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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Board of ICOANA CREDINTEI	2
Table of contents	3
Preface	4
* THEOLOGY STUDIES	
Ph.D. Marian VÎLCIU, The Christian family between Tradition and Modernity	5
Ph.D. Hristea G. KARAIANNIS, The image fo God in the Old Testament	13
Ph.D. George GRIGORITĂ, The Canon: the fundamental pastoral rule of the Church. An etymological, semantic and theological approach	21
Ph.D. Nicolae PREDA, The prayer “GOD OF THE SPIRITS...” short textual analysis	48
Ph.D. Candidate Constantin Valentin BUGIULESCU, The importance and role of virtues in the spiritual development of a person	63
*EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND RELIGION STUDIES	
Ph.D. Gabriela Alina ANGHEL, Ph.D. Mariana DOGARU, School education in the context of inclusive education policies	71
Ph.D. Claudia VLAICU, Ph.D. Ramona NEACSA, The role of interactive methods in the development of primary children’s creativity	79
Ph.D. Elena Ancuța SANTI, Ph.D. Cosmin SANTI, The dynamic of Religious Family life from a Psychological perspective	87
Ph.D. Nicusor BELDIMAN, Parentic principles in the homiletic work of the Metropolitan Bishop Firmilian Marin	93
Ph.D. Georgios KARAKASIS, The Catechism of Destruction: Sergei Nechaev and the spirit of Nihilism	103
Presentation of ICOANA CREDINTEI	115

Preface

The 8 issue of *Icoana Credintei/ Icon of Faith* (IFIJISR) encompasses a group of articles on various themes, dedicated to the areas of Theology, Education, Science and Religion. The committee of corresponding authors for the issue Number 8, Year IV (2018) of *Icoana Credintei* are intended to provide interaction within the community of thinkers, engaging in the dialog between religion and all types of science.

Thus, the first section: **THEOLOGY STUDIES** starts with the keynote lecture “*The Christian family between Tradition and Modernity*”, delivered by Professor PhD. Marian VÎLCIU. In this article the central role of the Family and marriage in our contemporary society is analysed. Next study belongs to PhD. Hristea G. KARAIANNIS called: “*The image of God in the Old Testament*” and debates the theological reflection about the image declaring the immovable relationship between God and man. The next paper belongs to Fr. Ph.D. George GRIGORIȚĂ entitled: “*The Canon: the fundamental pastoral rule of the Church. An etymological, semantic and theological approach*”. The central idea of this article is the importance of canon and the practical rule in the Church. Fr. PhD. Nicolae PREDA signs the paper, entitled: “*The prayer “GOD OF THE SPIRITS...” short textual analysis*”. Theme of this paper is dedicated to prayer “God of the Spirits...” considered one of the representative prayers for the dead in practical theology. This first section ends with the paper of Ph.D. Candidate Constantin Valentin BUGIULESCU and bears the title: “*The importance and role of virtues in the spiritual development of a person*”. Virtues are the first contribution to the Christian life and the formation for moral life.

The second section: **EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND RELIGION STUDIES** includes firstly Ph.D. Gabriela Alina ANGHEL, Ph.D. Mariana DOGARU paper: “*School education in the context of inclusive education policies*”, whose subject is an essential understanding of the inclusive education policy in Romania. The following issue, unfolded by Ph.D. Claudia VLAICU, Ph.D. Ramona NEACSA is the “*The role of interactive methods in the development of primary children’s creativity*”. It draws several directions of teaching research methodology in relation to this topic and it also suggests specific interactive methods of teaching meant to develop primary students’ creativity. The next paper belongs to Ph.D. Elena Ancuța SANTI, Ph.D. Cosmin SANTI and brings new clues in understanding “*The dynamic of Religious Family life from a Psychological perspective*”. The next article belongs to Ph.D. Nicusor BELDIMAN, in which he exposes the theme: “*Paranetic principles in the homiletic work of the Metropolitan Bishop Firmilian Marin*”. The section ends with Ph.D. Georgios KARAKASIS paper: “*The Catechism of Destruction: Sergei Nechaev and the spirit of Nihilism*”. The author stresses a philosophical path of interpretation of the phenomenon of political nihilism according to the way the latter is developed in the life and thought of the Russian anarchist Sergei Nechaev.

Therefore, the content of the current issue is a good invitation to reading theological, philosophical and moral-educational researches on specific themes from the field supporting thus the scientific aim of *Icoana Credintei*, international journal published by *Ideas Forum International Academic and Scientific Association* (IFIASA) in collaborations with members of the *Faculty of Orthodox Theology and Education Sciences*, “Valahia” University, Târgoviște, Romania.

June 2018

Editor Ph.D. Marin BUGIULESCU

* THEOLOGY STUDIES

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY BETWEEN TRADITION AND
MODERNITY**Ph.D. Marian VÎLCIU,**Faculty of Theology and Sciences of Education,
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ABSTRACT

Nowadays the family, and especially the Christian family, endures a whole series of challenges. People often forget that the family is an institution that was founded by God, thus gaining a sacred character, and are promoted ideas according to which the rules of the Christian family and the “canon” of the social values are ignored. We may assert that today we are living in a “dictatorship of indecency”, in which the Christian wisdom is considered either a weakness, either an archaic attitude, while indecency with all its forms is considered a modern and actual attitude. Family and marriage are regarded more and more as a dissoluble collusion, noticing an attempt to relativize them and to question their significance and importance, for man and generally for life, by promoting new and so-called modern forms of “free cohabitation”. Undoubtedly these are highly actual issues which need an ample and thorough analysis.

Keywords: family; marriage; religion; God; love; responsibility;

INTRODUCTION

Family is a divine institution founded by God ever since the creation of man. Considering its institution by God, family has a sacred character, highlighted by the fact that its prototype is the very Divine Family, the Holy Trinity, whose foundation is the faultless love, unity, communion and equality of its Persons. By this assertion we underline that family is the most important institution which was put in the service of life, all the other institutions that play a role in sustaining and promoting man’s life being subordinated to it, both under the aspect of their origins, and especially considering their role and mission. We do not wish to minimize whatsoever the contribution of the other institutions in supporting and promoting life, but we wish to stress that from the perspective of the importance, role and specificity, the family is by far superior, for it is the place where the human person is created and developed.

From sociological perspective, the transformation of an individual into a person is „*the family’s first accomplishment*”¹. In other words, family is a true cradle of life, it is the place where man’s life is knead, born and developed. At the origin of life stands „*family as nucleus of the society, while at the basis of the family stands marriage*”².

¹Nicolae Mărginean, *Psihologia persoanei*, Sibiu, 1944, p. 262;

²Pr. Prof. PhD. Dumitru Abrudan, Pr. Prof. Emilian Cornițescu, *Arheologia Biblică*, Ed. Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române (IBMBOR), Sibiu, 2002, p. 114;

1. A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE FAMILY

We must underline the fact that from the perspective of the Christian teachings, family, sociologically named “the cell” of the society, involves two aspects, a biological one and a moral one. In biological perspective, family must be considered “the first cell” of society, for a race in which marriage and family suffer severe attacks under the aspect of their signification and role for man, is sooner or later destined to disappear. As for the moral aspect, *„family is in truth considered a «cell» of the society, because inside the family are build the basics of education, inside the family begins the «carving» of the Christian soul, the family is the most competent component of a society which can practice this supreme «art», which is education”*³.

Man, created by God after His image (Genesis 1, 27), is by the very nature of his creation destined to life in communion, as is also stressed by the Holy Bible, that *„it is not good for the man to be alone, so I will make a helper suitable for him”* (Genesis 2, 18). Considering that man is created after God’s image and the Persons of the Holy Trinity form, through love, a complete unity, consequently man as „image of God” is a complete unity, because *„his human unity is not accomplished in the ununiformed personal duality, but in the man and woman complementarity”*⁴. The unity of the family is thus demonstrated by the fact that it has God as prototype, the One in Being, on the one hand, and on the other by the very manner in which man was created, for the Holy Bible says: *„And Adam said: this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man. This is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife and they become one flesh”* (Genesis 2, 23-24). Therefore, man and woman express two existence modalities of man. Man was created *„as duality to exist in relation, because taken individually he does not feel complete, he seeks the other for fulfillment and creation”*⁵.

If man is created *„in God’s image”*, if we consider the fact that at the foundation of the Holy Trinity stands love, man himself being a fruit of God’s love, then we see that it is necessary for man to experience this love in his family life, in which reflects the community image of the Trinity God. God has created man, calling him to existence through love, He called him in the same time to love, for **God is love** (1 John 4, 8) and He is, in Himself, the mystery of love and of love’s personal communion. For man this is a gift and in the same time a responsibility to live in love for God and to settle it at the foundation of his family and life. By creating man in this personal and complementary duality, man and woman, God has inscribed in him the vocation and in the same time the appropriate capacity and responsibility for love and communion. Love and communion are thus the basic innate vocation for each human being.

God arranges family setting love at its foundation so that man should be safe from egoism and to make him able give to his fellow, to help him and to be helped by him when he is in need. God arranged family in order to associate man to His continuous creation of life, creation which He blesses in heaven: *„Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth and subdue it”* (Genesis 1, 28).

The first family was founded in Heaven, having as priest and witness God Himself. In the paradisiac form, family undoubtedly knew the most beautiful period of its existence.

³Pr. Lect. Phd. Nicolae Achimescu, *Familia creștină între tradiție și modernitate. Considerații teologico-sociologice*, in **Familia creștină azi**, Ed. Trinitas, Iași, 1995, p. 120;

⁴Pr. Prof. Phd. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă, vol. III*, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1978, p. 180;

⁵Pr. Constantin Galeriu, *Taina nunții*, in **Studii Teologice**, XII (1960) no. 7-8, p. 489;

The thing that characterized the first family was collaboration, respect and understanding, but with the fall in sin the state of the family and the spiritual equilibrium of man was shaken, with repercussions upon the familial life. Up until the falling into sin, the husbands lived in a complete harmony, but afterwards the situation suffered significant changes.

The first change is shown by God the Creator, when He says: „*Your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you*” (Genesis 3, 16). These words show us that the order placed by God at the foundation of family suffers modifications, the woman being already placed in a certain condition of dependence to man. Consequently, the man no longer saw in woman the help offered by God, but a slave who was often despised, and the children, who by definition are considered a gift of God, who amplify the community image of God within the family, forming along with their father and mother a true human trinity, were sometimes seen as mere objects. In the case of some serious mistakes the father could punish his children with death, but this right of life and death over his children could be exerted only under the control of the citadel’s elders (Deuteronomy 21, 19-23). Even if such exaggerations were not unusual even in the Old Testament, we must nevertheless show that the Hebrews considered family, marriage, as a symbol of the union between God and His people (Ezekiel 16, 8).

This reality endured until the apparition of the Savior Christ into this world, Who „*re-strengthened the bond of marriage between man and woman and raised it from the order of nature to the order of grace*”⁶. Messiah restored the religious character of marriage, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, who purified and ennobled the conjugal love. He begun his redeemer work into this world by honoring marriage with His presence at the wedding in the Cana of Galilee. (John 2, 2-11) „*there fulfilling the first miracle with His power which is beyond nature, giving to the couple who was getting married to drink from the wine of enthusiastic love poured by Him through His Grace, desiring by this to show that from honoring and praising marriage begins the raising of human life.*”⁷. In this manner Messiah underlines the very important role played by family in man’s life and becoming. Moreover, we must stress that Messiah Himself has spent the greatest part of His life in the family, with love and obedience to His parents.

In another register, very often when he preaches the new teaching, Messiah uses the image of the family, using aspects from the family life. Thus, the Holy Bible displays parables that were spoken by Jesus Christ in which the subject is the family: the parable of the two sons send by their father to work in the vineyard – Matthew 21, 28-31; the parable of the father who gives good presents to his sons – Lucas 11, 11-13; the parable of the prodigal son – Lucas 15, 11-32; the parable of the bad workers – Matthew 21, 33-41; the parable of the emperor’s son wedding – Matthew 22, 1-13; the parable about the great dinner – Lucas 14, 16-24 etc.

Alongside the wedding from Cana in Galilee, when Christ, by His very presence at this wedding and by the fulfilled miracle, „*has blessed marriage taking it under His protection*”⁸, raising it to the tank of mystery, in which, upon the humans’ decision and desire spills the blessing and gift of God who make their connection solid and their love constructing, the Holy Bible also offer other moments that speak about families and marriages as complementary realities.

⁶Pr. Prof. PhD. Dumitru Stăniloae, *op.cit.*, p. 183;

⁷*Ibidem*, p. 182;

⁸Pr. Prof. Vasile Mihoc, *Căsătoria și familia în lumina Sfintei Scripturi. Nașterea de prunci, scop principal al căsătoriei*, in **Mitropolia Ardealului**, XXX (1985), no. 9-10, p. 584;

In His teachings, Jesus Christ show us that family based on marriage is a part of the order of creation and, consequently, re-establishing the primordial family's unity and indissolubility is indispensable. Thus, in the Preach from the mountain, Jesus Christ speaks clearly about the indissoluble character of marriage, when He asserts: „*It has been said: «Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce». But I tell you anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery*” (Matthew 5, 31-32), by this showing that no other reason is sufficient to break marriage.

It is a well-known fact that in the days of Jesus Christ breaking a marriage was a controversial issue, given the fact that the Hebrews had, back in those days, two exegetic schools of Bible interpretation, the one of Hillel, who was a liberal interpret of the Scriptures, and the one of Shammai, a rigid and formalist interpret. In this context, the Pharisees, consecrated enemies of Our Lord Christ, seeking to tempt Him in wrong assertions, addressed to Him the following question: „*Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?*” (Matthew 19, 3). Messiah asserts firmly both the unity and indissolubility of marriage, as a fact of life for man and woman, received from God from the very creation: „*Haven't you read, he replied, that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female? And said for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate*” (Matthew 19, 3-6). Believing that his answer interferes with the law of Moses, the Pharisees ask Him again: „*Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce and send her away?*” (Matthew 19, 7). Messiah once again underlines that man is not allowed to leave his woman, nor the woman her man, and answers: „*Because of your hardness of heart ... but from the beginning it was not so*” (Matthew 19, 8). From here we conclude that the Hebrews have received this concession regarding the un-bonding of marriage in order to avoid greater wrongdoings.

Therefore, the words of Christ demonstrate that the decomposition of a family by breaking marriage is not according God's will. The only accepted reason for breaking marriage, as we have seen once again mentioned in the Preach from the mountain and resumed here is the riot: „*I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery*” (Matthew 19, 9). So, according to Christ's words, there is no other reason to un-bond a marriage except adultery. „*Lust breaks the spiritual connection between man and woman, and all the divorce does is to officialise an already created situation*”⁹.

This teaching is also undertaken by the Saint Apostle Paul who, at his turn, defends the unity and indissolubility of marriage, showing that alongside adultery, physical death leads to breaking a marriage: „*Do you not know, brothers – for I speak to those who know the Law – that the Law has authority upon someone only as long as that person lives? For the married woman is bound, by law, to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies she is released from the law that binds her to him. So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man*” (Romans 7, 1-3). We find it is important to underline the fact that, according

⁹. Pr. Lect. Mihai Vizitiu, *Familia în învățătura Mântuitorului și a Sfinților Apostoli*, in vol. **Familia creștină azi**, Ed. Trinitas, Iași, 1995, p. 30;

to the aforementioned words, at first sight Messiah left the impression that man enjoys a primacy compared to the woman, but we must stress the fact that God's new teaching presents woman as being equal to man, for they are both bearers of God's image. Unlike the pagan world, in which man was the despot of the family, having absolute powers upon his wife and children, in the Christian family „*the husbands become equal before God*”¹⁰. Therefore, by the words: „*Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her, and if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery*” (Mark 10, 11-12), Jesus Christ was stressing not only the indissolubility of marriage, but also the complete equality of the two husbands¹¹, a truth that was also underlined by the Saint Apostle Paul, who said: „*nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ*” (Galatians 3, 28). Still, the family is not made only of husband and wife, but also of children, about which the orthodox teaching say they are a gift from God. Family is the place where it is continued the creation of man and, generally, of life. Christianity itself „*is the religion that started from the cradle of a child and from breast of a mother*”¹². The words spoken by God to the very first humans „*Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it*” (Genesis 1, 28) have an eternal character for the family's meaning and mission. By bringing children to this world, the Christian family fulfills this calling of God, while in another register „*a family with children is a more complete reflection of the Holy Trinity's communion and love*”¹³. So, apart from being seen as a gift from God, children represent in the same time God's blessing that spills upon the family, that bring parents together and consolidate the unity of the familial home. „*For parents children are a powerful motivation ... to as many virtues as possible, and a strong shield against the temptations from outside. The presence of children exerts the most efficient moral censure upon the parents' behavior*”¹⁴.

It is no wonder that Messiah, speaking about gaining the kingdom from the skies, establishes innocence as a prior condition and, as example of innocence He mentions children: „*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you: who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it*” (Mark 10, 14-15). Even more than that, the Lord Christ, as a loving Father, offers us in a gesture filled with kindness, a true and vivid lesson of love towards children: „*And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them*” (Mark 10, 16). If a family wishes to be loved by God, both parents and children have to maintain an atmosphere of peace and good understanding, thanking God for everything „*in psalms, praises and canticles*” (Colossians 3, 14).

2. FAMILY MEMBERS: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In the same time, Christ tells us which are the responsibilities of the family members, to themselves and to each other. The parents have the obligation to take care of their children, offering them only good and useful things (Matthew 7, 9-11), praying to God for them (John 4, 47). At their turn, the children owe their parents honor, obedience and

¹⁰Eugenia Safta Romano, *Arhetipuri Juridice în Biblie*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 1997, p. 142;

¹¹See Sfântul Ioan Gură de Aur, *Omilia despre căsătorie – Comentariu la Epistola către Efeseni*, trans. Marcel Hancheș, in *Altarul Banatului*, no. 1-3, 2002, p. 75;

¹²Vasile Coman, Bishop of Oradia, *Scrieri de Teologie Liturgică și Pastorală*, Ed. Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române a Oradiei, Oradea, 1983, p. 383;

¹³Pr. Lect. Mihai Vizitiu, *op.cit.*, p. 32;

¹⁴Constantin Pavel, *Familia preotului*, in *Glasul Bisericii*, IX (1960), no. 1-2, p. 81;

compliance after the word of God, „*Honor your father and mother...*” (Matthew 15, 4), having as model Jesus Christ Himself, who was „*obedient to His parents*” (Luke 2, 51).

From another perspective, we have to underline the fact that the children can be true teachers to their parents, showing them the manner in which people, our fellows, have to be loved in the most complete and disinterested manner. Last, but not least we have to say that the parents' love for their children is a model of true love.

The families without children lack the possibility of completely understand life and man's meaning onto this earth, while on the other hand, those who do not have children don't have the possibility of ever understanding the love of God for humans, for „*children are miraculous guides who take us again into this world, forcing us to get to know it better and better teaching us an alphabet of emotions, of the first feelings, of the huge fantasy, of the purity and candor, the power to discover the world with fresh eyes*”¹⁵.

Starting from these truths about family, which the Church preaches from the beginnings of its existence, we arrive in contemporaneity and without any great effort we see that the conjugal life has changed, has “modernized”, inasmuch as it hardly if ever report to the Christian moral laws. To this reality equally contributes the immoral literature, some tendentious commercials and the permanent process by which they try to confuse the moral values, considered outdated and off the map, all these leading to what we may name the de-personalization of man, which has many faucets.

At the family level we may speak about a certain „compulsion” to libertinism, in which the rules of the Christian family and the „canon” of the social values are ignored. We might even say that we live in a “dictatorship of indecency”, in which the Christian wisdom is considered either a weakness or an ancient attitude, while indecency of any kind is considered a virtue. More and more, family and marriage are regarded as an annulable agreement, trying to relativize and to question their significance and importance, for man and generally for life, by promoting new forms of so-called „free cohabitation”. This is the reason why, under the pressure of such ideas and principles, in many European states, and lately in our country, marriage is considered a „compelling monogamy”, „a feature of the body”, „a medieval age order”, or a „feudal structure”, going so far as to consider family and marriage as a result of the „churchly repressions”¹⁶.

There are in Europe some currents that have begun to be felt also in our country, which propose this so-called “free” “cohabitation” as an alternative to the family, as the connection between man and woman for a certain period of time, excluding the Mystery of the Weeding and which seeks to be a public relation, with the pretension of some social and even moral legitimacy. What are the propositions made, some time ago, by some of the Romanian politicians, who wanted the recognition and the promotion by the state of a consensual relation validated by a notary public, having as main argumentation the avoidance of the judicial consequences and the costs of divorce, and the disappointments caused by a failed marriage, none other than such alternatives for family?

These so-called „free cohabitations”, at which some add the relations or marriages on probation, with no social engagement, beyond the fact that they are in flagrant contradiction with the teachings of the Church and the Christian moral, they transform into a sort of „marriage object” inside which the two partners only „probate” each other, this type of relation excluding any kind of personal communion, because it lacks love and responsibility, and these last ones cannot be probated, for they are or they are not. More and

¹⁵*** *Tratat de Teologie Morală, vol.II*, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1979, p. 292;

¹⁶Pr. Lect. PhD. Nicolae Achimescu, *op. cit.*, p. 125;

more frequently, marriage and implicitly family are understood as simple contracts that the modern man doesn't need, which is why in the countries that are considered evolved, they renounce more and more frequently and easily to marriage.

To all these elements, modern man also adds another conception about life and family known under the name of „philosophy of happiness”, according to which man is bound to be happy, demarche in which family is understood as one of the means of making man happy. The slogan of this „philosophy” is „*You have to be happy, otherwise you have missed the opportunity to live*”¹⁷. According to this conception marriage is justified as long as the two are happy, if not, when husbands are no longer happy, they can break up and are free to seek happiness elsewhere. Obviously, such a mentality leads to a degradation of all that marriage and family represents from the perspective of the Christian teachings.

All these underline the fact that the contemporary man no longer believes in the holiness of the bond between man and woman and, all the more so, no longer believes in the mystery that God creates at the wedding service, which makes living in the family to be deprived of its spiritual foundation. Man will be truly happy only when he will rediscover the sacred character of the relation between man and woman within the family, understood as „*a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church*” (Ephesians 5, 32), a relation which involves faith and conjugal fidelity.

CONCLUSIONS

The Orthodox Church has granted and still grants a major importance to the Christian marriage and family, because on them depend not only the destiny of two people, but the destiny of human community. We must firmly believe that family is based on the Holy Mystery of the Weeding, a mystery that makes the family to become the holy shrine in which is lived love and are lived, altogether, the Christian virtues, through which man gains happiness here on earth, next to his fellows, and grows for the Kingdom of God. Not arbitrarily certain theologians speak about marriage as being „*a conjugal sacerdotium*”¹⁸.

Marriage, as the beginning of a family, is based not only on the inner need of living in community, but also on the communion between God and the mankind that He loves. For this reason, the Church gives to family the priority before any other kind of human communion. From theological and ecclesial perspective, the role of the family can never be questioned. Marriage and family must be considered, first and foremost, in connection to the common life of the Church, the family being the Church's icon (*ecclesia domestica*) and the icon of the Christ's love for mankind, as Saint Apostle Paul makes it clear for us: „*Husbands, you're your wives, just as Christ loved the church and have himself up for her to make her holy*” (Ephesians 5, 25-26).

Consequently, the Christian family has the mission to become, first of all, a profound community of life and love, from which by no means can wisdom and responsibility miss, and which will find complete fulfilment in God's Kingdom. In the same time, the Christian family must preserve, discover and transmit its faith and love, as a vivid reflection and real participation to God's love for mankind and Jesus Christ's love for His Church. By doing so, the Christian family will have actively fulfilled a fundamental mission.

¹⁷*Ibidem*, p. 126;

¹⁸Paul Evdokimov, *Taina Iubirii. Sfințenia unirii conjugale în lumina tradiției ortodoxe*, trans. Gabriela Moldoveanu, Asociația medicală creștină Christiana, București, 1994, p. 53;

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THE IMAGE OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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ABSTRACT

Although in the Old Testament there is no image and no representation of God in the creation text it is written that God created man in his own image and likeness. Is Man's form God's image? The image and likeness cannot be man's body because God is spirit and has no body and animals have bodies but are not in the image of God. The image refers to the soul and to the mind. The likeness of man to God must be limited to the immaterial part of man. The functional interpretation of the „imago Dei” understands the image to relate to humanity's role as God's agents in the world. The image of God cannot be regarded as an idiom of man's attitude. It is not a quality in man but a declaration that God had the will to bring to existence a partner. Thus, man becomes God's partner. Nowhere does the Old Testament indicate that the divine image and likeness are lost because of the Fall. The image of God constitutes all that differentiates man from the lower creation. Man has the will, the freedom of choice, self-consciousness, self-transcendence, self-determination, rationality, morality, and spirituality. The image declares the immovable relationship between God and man. Excludes the natural affinity to this relationship and accepts the heterogeneity of the creation with reference to the creator. It is a creation in the image of God rather than a creation as an image of God.

Keywords: God; Creation; man; image; likeness; aniconism; soul; mind; body;

INTRODUCTION

According to the Old Testament God has no image. Ex. 20:4 clarifies: *You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth*¹. If it is forbidden for Israel to create an image of God, because he will become idolatrous, then what could be his perception about the image of God. When God talks about His presence he declares that „I am who I am”² and he testifies His presence via the ark of the covenant³ or physical phenomena such as thunders and lightnings or the smoking mountain of Sinai⁴. So, if God in the Old Testament does not permit to create something about his image how can we perceive how he is like?

¹ Comp. Deut. 5:8.

² Ex. 3:14.

³ Ex. 25:22, Num. 7:89, 10:33-35, Josh. 3:3, 15-17, 5:6-12, 6:12-16, 18:1, I. Sam. 1:3, 3:3, 4:4, 5-22, 6:11, II. Sam. 6:2, I. Kgs 8, 19:10, I. Chr. 13:13, 16, 15:28-29, 28:2, 11, II. Cgr. 6:41,

⁴ Ex. 20:18.

1. THE IMAGE OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the entire Old Testament there are only three explicit references to the *imago Dei* notion (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1; and 9:6)⁵. Furthermore, these references are all found in that section of Genesis (chapters 1-11) known as the „primeval history”. Gen. 1:26-27 constitute the *locus classicus* of the doctrine of *imago Dei*, the notion that human beings are made in God's image:

O' 26 And God said, Let us make man according to our image and likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the flying creatures of heaven, and over the cattle and all the earth, and over all the reptiles that creep on the earth.

27 And God made man, according to the image of God he made him, male and female he made them.

The concept of the image of God, implied or expressed, underlies all revelation⁶. But as Henry and Feinberg point out the Bible does not define the precise content of the image of God⁷. Maybe that is the reason why as Snaith argues many „orthodox” theologians through the centuries avoided to „touch” the phrase *the image of God (imago Dei)*⁸. That does not exclude biblical researches to develop the research about this idea. Middleton mentions that „in the last thirty years of the twentieth century the functional understanding of the image of God became the virtual consensus in the field”⁹.

At the very beginning, it has to be said that the interpretation of the image of God among theologians makes a clear distinction between the body and the image, establishing the dualistic reading of the human race. Clark notes that the image and likeness cannot be man's body, because (1) God is spirit and has no body, and (2) animals have bodies but are not in the image of God¹⁰. Clarke believes that the image refers to the soul and to the mind, not to a body. His emphasis is: „God was now producing a spirit, and a spirit, too, formed after the perfections of his [that is, God's] nature”¹¹. For Keil and Delitzsch the image of God refers to the self-conscious personality of man¹². Chafer suggests the image of God is constituted only on the basis of the spiritual¹³. On the other hand, the likeness of man to God must be limited to the immaterial part of man, because God is incorporeal¹⁴.

Male and female, Adam and Eve, were created in the image of God. Brunner and Barth held a relational view of the image¹⁵. The functional interpretation of the *imago Dei* understands the image to relate to humanity's role as God's royal agents in the world. Man, as the image of God, is placed on earth as God's representatives. Skinner¹⁶ suggests that the

⁵ C. L. Feinberg, „The Image of God”, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 129 (1972), 515: 236.

⁶ J. Orr, „God, Image of,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, J.Orr, et al., (ed.), (1929), 1264.

⁷ C. F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, Vol. II *God Who Speaks and Shows: Fifteen Theses, Part One*, Waco, Texas: Word 1976, p. 125. C. L. Feinberg, „The Image of God”, 515: 238.

⁸ N. Snaith, „The Image of God”, *Expository Times* 86 (October 1974-September 1975) 24.

⁹ R. J. Middleton. *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1*, Grand Rapids: Brazos Press 2005, p. 29.

¹⁰ G. H. Clark, „The Image of God in Man”, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, XII (1969), 216.

¹¹ A. Clarke, *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments*, New York 1837, p. 38.

¹² C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch*, Vol. I of *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, J. Martin (trans.), Edinburgh 1866, pp. 63-64.

¹³ A. Altmann, „*Homo Imago Dei* in Jewish and Christian Theology”, *Journal of Religion*, XLVIII (July, 1968), 235-239, 243-244.

¹⁴ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Dallas 1947, pp. 181, 184.

¹⁵ M. J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 1998, pp. 524-525.

¹⁶ J. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis: The International Critical Commentary*, S. R. Driver, A. Plummer and C. A. Briggs (ed.), Edinburgh 1910, p. 32

image qualifies man for dominion, he affirms that such rule is a consequence, and not the essence of the image of God. Leupold remarks, „The double modifying phrase, ‘in our image, after our likeness,’ is nothing more than a phrase which aims to assert with emphasis the idea that man is to be closely patterned after his Maker”¹⁷.

Brunner distinguishes between two senses of the image of God: the formal and the material. The formal image is the *humanum* that which makes a person human, distinguishing the human from the animal. The formal image is man’s constitution as a rational being, responsible and free. Man as sinner has not lost this aspect of the image of God. In fact, it is presupposed in the ability to sin. While man’s freedom is limited as compared with God’s freedom, it is genuine. The image in this formal sense has not been touched in the least, says Brunner¹⁸. He points out that even the formal aspect is not structural; it is relational. Brunner uses the analogy of a mirror to clarify the distinction between the formal and material aspects of the image of God. When we bear the image of God in the material sense, we are in positive and responsive relationship to him. Brunner sees this aspect of the image to the reflection in a mirror.

Eichrodt¹⁹ suggested that the ancient traditions of the Old Testament had a different perception about the image understanding it as more physical. On the other hand the tradition of the Priestly Code (P) gave a spiritual sense to the image. His idea has been accepted later by Schellenberg²⁰ who pointed out that P understood the *imago Dei* beyond a functional focus on humankind as the lords over the animals. The biblical text focuses on the way that God created man and not if he is similar to Him. God as the the creator of all men is associated with all of them and not with small royal minority.

Von Rad²¹ believes „the image of God in man contains no direct explanation about the form which specially constitutes it; its real point is rather the purpose for which the image was given to man...his status as lord in the world”. The image fundamentally means „the pattern on which [human beings are] fashioned is to be sought outside the sphere of the created.” According to Clines the Old Testament never says that humanbeing was created in the image of God²².

Bonhoeffer²³ emphasizes that the expression *in the image of God* means rather the relationship between God and man and not a possession. „Humankind’s likeness to God lies in his capacity to be addressed as a ‘thou’ and to respond to the divine word”²⁴. For Erickson „the existence of a wide diversity of interpretations is an indication that there are no direct statements in Scripture to resolve the issue. Our conclusions, then, must necessarily be reasonable inferences drawn from what little the Bible does have to say on the subject”²⁵. Auld²⁶ focuses on Genesis 5:1-3 and 9:1-7 and regards these two passages to be the source texts for 1:26-31. His textual analysis introduced the idea that they were formulated to

¹⁷ H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, Columbus: Wartburg Press 1942, p. 88.

¹⁸ E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, London: Lutterworth 1952, pp. 55-57.

¹⁹ W. Eichrodt, *Theology of The Old Testament Vol. II.*, London SCM Press 1967, p. 122.

²⁰ A. Schellenberger, „Humankind as the ‘image of God’. On the Priestly predication (Gen 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6) and its relationship to the ancient Near Eastern understanding of images”, *Theologische Zeitschrift* 65 (2009) 97-115.

²¹ G. Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology Volume 1*, Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd 1973, pp. 143-146.

²² D. J. A. Clines. „The Image of God in Man”, *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968), 99.

²³ D. Bonhoeffer, *Creation and fall*, London / New York 1959, pp. 33-38.

²⁴ B. S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological reflection on the Christian Bible*, Minneapolis: Fortress 1993, p. 568.

²⁵ M. J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Baker 1987, pp. 512-513.

²⁶ G. Auld, „*Imago Dei* in Genesis: Speaking in the Image of God”, *Expository Times* 116 (2005) 259-262.

function as a new prologue to the book of Genesis in order to place humans further from animals and closer to God.

According to Middleton²⁷ Gen 1:26 is the key to understand the idea of the *imago Dei*. The syntax of the passage remarks the verb „to rule” as the main purpose of man. As a result, humankind has been created to dominate in purpose and not as a consequence of the *imago Dei*. Chapter 1 of the book of Genesis declares that man has been created to be a representative and agent of God in the world and to share God’s rule on the earth.

For Barth the phrase *in the image of God* is not referring only to the relationship between man and God, but between men as well. The image of God cannot be regarded as an idiom of man’s attitude. It is not a quality in man but a declaration that God had the will to bring to existence a partner. Thus, man becomes God’s partner. Barth emphasized the „I-thou” or „face-to-face” relation as in the divine life. Man cannot be created in the image of God because God is „totally Other”. As the time passed he changed this idea and found a divine image in man²⁸. The presence of Jesus Christ gave a more substantial meaning: the image of God consists in being for others, in constructing a strong relationship with others.

Some researchers believe Gen. 1:1-2:3 consists a special narrative unit which reflects the idea that the image of God in man has a corporeal meaning. The analysis of this this opinion delivers the „royal” flavour of the biblical text, which presents man as the appointed by God ruler to dominate over the cosmos. This picture has also been reflected by the prophet Isaiah who sees Yahweh as „seated on a throne, high and exalted”²⁹.

McFague’s opinion about God as a ruler reflects the icon of a Monarch who stands above all and rules his kingdom, a picture obviously crucial for the royal interpretation of the image³⁰. This understanding of the image occurs also in ancient Near East where the kings were the representatives of God in the earth as the living images of God³¹. According to this opinion the idea about the image of God reflects the influence of the ancient Near Eastern perspectives. Walton, points out that in the ancient Near East it was believed that the image of God did the work of God in the world³². As a result it is obvious one should examine to what extent the biblical text has been influenced by the ancient Near Eastern understanding of the *imago Dei*.

In the four thousand year old *Sumerian creation myth* is stated:

O my mother, the being who you named is there; associate the image of the gods with him, mix the nucleus of the clay above the primal ocean. The gods and princely figures will thicken the clay,

²⁷ J. R. Middleton, *The liberating image: the ‘Imago Dei’ in Genesis I*, Grand Rapids: Brazos 2005.

²⁸ K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark 1958, vol. 3, part 1, p. 185.

²⁹ Is. 6:1. P. D. Miller, Jr., „The Sovereignty of God”, *The Hermeneutical Quest: Essays in Honor of James Luther Mays on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, D. G. Miller (ed.), Allison Park, Penn.: Pickwick Publications 1986, pp. 129-144; G. E. Wright, *The Old Testament and Theology*, New York: Harper and Row 1969, pp. 97-150; J. S. Chestnut, *The Old Testament Understanding of God*, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968, pp. 70-81. G. V. Smith, „The Concept of God/the Gods as King in the Ancient Near East and the Bible”, *Trinity Journal* 3 (1982) 1, 18-38.

³⁰ S. McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age*, Philadelphia: Fortress 1987, pp. 63-69.

³¹ P. J. Gentry and S. J. Wellum. *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway 2012, pp. 192-193.

³² J. H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2006, p. 212.

*But you must give life to the limbs*³³.

The term for *tselem* in Akkadian is *salmu*. *Salmu* is used in association to the statues of kings and dignitaries, as well as the images of deities³⁴. Furthermore, the Akkadian king is called a *salmu*, as the image of a deity – *Enuma Elish* 1:15-16³⁵. In addition to this the *Egyptian Instruction of Merikare* presents humans as the representatives of gods in the earth and Pharaoh as the bearer of the image of the sun god³⁶:

*Well tended is mankind – god’s cattle,
He made sky and earth for their sake, He subdued the water monster,
He made breath for their noses to live. They are his images, who came from his body,
He shines in the sky for their sake;*

He made for them plants and cattle, Fowl and fish to feed them.

Merill believes that such a perception occurs as well in the Akkadian and Aramaic *Tell Fekheriye inscription*³⁷. According to Van Leeuwen³⁸ it is possible that the author of the biblical text, surrounded by perceptions which regarded the king as a symbol of the power of a deity, has been affected and as a result imported such ideas to the Old Testament.

Gen. 1:26 is the crown of the creation. The climax of creation is reached in with the creation of the man. Dempster states, „the rest of the canon assumes the royal overtones of Genesis 1, indicating the unique authority assigned to the primal couple, and thus to all humanity”³⁹. The creation of the man is underlying the two ways relationship between God and man. God’s first utterance is „Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” The plural „let us make” is a plural of majesty for God Elohim. This decision of God defines man in relation to Him. Then God decrees, „Let them rule...” and places man to name all animals. This relates man to creation. The biblical text shows that man must actualize his relationship with God by the way he relates to the world around him.

This relationship between the Creator and man has a beginning. God’s decision „Let us make man” shows God’s purpose. The result of this action is God’s doing of man „in our image, according to our likeness”. It is God who sets up this relation. Man was created in the image of God, by God’s own will and that is out of what God is in himself. After the creation of the world man comes to the proscenium as the final creation. It is only man who is being created in the image of God. Dominion over the world was given only to man. Does this fact inform us about God’s image? The answer is no!

Thielicke believes that „the divine likeness is thus a relational entity because it is manifested in man’s ruling position vis-à-vis the rest of creation, or better, because it consists in this manifestation, in this exercise of dominion and lordship.”

Did the Fall of man effect the image of God? Nowhere does the Old Testament indicate that the divine image and likeness are lost. Biblical text declares that after the Fall

³³ W. Beyerlin, *Near Eastern Religious Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, Philadelphia: Westminster 1978, p. 77.

³⁴ E. H. Merrill, „Image of God”, T. D. Alexander & D. W. Baker (eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press 2003, p. 442. (pp. 441-445).

³⁵ R. C. Van Leeuwen, „Form, Image”, W. A. Van Gemeren (ed.), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis Volume 4*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1997, p. 644, (pp. 643-648).

³⁶ M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature 3 vols.*, Berkeley: University of California 1973-1980.

³⁷ E. H. Merrill, „Image of God”, T. D. Alexander & D. W. Baker (eds.) *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press 2003, p. 442, (pp. 441-445).

³⁸ R. C. Van Leeuwen, „Form, Image”, p. 644.

³⁹ S. G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press 2003, p. 60.

man „is still the ‘work and creature of God’⁴⁰. The New Testament refers to the new creation, to the restoration of the image (cf. 1 Cor. 15:49). Christ is the pattern of this restoration. The principle emphasis in Pauline theology is the restoration of the image (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18)⁴¹. Man has been endowed with God’s likeness, but he cannot achieve this likeness by his own will and power. God gives any likeness and that is proofed by Jesus Christ.

Is Jesus Christ the image of God? The relative passages are 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15-17; and Hebr. 1:2, 3. These passages are dealing with Christ not so much as the incarnate Savior as the eternal Son. But it has to be said that when the Bible represent man in the image of God, it is of the Godhead, not of Christ exclusively. That happens because man cannot be equated with God. Chereso points out: „This is because man can never achieve equality or identity of nature with God. Only the Son is so perfect an image of His Father as to be equal to, and identical in nature with, Him. Hence it is that the Word is called the image of God, while man is said to be created in that image”⁴².

The image of God constitutes all that differentiates man from the lower creation. Man has the will, the freedom of choice, self-consciousness, self-transcendence, self-determination, rationality, morality, spirituality and *nephesh – psychi* soul. However, through the anthropomorphism man looks at God because of his human nature. This nature and essence determines the perspective and the image by which man ascribes to God. The Israelite could not speak about God without an anthropomorphism. For Him God has face, eyes, ears, mouth, hands and legs”⁴³. However, this does not mean that everything is subjectivism. Man’s perception cannot do away with subjectivism because the subject knower is always involved in the process of arriving at knowledge. To know is to enter into a relation with an object of knowledge. In other words, knowing presupposes two things; the subject-knower and the object to be known.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The image of God is universal within the human race. The first and universal man, Adam, not a portion of the human race, was made in the image of God.

2. The image of God has not been lost as a result of sin or specifically the Fall. The presence of the image and likeness in the non-Christian is assumed. As a result, the image of God is not something accidental or external to human nature. It is something which is connected with humanity.

3. There is no indication that the image is present in one person to a greater degree than in another. For example high intelligence, is not evidence of the presence or degree of the image.

4. The image is not correlated with any variable. For example, there is no direct statement correlating the image with development of relationships, nor making it dependent upon the exercise of dominion.

5. In light of the foregoing considerations, the image should be thought of as primarily substantive or structural. The image is something in the very nature of man, in the way in which he was made. It refers to something man is rather than something he *has* or

⁴⁰ Deut. 32:6; Isa. 45:11; 54:5; 64:8; Acts 17:25; Rev. 4:11; Job 10:8-12; Ps. 139:14-16. G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*, p. 133.

⁴¹ Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.

⁴² C. J. Chereso, „Image of God”, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, W. J. McDonald, et al., (ed.) VII (1967), p. 369.

⁴³ Gen. 3:8; 32:30; Ex. 33:3, I. Sam. 5:11; II. Kgs 19:16; Is. 52:10, Zech. 4:10.

does. By virtue of his being man, he is in the image of God; it is not dependent upon the presence of anything else.

6. The image refers to the elements in the makeup of man which enable the fulfillment of his destiny. The image is the powers of personality which make man, like God, a being capable of interacting with other persons, of thinking and reflecting, and of willing freely.

Finally, the image declares the immovable relationship between God and man. Excludes the natural affinity to this relationship and accepts the heterogeneity of the creation with reference to the creator. It is a creation in the image of God rather than a creation as an image of God⁴⁴.

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THE CANON: THE FUNDAMENTAL PASTORAL RULE OF THE CHURCH. AN ETYMOLOGICAL, SEMANTIC AND THEOLOGICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

In the ecclesiastical language, the term canon (κανών) was introduced to indicate the practical rule of the teaching of faith and to differentiate it from the concept of law (lex – νόμος). This term therefore identifies any rule of the Church that puts into practice the doctrine of faith, defined by dogmas. The expression "holy canons" defines the collection of canons approved and received by the Church. Over time, some authors have made various proposals on the role of holy canons in the Church, oscillating them to be canceled as unsubstantiated until they say that their text would have been revealed. According to the doctrine and practice of the Church, the holy canons apply pastorally to ecclesial life, customized for each individual situation. Therefore, in the Church, it is necessary for all activities to take into account the fundamental principles contained in the holy canons, so that the life of the Church conforms to the teaching of christian-orthodox faith.

Keywords: canon, canon law, ecclesiastical law, theology of canon law; orthodox theology.

INTRODUCTION

Common language employs quite frequently the term *canon* to designate a *rule* or a norm specific to a particular field. Theological language also uses the term *canon* to identify certain specific ecclesiastical regulations. Sometimes, however, the term *canon* also means *law* (*legal system*), thus the phrase „*canon law*” designating the „law (legal system) of the Church”. In other contexts, the term *canon* is employed as to mean *dogma*, hence the phrase „*canon of the faith*”.

Until the 20th century, the role and significance of *canons* had never been questioned in the Church; on the contrary, the prefaces of the canon collections would point out that the authority of holy canons equals the authority of the Gospels’ text (the best example is the *Pedalion*, also known as *The Rudder*). Since the turn of the 21st century, however, some authors have expressed divergent views on the validity and applicability of canons. To some authors, canons are nothing but vestiges of Church life dating from a particular epoch, but having no practical relevance to the present life of the Church.

According to other authors, the canons are the main referential in ecclesial life, therefore they absolutely have to be followed literally, in strict accordance to their text. Yet other authors have given canons a fundamental and constant role in the organization and operation of the Church, indicating as mandatory only the fundamental principles they contain, to be observed in the Church.

Therefore, an etymological and semantic analysis of the term *canon*, and a description of its evolution over time as well as its current meaning, are a didactic and pastoral necessity. It is also highly useful and necessary to investigate the relationship between *canons* and *dogmas*, and the one between *canons* and *laws*.

1. THE ETYMOLOGY AND MEANING OF THE TERM „CANON”

In light of communion ecclesiology, the Orthodox Church defines itself – canonically – as the communion of autocephalous Churches, who have to preserve the *doctrinal, canonical and liturgical unity with the universal Orthodox Church*. In practice, the preservation of canonical unity in the Church, is achieved by each autocephalous Church complying with, and applying the *holy canons*. For a better understanding of the „*holy canons*”, or the „*holy and divine canons*”¹, it is necessary to explain first the etymology of this term, then to present the current significance of the term *canon* in the Orthodox theology.

Etymologically, the word *canon* originates in the Greek κανών (*canon*), derived from the Hebrew *qaneh*, meaning a *rule, norm, guideline, model, principle, benchmark*². The Hebrew term *qaneh* is usually translated by *reed* (the scientific name is *Arundo donax*), but is also designates a straight, tubular object, employed as a measuring rod. However, some experts have put forth other possible etymologies for the word κανών, postulating a Sumerian-Akkadian origin of the term³.

One of the 12th century Byzantine canonists – Ioannis Zonaras (1042-1130), in his commentaries (*scholia*) to the pastoral epistle on feasts written by St Athanasius the Great (†373) attempted a metaphorical explanation for the etymology of the term κανών, asserting that it designated a wooden tool used by craftsmen to polish wooden or stone items, more precisely to remove the irregularities of the respective object; the Church had chosen this term precisely in order to highlight the soteriological character of the canon, which is prescribed so as to correct any irregularities that may have occurred in the lives of the faithful, in order to bring them in communion with Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour⁴.

In the Old Testament, the term *qaneh* was employed to designate a measuring rod, or a pole as it is translated in the Romanian Bible books (Ezekiel 40, 3) – the unit of length employed to indicate the dimensions of the Temple in the vision of Ezekiel (40, 3-5). In the Septuagint, the term κανών occurs only three times (Micah 7, 4; Judith 13, 6; 4 Maccabees 7, 21) each with a different meaning⁵.

During the first Christian century, the term κανών was used to mean „*moral norm/guideline*”, as the Holy Apostle Paul employs it in his epistles (II Cor. X, 13, 15, 16, Gal. VI, 16, Philip. III, 16). At the end of the first Christian century, Saint Clement of Rome, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, used the term κανών to mean *moral guideline* or *prescription*, exhorting them to abandon the vain, daily and worldly cares and instead refer to „the holy, lofty *guidance* offered by our tradition”⁶. Thus, to the Christians of the first three centuries, *canon* meant

¹ For a detailed analysis of the concept of *canon* in the Church, as well as the collection of canons entitled „The Holy and Divine Canons of the Church” (canon 1, the Seventh Ecumenical Council), see my recent work on this topic: Georgică Grigoriță, *Sfintele și dumnezeieștile canoane în Biserică: între tradiție eclezială și necesitate pastorală. O analiză a izvoarelor teologiei canonice în actualul context ecleziologic*, Bucharest, 2017.

² Cf. Maurice Lalmant, „Canon”, in Raoul NAZ (ed.), *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, t. II, Paris, 1937, col. 1283-1284; Heinz Ohme, *Kanon ekklesiastikos. Die Bedeutung des altkirchlichen Kanonbegriffes*, Berlin-New York, 1998, pp. 21-28; „Kanon I (begriff)”, in Franz Joseph Dölger (ed.), *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 20, Stuttgart, 2004, pp. 1-28; Leopold Wenger, *Canon in den römischen Rechtsquellen und in den Papyri: eine Wortstudie*, Wien, 1942; „Über canon und regula in den römischen Rechtsquellen”, in *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Kanonistische Abteilung* 32 (1943), pp. 495-506; Herbert Opper, *Kanón. Zur Bedeutungsgeschichte des Wortes und seiner lateinischen Entsprechungen (Regula-Norma)*, Leipzig, 1937; Ioan Cozma, „Cuvântul *canon* în terminologia bisericească. Sensul și folosirea lui în legislația canonică sinodală”, in *Altarul Reîntregirii* 2 (2004), pp. 232-251; Emilian-Iustinian Roman, „Κανών – chintesența legislației bisericești actuale”, in C. DRON, *Valoarea actuală a canoanelor*, Iași, 2016, pp. 23-46.

³ Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque. Histoire de mots*, Paris, 1968, p. 493; Robert Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, vol. 1, Leiden, 2010, p. 637. For a presentation of the etymology of the term „κανών”, see: Răzvan Perșa, „Sensurile termenului κανών în Tradiția canonică a Bisericii Ortodoxe în primele patru secole”, in *Astra Salvensis* 4 (2016), nr. 7, pp. 20-39.

⁴ Cf. Georgios A. Ralli – Michael Potli [Γεώργιος Α. Ραλλή – Μιχαήλ Ποτλί] (ed.), *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*, vol. IV, Athens, 1854, p. 18.

⁵ Johan Lust – Erik Eynikel – Katrin Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexikon of Septuagint*, Stuttgart, 2003, p. 642.

⁶ Sanctus Clementis, *Epistola ad Corinthios*, VII, 2 (PG I, col. 223-224).

the totality of the normative order of the Church, the „sum of Church norms”, the ultimate standard or benchmark offered by the Gospel to inform the life of the Church; God’s commandments and the apostles’ prescriptions, passed down in the living tradition of the Church and providing the norms that underlie the life of the Church. The canon is the pre-existing authority which synods and councils simply invoke and protect from distortions, confirming (not formulating) it as the „ancient practice and custom” of the Church⁷.

With this connotation of „*guideline*” or „*normative prescription*”, the term *κανών* was employed in Church language up to the 4th century; throughout the first three centuries, *rules* governing the manner of living in compliance with the New Testament teachings were usually ascribed to the Holy Apostles (pseudo-epigraphic writings) and had a markedly consuetudinary character, as they derived from a *custom* (*usus / mos / consuetudo*)⁸.

From early 4th century onwards, the Church summoned Ecumenical Councils which passed decrees (*ῥοι συνόδων – definitiones synodorum*)⁹ to settle doctrinal and disciplinary problems occurring in the Church life. Subsequently, in order to distinguish them from doctrinal rulings, the councils’ decisions on disciplinary issues gradually began to be identified as *κανόνες* – that is, concrete instantiations of the „*Church’s canon (moral normative)*”¹⁰.

Although they had emerged in a society deeply indebted to the Roman law, conciliar decisions on disciplinary issues arising in Church life were not designated by the well-established term *νόμος* or *lex*; from the earliest times, they were instead termed *κανών*, a Greek term subsequently translated into Latin by *regula*, precisely in order to point to the difference between the nature of the Church and that of the State, respectively. *Canons* thus exist and are applied only within the Church, deriving their authority from the moral-religious assessment of one’s acts, rather than the coercive force exerted by the State *laws*¹¹. For this reason, probably, some authors regard the *canon* as the „churchly antonym” to the laws of State¹².

From Latin, the term *canon* was borrowed by all Romanic languages, designating a pastoral rule issued by the ecclesiastical authority, sanctioned by a Council and acknowledged by consensus throughout the entire Church. With the same meaning, the term *canon* was also imported into the Germanic languages as *kanon*. In Slavonic language, the Greek term *κανών* was translated as *правило* (*rule*) and still retains this form and connotations in most Slavic languages. From Slavonic, the term *pravila* was introduced in Romanian language, meaning a decree or decision of either a secular or ecclesiastical nature, and since the 16th century it has become established as designation for a collection of canons and/or laws¹³.

2. THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE SEMANTIC CONNOTATIONS ATTACHED TO THE TERM „CANON” IN THE CHURCH

Along the times, the term *canon* (*κανών*) has undergone a significant semantic evolution in the ecclesiastical language, coming to define both the *pastoral rule* sanctioned by a council and received by the entire church, and the *epithemia* (the penance) imposed by a priest to a penitent during

⁷ Ioan Ică jr., *Canonul Ortodoxiei. Canonul apostolic al primelor secole*, Sibiu, 2008, p. 118.

⁸ Cf. Petre Coman, „Problema obiceiului de drept în sfintele canoane”, in *Studii Teologice* 21 (1969), no. 5-6, pp. 399-409; Samir Gholam, „Obiceiul ca izvor în dreptul romano-bizantin și în tradiția patristico-canonica a Bisericii Ortodoxe”, in *Studii Teologice* 27 (1975), no. 5-6, pp. 452-463.

⁹ Evangelos Roussos, [Ευάγγελος Ρουσσός], *Λεξιλογιον εκκλησιαστικου δικαιου τρηλωσσον. Βυζαντινον δικαιον*, Athens, 1948, p. 326; Evangelos Roussos, [Ευάγγελος Ρουσσός], *Λεξιλογιον εκκλησιαστικου δικαιου τρηλωσσον. Λατινικον δικαιον*, Athens, 1949, p. 72.

¹⁰ For an analysis of the term *κανών* and its connotations in the synodal decisions of 4th-9th centuries, see: David Wagshal, *Law and the legality in the Greek East: The Byzantine Canonical Tradition*, 381-883, Oxford, 2015, pp. 139-141. See also: Jonathan Armstrong, „From the *κανών της ἀληθείας* to the *κανών τῶν γραφῶν*: the rule of faith and the New Testament canon”, in Romie Rombs – Alexander Hwang (ed.), *Tradition and the Rule of Faith in the Early Church: Essays in Honor of Joseph T. Lienhard S.J.*, Washington, 2010, pp. 30-47.

¹¹ Nicolae Dură, „Dreptul și religia. Normele juridice și normele religio-morale”, in *Analele Universității „Ovidius” 1* (2003), p. 20.

¹² Bruno Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis. Die Gattung der alichristlichen Kirchenordnungen*, Berlin – New York, 1992, p. 87.

¹³ Cf. Ștefan G. Berechet, *Legătura dintre Dreptul bizantin și românesc*, vol. I, part I, Vaslui, 1937, pp. 90-140.

the Holy Mystery of Confession, as well as the *list* of Bible books acknowledged as authentic. Therefore, it is necessary to elaborate on the semantic history and evolution of the term *canon* in the ecclesiastical language.

a. A brief history of the term „canon” in Church language

Since its very beginnings, the Christian Church – fully aware of its divine-human constitution – felt it necessary to establish specific rules and regulations, in order to systematize its own organization and operation. The New Testament texts denote the importance attached to the organization and smooth running of ecclesial communities, as well as the brotherly relationships among them. Subsequently, this concern developed gradually and unsystematically, in response to the pastoral needs that arose, and resulting in certain rules aimed at directing the members of the respective community towards union with Lord Jesus Christ.

During the first three centuries, Church was organized and operated in direct dependence on the attitude of the imperial authority towards the newly-emerged Christian communities. As long as the Roman authority did not impose any restrictions against Christians, the Church was able to organize itself and operate according to its own pastoral rules and in compliance with the Roman legislation¹⁴. Once the persecutions started, the Church had to conceal its corporate existence and could no longer work on its institutional organization. During these times of persecution from the Roman authority, the Church could not assume any stance as a public institution, since Christianity had been declared *religio illicita* across the Empire, and Christian communities were, consequently, considered to be *collegia illicita*¹⁵.

Pastoral rules addressing the organization and operation of the Church are mentioned, though not presented in a systematic manner, both in New Testament writings (mainly chapter XV in the *Acts of the Apostles*¹⁶), and in the pseudo-apostolic literature: the *Didache (Teaching) of the Twelve Apostles*, the *Canons of Saint Hippolytus*, *Epitome Constitutionum Apostolorum*, the *Ordinances of the Holy Apostles Through Clement*, *Canones Apostolorum Ecclesiastici*, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, or the *Didascalia Apostolorum*¹⁷. Although these latter writings – whose character was liturgical par excellence and had only a tangential disciplinary and organizational relevance – enjoyed great popularity during the first Christian centuries, they were not universally accepted as rules officially acknowledged by the Church, and in the 7th century they were rejected by a decree of the Trullan Council (canon 2).

In early 4th century, through the *Edict of Serdica* issued in 311 AD, emperor Galerius (305-311) ended the persecutions against Christians and returned to them the goods confiscated during the persecution of Diocletian (284-305)¹⁸. Through the *Edict of Milan (Edictum Mediolanense)*, proclaimed by emperor Constantine the Great (306-337) in 313 AD¹⁹, the Church was granted the

¹⁴ Cf. Melchiorre Roberti, „Le associazioni funerarie cristiane e la proprietà ecclesiastica nei primi tre secoli”, in *Studi dedicati alla memoria di Pier Paolo Zanzucchi*, Milan, 1927, pp. 89-113.

¹⁵ Cf. Giuseppe Bovini, *La proprietà ecclesiastica e la condizione giuridica della Chiesa in età precostantiniana*, Milan, 1949.

¹⁶ Cf. Constantin Preda, *Credința și viața Bisericii primare. O analiză a Faptelor Apostolilor*, Bucharest, 2002; Ioan Mircea, „Organizarea Bisericii și viața primilor creștini după Faptele Apostolilor”, in *Studii Teologice* 7 (1955), no. 1-2, pp. 64-92.

¹⁷ Cf. Brian Edwin Ferme, *Introduction to the History of the Sources of Canon Law. The Ancient Law up to the Decretum of Gratian*, Montreal, 2007, pp. 29-50; Peter Erdö, *Storia delle fonti del diritto canonico*, Venice, 2008, pp. 17-29.

¹⁸ Alberto Baraznò (ed.), *Il cristianesimo nelle leggi di Roma imperiale*, Milan, 1996, p. 149.

¹⁹ *The Edict of Mediolanum* (today's Milano, Italy) is an administrative document issued by the Roman emperors Constantine and Licinius in April 313 AD, in the imperial palace of Mediolanum. It guaranteed religious tolerance across the Roman Empire, thus allowing Christians freedom of worship. It also stipulated the restitution of all buildings confiscated from Christians. Juridically, this document is a *rescript*, as it simply confirmed what had been already decreed by the *Edict of Serdica*, issued by emperor Galerius on 30 April 311. The imperial decree is known mainly from the writings of bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, who in his *Ecclesiastical History/Historia Ecclesiastica* (HF. X. 5. 2-14) translates a document published in Latin by emperor Licinius in the provinces of Syria, Palestine and Egypt, after the death of Maximian Daia (July-August 313). In 1678, the French scholar Étienne Baluze (1630-1718) discovered the only extant manuscript of *De mortibus persecutorum* (DPM. XI.VIII. 2-13), written by the Christian apologist Irenaeus Caecilius Firmianus Lugdunensis and thus offered to the general readership a Latin version of the *Edict*, issued by the same Licinius at Nicomedia on 13 June 313. Cf. Anastasio Cipriani, *L'Editto di Milano e il suo valore politico-religioso*, Rome, 1913. See also Nicolae Dură, „Edictul de la Milan (313) și impactul lui asupra relațiilor dintre Stat și Biserică.

legal right to organize itself and to operate within the Roman Empire, being acknowledged as *religio licita*. Through the *Edict of Thessalonica* promulgated on 28th of February, 380 by emperor Theodosius the Great (379-395), Christianity was declared the only *religio licita* (the official religion) of the Roman Empire, receiving full support from the political authority²⁰. Freedom, peace, the favorable legislative framework, as well as the public support, allowed the Church to develop very much, especially in the direction of public worship and the organization of its administrative bodies²¹.

During the 4th-5th centuries, synods and councils were increasingly called for, in order to respond to concrete situations in the life of Christian communities; they issued numerous doctrinal and disciplinary decrees in this sense²². The disciplinary decisions were regarded by the Fathers convened in councils, as *pastoral rules* intended to regulate certain aspects in the organization and operation of the Church, with no claim to any juridical authority. In time, however, these *pastoral rules* came to be identified as *canons* (κανόνας – *canones*) and in the Byzantine Empire, they even gained the authority of laws (*lex – νομος*) and were promulgated as such, alongside imperial laws aimed to regulate aspects in the life of the Church. A telling example is the decree issued in 545 AD by emperor Justinian (527-565) in his *Novela 131*:

Sancimus igitur vicem legum obtinere sanctas ecclesiasticas regulas, quae a sanctis quattuor conciliis expositae sunt aut firmatae, hoc est in Nicaena trecentorum decem et octo et in Constantinopolitana sanctorum centum quinquaginta patrum et in Epheso Prima, in quo Nestorius est damnatus, et in Calcedone, in quo Eutychis cum Nestorio anathematizatus est. Praedictarum enim quattuor synodorum dogmata sicut sanctas scripturas accipimus et regulas sicut leges servamus²³.

Thus in the 6th century, the canons issued by the first four Ecumenical Councils were acknowledged as *laws* in the Byzantine Empire, and were applied and observed as such. This artificial equivalence created by the imperial authority, between Church *canons* and imperial *laws* facilitated a significant influence of the Roman law on canon theology, and over time engendered confusions both concerning the Church-Empire relationship, and the organization and operation of the Church²⁴.

Câteva consideratii istorice iuridice si ecleziologice”, in *Mitronolia Olteniei* 64 (2012), no. 5-8, pp. 28-43; Giorgio Barone Adesi, „Libertà religiosa e convivenza delle religioni: nell’editto di Milano e negli indirizzi legislativi costantiniani”, in Ilaria Zuanazzi (ed.), *Da Costantino à oggi. La libera convivenza delle religioni. Atti del Seminario interdisciplinare nel 1700° anniversario dell’Editto di Milano organizzato dai Dottorati di ricerca in “Diritti e Istituzioni” e in “Diritto, Persona e Mercato” del Dipartimento di Giurisprudenza dell’Università degli Studi di Torino (Torino, 24 ottobre 2013)*, Naples, 2015, pp. 11-40.

²⁰ Cf. Jean Gaudemet, „L’Edit de Thèssalonique: police locale ou déclaration de principe ?”, in Henri W. Pleket – Arthur M. F. Verhoogt (ed.), *Aspects of the Fourth Century A.D. Proceedings of the Symposium „Power and Possession. State, Society and Church in the Fourth Century A.D.”, Leiden, 3-5 June 1993*, Leiden, 1997, pp. 43-51; Dragoș Boicu, „Teodosie cel Mare și Edictul de la Tesalonica (28 februarie 380). Circumstanțe, comentariu, receptare”, in *Revista Teologică* 94 (2012), no. 2, pp. 186-207. For details on this change in the juridical status of the Church in the Roman Empire, see Antonio Cardinale – Alessandro Verdelli, *Il cristianesimo da culto proibito a religione dell’impero romano. La nascita del potere della Chiesa nel IV secolo d. C.*, Rome, 2010; Gian Luigi Falchi, „Legislazione e politica ecclesiastica nell’Impero romano dal 380 d.C. al Codice Teodosiano”, in *Atti della Accademia Pontaniana* VI (1986), pp. 179-212.

²¹ The body of literature on State-Church relationship during the 4th century is extensive, thus we indicate here only a few representative writings addressing the Roman imperial legislative policy concerning the Church in the 4th century: Antonella Di Mauro Todini, *Aspetti della legislazione religiosa del IV secolo*, Rome, 1990; Jean Gaudemet, „Politique ecclésiastique et législation religieuse après l’Edit de Théodose I de 380”, in *Atti dell’Accademia Romanistica Costantiniana* 7 (1986), pp. 1-22.

²² Cf. Nikos Maghioros, „Lineamenti della normativa conciliare canonica dal 313 al 425”, in *Il diritto romano canonico quale diritto proprio delle comunità cristiane dell’Oriente mediterraneo. IX Colloquio internazionale romanistico canonistico*, Città del Vaticano, 1994, pp. 365-453.

²³ Justinian, *Novella 131.1*. See also: Giorgio Barone Adesi, „Legittimazione e limiti di vigenza dell’ordinamento canonico nell’impero romano”, in Gian Luigi Falchi – Antonio Iaccarino (ed.), *Legittimazione e limiti degli ordinamenti giuridici. XIV Colloquio Giuridico Internazionale*, Città del Vaticano, 2012, pp. 319-336.

²⁴ On the influences mutually exerted between Roman law and Christianity, see: Raymond Théodore Troplong, *De l’influence du Christianisme sur le droit civil des romains*, Paris, 1843; Périclès-Pierre Joannou, *La législation impériale et la christianisation de l’Empire romain (311-476)*, Rome, 1972; Amílcar Alivizatos, „Les rapports de la législation ecclésiastique de Justinien avec les canons de l’Eglise”, in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Diritto Romano (Bologna e Roma XVII-XXVII aprile MCMXXXIII)*, vol. II, Pavia, 1935, pp. 79-87; Jean Gaudemet, „Elementi giuridici romani nella formazione del diritto ecclesiastico dei primi secoli”, in *Mondo classico e cristianesimo. Atti del convegno su Mondo greco-romano e cristianesimo, Roma 13-14 maggio 1980*,

To be better preserved and more easily applied, the canons issued or sanctioned by the Ecumenical councils were put together in *collections of canons* or *canon collections*, which classified them mainly according to their chronological order. This did not only facilitate the preservation and dissemination of canons, but also expressed their pastoral importance, transcending the confines of both time and space. Later, from the 6th century onwards, the *canon collections* began to include alongside canons, the *imperial laws* concerning the Church, thus creating a new type of collections: the *nomocanons*, with a definitive impact on the manner of collecting and passing down the holy canons in the Church²⁵.

In the aftermath of the last Ecumenical Council of 787 AD, a collection was compiled, sanctioned and acknowledged, including all the canons validated by the Church, collectively identified by the title „*the Holy Canons*”. Subsequently, these *Holy Canons* were added other ones, which despite not being sanctioned by any *Ecumenical Council* as official decrees, were however accepted and received unanimously by all autocephalous Churches²⁶, by *consensus Ecclesiae dispersae*. Concerning this manner of adopting decisions within the Orthodox Church, when an ecumenical council does not have the possibility to convene, professor Valerian Șesan (1878-1940) explained that,

in relation to an ecumenical council, *consensus Ecclesiae* is a corollary completing the decision of an ecumenical council, or replacing it. If it is about an addition intended to complete it, then *consensus Ecclesiae* has the same authority as the *ecumenical council*. *Consensus Ecclesiae* is a body exerting the central authority in the Church. The difference lies in the following: through an *ecumenical council*, the decisions are made by the gathering of bishops; through *consensus Ecclesiae*, the bishops (episcopacy) issue the decisions, however not in a gathering, but as they are dispersed. [...] In practice, the decisions of this body exerting church power are reached as follows: the bishops of one Church address a circular letter to the *protos* among the bishops of each of the other Churches, presenting their opinion on a particular matter. If the rest of the bishops agree on the respective issue, then this common stance becomes mandatory for the entire Church²⁷.

Therefore, during its two millennia of historical existence, the Church has always made universally valid decisions in a synodal manner, either through the councils later acknowledged as ecumenical, thus universally authoritative (4th-8th centuries), or through the consensus of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches, that is, the *consensus Ecclesiae dispersae* (9th-20th centuries). In this latter instantiation of the synodal manner of reaching decisions in the Church (*consensus Ecclesiae dispersae*), employed since the 9th century to the present, there are two stages in the synodal decision-making process: first, at the level of one Orthodox Church, decisions are made by the synod of bishops; then, each autocephalous Orthodox Church expresses her „*vote*” at pan-Orthodox level (that of the entire Orthodox Church) by means of synodal letters (encyclicals). Lack of *consensus* over a decision entails its annulment. In the second Christian millennium, by this synodal manner of deciding through the consensus of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches, decisions have been passed on many aspects of the utmost importance for the Church life, such as

Rome, 1982, pp. 171-182; Nikos Maghioros, *La recezione della normativa conciliare nel diritto imperiale in materia di fede conservato nel Cth. XVI*, Rome, 1998.

²⁵ For a historical presentation of the manuscript collections of canons during the first Christian millennium and the subsequent literature, see: Lotte Kéry, *Canonical Collections of the Early Middle Ages (ca. 400-1140) . A Bibliographical Guide to the Manuscripts and Literature*, Washington, 1999.

²⁶ Traditionally, the phrase „*Church autocephaly*” indicates in the Orthodox ecclesial language the canonic status of a local Church, which enjoys *maximum autonomy* and has the right to elect its own *head* (πρῶτος – *primus*) by the vote of its own Synod of bishops. Cf. Georgică Grigoriță, „Autocefalia în Biserica Ortodoxă. Studiu canonic”, in *Autocefalia: libertate și demnitate*, Bucharest, 2010, pp. 65-82.

²⁷ Valerian Șesan, *Curs de Drept Bisericesc Universal (cu considerarea Dreptului bisericesc particular român)*, Cernăuți, 1936-1937, pp. 198, 199-200.

acknowledging or not acknowledging the autocephaly of particular local Churches, and including new autocephalous Churches in the Diptychs.

Returning to the compilation of the single, common *corpus canonum* of the Church, we mention that in the 10th century, the canons included in the collection known as the *Nomocanon in 14 titles* or the *Nomocanon of Photius* were acknowledged as having authority over the entire Church, by a decision of an *Endemic Synod* convened at Constantinople in 920 AD; the decision was subsequently accepted by consensus throughout the entire Church, and thus became universally valid. After the schism of 1054, these *Holy Canons* constituted a single, common *corpus canonum* of the Orthodox Church and were published, translated and commented upon in various languages²⁸. In the canon collections of the Orthodox Church of the second Christian millennium, the authors added a number of canons issued by synods convened after the 8th century, or by Holy Fathers (as in the case of the so-called „additional canons”, intended to complete the former ones), even though these latter ones were not universally implemented across the entire Church. Thus, each collection of church canons, dating from the second Christian millennium, has its own particular contents.

b. The importance and applicability of the holy canons in the Church

Throughout the times, especially since the 19th century, Orthodox theologians and canonists have expressed their views on the value, role and importance of the *holy canons* in the Orthodox Church. Such opinions ranked from granting canons a fundamental position the life of the Church, to regarding them as utterly obsolete. In the 20th century, quite frequently the Orthodox theologians tended to borrow or imitate Western practices or views on the role, importance and practical manner of implementing the *holy canons* in everyday ecclesial life, mainly by recommending to imitate the undertaking of the Roman-Catholic Church, which in 1917 published its first *Code of Canon Law* (*Codex Iuris Canonici*)²⁹.

More precisely, after 1917, under the influence of the process of canon codification initiated by the Roman-Catholic Church, some Orthodox theologians asserted that the *holy canons* were outdated and obsolete, therefore the Orthodoxy needed in their opinion to engage in a process of canon codification, with a view to adopting a single, unified „*code of canon law*” to take effect and be observed throughout the entire Orthodox Church. Their argument was usually the alleged impossibility of a positive development of Orthodox canon law, caused by the immutability of the *holy canons*. The matter of the importance of the *holy canons* for the Church, as well as the proposal to codify them, were addressed by the first international congress of Orthodox theology held in Athens in 1936³⁰, when the Romanian professor Valerian Șesan (1878-1940) delivered a lecture presenting the importance of the *holy canons* for the Church and the lack of real grounds for a possible codification according to the Catholic model³¹.

During the second half of the 20th century, the tenet of the codification of *holy canons* (put forth by some Greek theologians), was adhered to even by the current Ecumenical Patriarch – Bartholomew Archontonis (*Βαρθολομαίος Αρχοντόννης*), who in his PhD thesis entitled „*The*

²⁸ Cf. † Nicodim Mișaș, *Drept bisericesc oriental*, Bucharest, 1915, pp. 65-92; Ioan N. Floca, *Drept canonic ortodox. Legislație și administrație bisericească*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1990, pp. 75-76; Vlasios Phidas, *Droit canon. Une perspective orthodoxe*, Chambésy, 1998, pp. 23-24; Spyros Troianos, „Byzantine Canon Law to 1100”, in Wilfried Hartmann – Kenneth Pennington (ed.), *The History of Byzantine and Eastern Canon Law to 1500*, Washington, 2012, pp. 138-141. See also: John Erickson, „The Orthodox Canonical Tradition”, in *Saint Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 27 (1983), pp. 155-167.

²⁹ In the Roman-Catholic Church, the first *Code of Canon Law* (*Codex Iuris Canonici*) was promulgated by Pope Benedict XIV on 27 May 1917, by the apostolic constitution „*Providentissima Mater Ecclesiae*”.

³⁰ For the entire debate, see: Constantin Dron, *Valoarea actuală a canoanelor* Bucharest, 1928 (republished in 2016 at Iași by Emilian Iustinian Roman); Liviu Stan, „Codificarea canoanelor”, in *Studii Teologice* 12 (1960), no. 7-8, pp. 627-648; „Țaria nezdruncinată a sfințelor canoane”, in *Ortodoxia* 22 (1970), pp. 300-304; Nicolas Afanassieff, „The Canons of the Church: Changeable or Unchangeable?”, in *Saint Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 11 (1967), pp. 54-58; Panagiotis Boumis, „Το κύρος και η ισχύς των ιερών κανονών”, in *Θεολογία* 46 (1975), pp. 94-114; Ilie Moldovan, „Sfintele canoane și raportul lor cu revelația divină”, in *Ortodoxia* 28 (1976), no. 2, pp. 365-373 [republished in *Mitropolia Banatului* 28 (1977), no. 1-3, pp. 101-114].

³¹ Valerian Șesan, „Revizuirea canoanelor și a altor norme bisericești, precum și codificarea lor”, in *Candela* 47 (1936), pp. 145-159.

Codification of the Holy Canons and the Canonical Constitutions in the Orthodox Church” (defended in 1968 at the *Pontifical Oriental Institute* in Rome, under the supervision of professor Ivan Žužek), proposed that this envisaged „code of canons” should be written in Greek³² (sic!). Also, the PhD supervisor of the Greek hierarch – the Slovenian Jesuit Ivan Žužek (1924-2004), also published in the year 1969 a study advocating for the idea of a codification of the Holy Canons in the Orthodox Church³³. The same proposal was reiterated by Bartholomew Archontinis during the first meeting of the *Society for the Law of the Eastern Churches*, which took place in 1971 at Vienna³⁴.

In 2015, the Greek archimandrite Grigorios Papatomas attempted to put into practice this idea of codifying the *holy canons*, by publishing a bilingual (Greek-French) volume, in which he included in a peculiar manner the texts of all writings he deemed to be canons, marking them with consecutive numbers. Thus the collection compiled by archimandrite Papatomas includes 771 „canons”, the first one being a New Testament excerpt, namely the *Acts of the Apostles* 15, 23-29 (sic!), and the last one – canon 3 issued by the Council of Constantinople of 879/880 AD³⁵. Beside the fact that by issuing this volume, the Greek professor appears to assume the position of a pan-Orthodox authority, higher than the Councils, by deciding on an arbitrarily compiled corpus of canons, we must note the fact that currently there is no critical edition of the text of the holy canons, and no pan-Orthodox consensus over a collection of canons in effect throughout the entire Orthodox Church.

The Father professor Liviu Stan (1910-1973) was the first Orthodox canonist to provide a systematic, pertinent response to this initiative pursuing the codification of canons: in 1954 he published a study³⁶ where he pointed out that according to the Orthodox canon doctrine, the *holy canons* are neither outdated, nor obsolete, but on the contrary they contain all the fundamental principles underlying the organization and operation of the Church. Therefore, the *holy canons* are not to be interpreted or applied word for word, but rather by identifying the fundamental principles they contain and by putting these principles into practice in Church life.

Subsequently, during the official ceremony awarding him the title of *Doctor Honoris Causa* from the part of *Aristotle University* of Thessaloniki (Greece) on 7 May, 1968 the Romanian canonist chose to deliver a lecture entitled „*On the fundamental canonical principles of the Orthodoxy*”³⁷. This was intended

not as a justification against the accusers, but mainly aiming to present as clearly as possible, from the canonical point of view, the life of the Orthodox Church, to the vocal opponents who attack these principles, and especially attack our perseverance in preserving and safeguarding the fundamental elements of its essence³⁸.

In his paper, Father professor Liviu Stan stated that, generally, the fundamental canonical principles of Orthodoxy are contained, on the one hand, in the universal constitutional charter of the Church, namely the collection of the Holy Canons, and

³² † Bartholomew Archontinis, *Περί την κωδικοποίησιν των ιερων κανόνων και των κανονικων Διατάξεων εν τη 'Ορθοδόξω 'Εκκλησία*, Salonic, 1970.

³³ Ivan Žužek, „A Code for the Orthodox Churches”, in *Concilium* 8 (1969), pp. 74-79.

³⁴ † Bartholomew Archontinis, „A Common Code for Orthodox Churches”, in *Kanon* 1 (1973), pp. 45-53.

³⁵ Grigorios Papatomas, *Τὸ Corpus Canonum τῆς Ἐκκλησίας (1^{ος} - 9^{ος} αἰώνος). Τὸ κείμενο τῶν Ἐκκλησιακῶν Ἱερῶν Κανόνων. Le Corpus canonum de l'Église (1^{er} - 9^e siècles). Le texte des Saints Canons ecclésiiaux*, Katerini, 2015.

³⁶ Liviu Stan, „Legislația bisericească și valoarea ei canonică”, in *Mitropolia Olteniei* 6 (1954), no. 11-12, pp. 598-617.

³⁷ Originally, this lecture entitled „Περί των θεμελιωδων κανονικων αρχων της Ορθοδοξίας” was published in the journal *Θεολογία* vol. 39 (1968), no. 1-2 (January-February), pp. 5-18. At the request of His Beatitude Daniel, the Patriarch of Romania, the paper was translated into Romanian language and published with the title „*Despre principiile canonice fundamentale ale Ortodoxiei*” in the volume *Autocefalia. Libertate și demnitate*, Bucharest, 2010, pp. 18-25. The translation was also published in *Revista Teologică* 20 (2010), no. 3, pp. 175-185. Most likely, the idea of Father professor Liviu Stan of providing a systematic presentation of the principles contained in the text of the holy canons, had been inspired among others by the book authored by Panagiotis Bratsiotis (1889-1980) entitled „*Die Grundprinzipien und Hauptmerkmale der Orthodoxen Kirche*”, published in 1938 (Panagiotis Bratsiotis, *Die Grundprinzipien und Hauptmerkmale der Orthodoxen Kirche*, Athens, 1938) and by the book authored by Ilya Stepanovich Berdnikov (1839-1915) entitled „*The basic principles of the Ecclesiastical Law of the Orthodox Church*” (Илья Степанович Бердников, *Основные начала церковного права Православной Церкви*, Kazan, 1902) published in 1902.

³⁸ Liviu Stan, „Despre principiile canonice fundamentale ale Ortodoxiei”, p. 18.

on the other hand in the long-standing, constant consuetudinary practice of Church life - established as customs underlying the canon law. Some of these principles have dogmatic contents or grounds, not only a juridical or canonical basis. Thus, according to their contents we can divide them into two categories. The first category includes the fundamental canonical principles with dogmatic contents or grounds: 1. *the ecclesiological-institutional principle*, 2. *the organic (constitutional-ecclesiastic) principle*, 3. *the principle of ecumenicity*, 4. *the hierarchical principle*, 5. *the synodal principle*, 6. *the principle of economy*, 7. *the principle of external autonomy*, 8. *the principle of loyalty to the State*. The second category includes the following fundamental canonical principles having a juridical basis: 1. *the principle of autocephaly*, 2. *the principle of internal autonomy*, 3. *the nomocanonic principle*, 4. *the territorial principle*³⁹.

The Romanian canonist adds that further principles may be added, and they can also be systematized differently. Having enumerated these principles, Father professor Liviu Stan points out that, an overall assessment of the fundamental canonical principles of Orthodoxy sees them as the firm, unbreakable standards of the Church, which contribute within the institution and activity of the Church, to securing the necessary balance – which could hardly be struck by any other human institution⁴⁰.

For a concrete illustration of the manner in which the fundamental canonical principles are applied in the life of an autocephalous Church, the canonist born in Hunedoara provided a thorough, comprehensive analysis of the way in which they were reflected in the 1948 *Statutes for the Organization and Operation of the Romanian Orthodox Church* as well as its *Regulations*⁴¹.

Moreover, in the year 1969, Father professor Liviu Stan published a study⁴² making a stand against the envisaged codification of the *holy canons*, which he described as completely alien to the Tradition of the Church. The Romanian canonist also made it clear in his writings that the *holy canons* are operative throughout the entire Orthodox Church and that they can be amended, modified or replaced only by an Ecumenical Council – the supreme authority of the Orthodoxy⁴³.

Subsequently, other Orthodox theologians and canonists elaborated on this ecclesiological perspective of Father professor Liviu Stan, addressing the role and importance of the *holy canons* at present, as well as their current practical applications in the organization and operation of the Orthodox Church⁴⁴; they included in the canon theology textbooks, and in their studies, the concept of *canonical principles fundamental for the organization and operation of the Orthodox Church*⁴⁵. Professor Iorgu Ivan (1899-2001) explained that:

These principles of organization and management are called *fundamental*, because they were established from the very beginnings, in light of the teachings of our Saviour Jesus Christ, like firm pillars supporting the organization of the Church, together with the dogmas and the moral

³⁹ Liviu Stan „Despre principiile canonice fundamentale ale Ortodoxiei”, p. 18.

⁴⁰ Liviu Stan, „Despre principiile canonice fundamentale ale Ortodoxiei”, p. 25.

⁴¹ Liviu Stan, „Legislația Bisericii Ortodoxe Române în timpul arhipăstoririi Preafericitului Părinte Patriarh Justinian. Principiile canonice de bază ale Ortodoxiei oglindite în legislația Bisericii Ortodoxe Române”, in *Ortodoxia* 20 (1968), no. 2, pp. 267-296.

⁴² Liviu Stan, „Codificarea canoanelor”, pp. 627-648.

⁴³ Cf. Liviu Stan, „Tăria nezdrucinată a sfințelor canoane”, pp. 300-304.

⁴⁴ Irimie Marga, „Actualitatea sfințelor canoane”, in *Revista Teologică* 12 (2002), no. 3, pp. 41-46.

⁴⁵ Iorgu Ivan, „Principii de organizație și disciplină bisericească în canoanele Sinodului al IV-lea ecumenic”, in *Telegraful Român* 100 (1952), no. 7-8, pp. 2-4; Ion-Gheorghe Rușescu, „Principii și dispoziții de organizare și disciplină în canoanele Sinodului VI ecumenic”, in *Studii Teologice* 35 (1983), no. 1-2, pp. 64-78; Liviu-Claudiu Moisiu, „Principii de organizare și disciplină bisericească în canoanele Sinodului III ecumenic”, in *Studii Teologice* 36 (1984), no. 9-10, pp. 656-666; Constantin Rus, „Principii de organizare și disciplină bisericească în canoanele Sinodului VII ecumenic de la Niceea din anul 787”, in *Mitropolia Banatului* 37 (1987), no. 2, pp. 40-57; Nicolae Dură, „Principiile canonice, fundamentale, de organizare și funcționare a Bisericii Ortodoxe și reflectarea lor în legislația Bisericii Ortodoxe Române”, in *Mărturie Ortodoxă* 6 (1987), pp. 127-144 [republished in *Revista de Teologie Sfântul Apostol Andrei* 5 (2001), pp. 129-140]; Ioan N. Floca, *Drept canonic ortodox*, vol. I, pp. 191-205; Constantin Rus (ed.), *The place of Canonical Principles in the Organization and Working of Autocephalous Orthodox Churches. The Canon Law International Symposium (Arad, 10-12 September 2008)*, Arad, 2008; Iulian Mihai L. Constantinescu, „Principiile canonice fundamentale și aplicarea formei canonice în organizarea și conducerea Bisericii”, in *Mitropolia Olteniei* 67 (2015), no. 1-4, pp. 178-196.

norms; they are also called *canonical* because, after uninterrupted usage they became established by means of the norms – termed canons – which the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils decreed or confirmed, as mandatory rules to be observed by the entire Church.⁴⁶

However, the lack of pan-Orthodox consensus over the validity of the *holy canons* and the concrete manner of applying them in the ecclesial life, has created tensions within the Orthodox Church, especially over the matters of *primacy* and *autocephaly*, which generated theological disputes or *de facto* situations that did not comply with the canon stipulations. Some of these issues had an impact on the official theological dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman-Catholic Churches, thus creating the image of Orthodoxy lacking unity⁴⁷.

Finally, we note that the tensions recently created within the Orthodox Church by the different interpretation of a number of canons, have prompted certain authors to question the efficiency and necessity of applying the *holy canons* in Church life. This fact, as well as the lack of an unanimously acknowledged text of the *holy canons*, based on a critical edition, has allowed some authors to put forth various innovative proposals aimed at the codification, or even the alteration of the *holy canons*. All these facts, therefore, are a substantial motivation for drafting a critical edition of the text of the *holy canons*, to provide the basis for a unitary collection of canons valid for the entire Orthodox Church.

c. *The Canon – as a pastoral rule sanctioned by a Council and received by the entire Church*

With regard to the point in time when the term *κανών* (designating a Council's decision concerning Church discipline or a pastoral rule) joined the ecclesiastic idiom, scholars currently hold several opinions.

Some historians investigating the sources of canon theology assert that the oldest mention in this sense, can be found in canon 14 of the Synod of Ancyra (314 AD). Other scholars maintain that the term *κανών* in its current meaning was first employed at the Ecumenical Council of Nicea (325 AD), whose canons mention other previous canons, namely: canon 1 mentions apostolic canon 21, as argument for admitting eunuchs into the clergy; canon 2 mentions the observance of apostolic canon 80 in the ordination of priests; canon 5 reiterates the stipulations of apostolic canons 12, 13, 32 and 37 on receiving the excommunicated persons into the Church, and the obligation for bishops' synods to convene at least twice a year; canons 9 and 10 maintain the stipulations of apostolic canons 25, 61 and 62 regarding the impediments to ordination; canons 15 and 16 mention apostolic canons 14 and 15 concerning the rule forbidding clergymen to be transferred; canon 17 reiterates the stipulations of apostolic canon 44 forbidding clergy members to engage in usury; canon 18 explains the stipulations of apostolic canon 39 governing the relationships among the members of the divinely-instituted hierarchy⁴⁸.

Other authors assert that in the text of the Synod of Ancyra (314 AD), as well as the decrees issued by the First Ecumenical Council (325 AD), the term *κανών* did not designate a rule already prescribed by Church authority, but the *rule of the faith* translated in fundamental principles of Christian life; therefore, the first official use of the term *κανών*, to indicate a Council's decision

⁴⁶ Iorgu Ivan, „Importanța principiilor fundamentale canonice de organizație și administrație, pentru unitatea Bisericii”, in *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei* 45 (1969), p. 155.

⁴⁷ See Georgică Grigoriță, „Întâietate și sinodalitate în dialogul teologic oficial dintre Biserica Ortodoxă și Biserica Romano-Catolică. Studiu canonic”, in *Ortodoxia* 7 (2015), no. 1, pp. 104-177; „Streitfragen im Dialog zwischen der Orthodoxen Kirche und der Römisch-Katholischen Kirche”, in Dan Dungăciu (ed.), *Sieben Hauptthemen für Rumänien im Jahr 2014*, Bucharest, 2015, pp. 709-725.

⁴⁸ Cf. Heinz Ohme, *Kanon ekklesiastikos*, pp. 24-114; Peter Erdö, „Quid significat „Lex” in iure canonico antiquitatis (saecula III-IV)”, in *Periodica* 76 (1987), pp. 381-412; Heinz Ohme, „Der Kanon-Begriff der Synode von Nizäa (325)”, in *Studia Patristica* 29 (1997), pp. 310-315; Constantin Rus, „Canoanele Bisericii și funcția lor ecleziologică”, in *Altarul Banatului* 11 (2000), no. 7-9, pp. 37-46.

regarding Church discipline, can be found as late as the epistle preceding the 25 canons of the Synod of Antioch, 341 AD⁴⁹.

We conclude that, although the experts do not agree on the exact date when the term *κανών* was officially introduced in the ecclesiastical idiom, it is certain that already in the first half of the 4th century, the term *κανών* officially joined Church terminology to indicate the conciliar decrees received by the Church in matters of ecclesial discipline. Ever since, in the ecclesiastical language, the term *canon* defines (as its main meaning) a pastoral rule issued by a Church authority, a rule subsequently approved by a council and consensually accepted by the entire Church.

d. The canon – as *epithemia* (penance) assigned by the confessor priest

However, some 4th-century Church Fathers also employed the term *κανών* to identify other activities in the life of the Church. For instance, Saint Basil the Great (330-379), in his epistles (containing the 96 canons ascribed to him) used the term *κανών* to designate the duration of the public penance which a Christian had to undertake after having confessed his/her sins in the Mystery of Confession⁵⁰. The current Orthodox theological language, however, names the time of penance and amendment that follows the confession of one's sins, by the term *epithemia* (*επιτίμια*)⁵¹.

We also note that the Christian Church has set two categories of measures aiming to bring her erring members on the right path: *epithemia* (acts of penance) and *punitive measures*. The *epithemia* have an exclusively private character and are assigned to the faithful by the confessor priest, under the Holy Mystery of Confession, while the *punitive measures* have a public-communional character, and are applied by the canonical authorities of the Church, following an enquiry.

In conclusion, since the *epithemia* are not punishments or penalties, nor acts of „*satisfaction*” rendered for the sins one has committed, but they aim to heal spiritually, to the greatest possible extent, the persons having strayed and to bring them to heartfelt repentance in order to enable them to regain communion with Christ, obviously the use of the term *canon* in the sense of *epithemia* is mainly due to the fact that theologically speaking, the *epithemia* have a similar meaning as *canons*, the difference lying only in the authority issuing them.

e. The canon – as a list of Bible books

In addition, we mention that from the 4th century onwards, the list of Bible books acknowledged as the true Scriptures has been identified by the term *κανών*, specialized language adopting the phrase „*biblical canon*”. Thus since the early Christian age, those books which the Church accepted as inspired by the Holy Spirit and as sources of the divine Revelation, that is, acknowledged by the Church authorities as part of the Holy Scripture, were deemed to be *canonical* – in other words, included in the official list identified as the „*biblical canon*” since it had been sanctioned through a decree (canon). This list was compiled gradually, and was completed only in late 4th century⁵².

⁴⁹ Cf. Ivan Žužek, „Sacralità e dimensione umana dei *canones*”, in Silvano Agrestini – Danilo Ceccarelli Morolli (ed.), *Ius ecclesiarum vehiculum caritatis. Atti del simposio internazionale per il decennale dell'entrata in vigore del Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium, Città del Vaticano 19-23 novembre 2001*, Città del Vaticano, 2004, pp. 53-116; Ioan Ică jr., *Canonul Ortodoxiei*, pp. 117-120.

⁵⁰ Cf. can. 11 I Ecum., 4, 5 and 6 Ancyra, 2 and 19 Laodicea, 11 Gregory of Neocaesarea, 22 and 75 Basil the Great.

⁵¹ For the atonement of sinners, the Christian Church has set various corrections, generally classified into two categories: *epithemia* and *punitive measures*. *Epithemia* are applied to the faithful under the Holy Mystery of Confession, whereas the *punitive measures* are enforced by the canonical authorities of the Church. Cf. Dimitrios Papathanassiou Ghinis, *Théologie et pastorale des pénitences (epitímia) selon l'Eglise orthodoxe*, Strasbourg, 1981; Alexandru-Armand Munteanu, „Aplicarea epitimilor în lumina sfințelor canoane”, in *Studii Teologice* 13 (1961), pp. 445-465; Grigore Pătrulescu, „Epitimiile canonice și ascetice în general”, in *Studii Teologice* 32 (1980), pp. 535-550.

⁵² Heinz Ohme. *Kanon ekklesiastikos*. nr. 37-44. See also: Frederick Fvvie Bruce. *The Canon of the Scripture*. Downers Grove – Illinois. 1988; Andrés Sáez Gutiérrez. *Canon v autoridad en los dos primeros siglos. Estudio histórico-teológico acerca de la relación entre la Tradición y los escritos apostólicos*, Rome, 2014.

Apostolic Canon 85 recommended to the faithful the biblical books whose reading was beneficial, so that they might avoid the apocryphal books mentioned in the apostolic canon 60. The Synod of Laodicea (343 AD), indicated in its canon 60 biblical books that could be read in the Church, namely 22 Old Testament books and all New Testament books, except for the *Book of Revelation*, which most likely was still unknown at the time in Phrygia. Canon 24 of the Synod of Carthage (419 AD) enumerated the Old Testament books that could be read in the Church. Saint Athanasius the Great (†373) also indicated the canonical books of the Bible, mentioning that „*there are also other books, but they are not part of the canon; however the Holy Fathers recommend them for reading by those recently converted, who wish to learn about the Orthodox worship*” (can. 2)⁵³. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus indicated the list of the Old Testament and the New Testament books accepted during his times (can. 1). In his turn, Saint Amphilochius of Iconium enumerated in his own canon the canonical books of the Holy Scripture, and concluded by stating that „*this very true and correct canon (αψευδέστατος κανὼν) contains the Scriptures inspired by God*” (can. 1)⁵⁴. Thus, the collection of Bible books acknowledged as authentic and authoritative in the Church has been identified as the „*canon*” or „*biblical canon*” since it was defined by the canons⁵⁵. It is a telling fact that the oldest extant manuscript, containing such a list of the New Testament books, has been named the „*Muratorian canon*” after the name of its finder – Ludovico Antonio Muratori (1672-1750)⁵⁶.

In the current Church language, the phrase „*biblical canon*” indicates the list of the Bible books accepted as authentic and authoritative. In the Orthodox Church, the phrase „*biblical canon*” defines the list of Bible books, which the Church has accepted as written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and containing the divine revelation. The Orthodox biblical canon includes 39 canonical books, and 14 *anagignoscomena* (books which are useful and worth reading) of the Old Testament as well as 27 canonical books of the New Testament⁵⁷.

f. The Canon – as a list of the Church Saints

Since its very beginnings, the Church would include in a list of saints those whom it regarded as champions of the faith, and who had passed away. They were venerated, based on the dogmatic doctrine, by being remembered and by addressing them prayers, in their capacity as helpers and intercessors for the mercy of God. Originally, these lists of saints, written by every local community, included only the martyrs, which is why the respective lists were termed *martyrologies* or *acts of the martyrs (acta sanctorum)*.

Later on, after the times of the persecutions, these lists of saints began to include some deceased Christians who had stood out during their lifetimes, by confessing and defending the Orthodox faith. Based on these local lists of saints, gradually a general catalogue of the Church saints was produced; it was known as the „*saints’ canon*”. The process of including a new saint in the catalogue of Church saints, was identified by the verb „*to canonize*” derived from this phrase, and the result of this action has been termed „*canonization*”⁵⁸.

⁵³ For details, see: David Brakke, „Canon Formation and Social Conflict in Fourth-Century Egypt: Athanasius of Alexandria’s Thirty-Ninth Festal Letter”, in *The Harvard Theological Review* 87 (1994), no. 4, pp. 395-419.

⁵⁴ Georgios A. Ralli – Michael Potli [Γεώργιος Α. Ράλλης – Μιχαήλ Ποτλί] (éd.), *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*, vol. IV, p. 367.

⁵⁵ For details, see: Constantin Rus, *Canonul cărților Sfintei Scripturi după canoanele Bisericii Ortodoxe*, Arad, 2001.

⁵⁶ Albert C. Sundberg Jr., „Canon Muratori: A Fourth-Century List”, in *The Harvard Theological Review* 66 (1973), no. 1, pp. 1-41.

⁵⁷ For details, see: Vasile Mihoc, „Canonul și inspirația Sfintei Scripturi văzute din punct de vedere orthodox”, in *Ortodoxia* 41 (1989), no. 3, pp. 20-30 [republished in *Ortodoxia* 48 (1997), no. 1-2, pp. 23-33]; Stelian Tofană, *Introducere în Noul Testament: Test și Canon*, vol. 1, Cluj Napoca, 1997, pp. 53-86.

⁵⁸ For details, see: Liviu Ștan, „Despre canonizarea sfinților în Biserica Ortodoxă”, in *Ortodoxia* 2 (1950), pp. 260-278; „Canonizarea sfinților după învățătura și după rânduielile Ortodoxiei”, in *Mitropolia Olteniei* 20 (1968), pp. 360-368; † Job Getcha, „La canonisation des saints dans l’Eglise orthodoxe”, in *Esprit et vie* 115 (2004), pp. 34-38.

g. The Canon – as Eucharistic prayer

In the liturgical idiom, especially that of Romanic languages, the term *canon* has been associated to the most important part of the Holy Liturgy – the Eucharistic prayer; thus the phrase „*Eucharistic canon*” was coined, to define the liturgical anaphora (ἀναφορά). During the early centuries of the Latin Christianity, the Eucharist itself was deemed to be *Liturgy canon* (*canon missae*)⁵⁹. Later, the Eucharistic prayers within the Holy Liturgy have been designated as the „*Eucharistic canon*”, in the West, and the „*anaphora*”, in the East.

This phrase „*Eucharistic canon*” is not widely used in the specialized Orthodox terminology, which prefers the term „*anaphora*”. In the current Catholic theological idiom, the phrase „*Eucharistic canon*” is employed to designate the central part of the Latin mass, which includes the Eucharistic prayers. The *Latin Eucharistic canon* is generally considered to originate from Egypt’s Alexandrian tradition, but some of its elements also evince influences of the Antiochian tradition. The exact time when the *Latin Eucharistic canon* was created has not been ascertained, although authors assert there are attestations to it dating from the 3rd century. However, it is known that its text was completed during the 13th century, in Rome. This is probably why the *Latin Eucharistic canon* is currently known as the „*Roman canon*”⁶⁰.

h. The Canon – as a poetic hymn of Christian worship

In the Orthodox worship, the term *canon* generally designates a Christian religious poetic hymn, based on the Bible. The greatest number of such *canons* can be found in the service of the Orthros; however such *canons* are also included in the Apodeipnon (Compline), the Sunday Midnight Office, some Holy Mysteries (e.g. the Unction), hierurgies (the funeral service), as well as the celebration of the Holy Liturgy (the third and sixth chants). Within the corpus of Christian hymnography, the *canon* is a composition comprising several hymns (odes, troparia, katabasia), which follow certain rules with regard to their form and their interconnections, so that together they form a whole. Historically, this type of hymn known as *canon*, dates from the 7th century; it was created by Saint Andrew of Crete († 740), the author of the *Great Penitential Canon* chanted during the Lent. Over the following centuries, this hymn was developed and promoted by the Church, becoming a fixed part of the structure of religious services.

Generally, liturgical theology indicates a number of nine *odes* in order for a *canon* to be complete, but it also accepts shorter versions of the canon – with only two or three odes. In its turn, an ode comprises three to nine troparia, which all follow the structure of the first troparion (in terms of the number of syllables, and the stressed ones) – that is, the structure of the first stanza in the ode, which thus provides the model for the following stanzas’ melodic line and number of lines and syllables. Within the corpus of Christian hymnography, the *canon* is the most elaborate form of Christian liturgical poetry: it is a unit containing nine chants (odes) comprising three or more stanzas each. Thus the components of a *canon* obey clear rules that dictate both their form, and their contents, and are united by a common topic. Therefore in the Orthodox worship, a *canon* is a hymn whose structure follows precise rules. Most likely, this structure created by clear rules was the reason why this type of Christian hymn has received the name *canon*. Thus in the Orthodox Church,

... *the canon* is the second and last lofty form of Byzantine poetry; it started to prevail over the kontakion during the 8th century and continues to do so to this day⁶¹.

The term *canon* has also been associated with *prayer*, defining personal praying done according to certain prescriptions, concerning both its form and its contents; thus the phrase „*prayer*

⁵⁹ Cf. Paul Cagin, *L’Eucharistia, canon primitif de la messe ou formulaire essentiel et premier de toutes les liturgies ?*, Paris, 1912.

⁶⁰ For details on the *Roman canon*, see: Félix María Arocena Solano, „En torno al canon romano”, in *Burgense* 36 (1995), no. 2, pp. 393-425; Francisco Sanchez Abellan, „Canon Romano”, in *Helmántica* 25 (1974), pp. 245-319.

⁶¹ Konstantin Nikolakopoulos, *Immografia ortodoxă la început și astăzi. Dicționar de termeni liturgici și immologici*, Bucharest, 2015, p. 86.

canon” (meaning a rule of prayer) was coined. In this case, there are no norms concerning the tone or quality of the recitation.

3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHURCH CANONS AND STATE LAWS

a. *Canons: pastoral rules of the Church*

The Christian Church, ever since the 4th century, has operated a clear distinction between *canons* (κανόνες – *canones*)⁶² and *laws* (νόμοι – *leges*)⁶³, especially visible in the *Novels* (*Novellae*)⁶⁴ issued by emperor Justinian (527-565)⁶⁵ and in the mixed collections (*nomocanons*). Currently this distinction, which Orthodox ecclesiology makes between *canons* (κανόνες – *canones*) and *State laws* (νόμοι – *leges*) concerning the Church, is clearly expressed in the titles of specialized literature published in Greek, entitled «Οι ιεροί κανόνες και εκκλησιαστικοί νομοί»⁶⁶ (*On the holy canons and Church laws*), «Κώδικας Ιερών Κανόνων και Εκκλησιαστικών Νόμων» (*The codex of holy canons and Church laws*)⁶⁷, or «Ιεροί κανόνες και κοσμικοί νόμοι» (*Holy canons and secular laws*)⁶⁸.

We note that, alongside the *holy canons* with authority over the entire Orthodox world, there are also civil laws which do not belong to this *corpus canonum Ecclesiae orthodoxae*, but concern the life and activity of the Church in the states where it is organized and operates. All these laws, most of them of administrative nature, are named „*nomoi*” (νομοί – *leges*)⁶⁹ in the first-millennium collections. The favorable attitude towards the Church of the Roman emperors, beginning with Constantine the Great, entailed a mutual influence between Christianity and the Roman law in effect at the time⁷⁰. Thus, in the Roman Empire, the Christian Church was at first accepted politically (311 AD), then acknowledged legally (313 AD), and later privileged by the political authorities (380 AD). In this context, Church canons acquired increasing importance within the Roman Empire, so much so that in the 6th century, emperor Justinian conferred the existing *canons* the authority of *law* through his new constitutions (*novellae constitutiones* – *νεοραὶ διατάξεις*). This type of legislation

⁶² “κανών – regula – règle”, Evangelos Roussos, [Ευάγγελος Ρουσσός], *Λεξίλογιον εκκλησιαστικου δικαιου τριγλωσσον. Βυζαντινον*, p. 256; “Canon – canon, règle – κανών”, Evangelos Roussos, [Ευάγγελος Ρουσσός], *Λεξίλογιον εκκλησιαστικου δικαιου τριγλωσσον. Λατινικον δικαιον*, p. 37.

⁶³ “Νόμος – lex (constituta, statuta) – loi (constitution, statut)”, Evangelos Roussos, [Ευάγγελος Ρουσσός], *Λεξίλογιον εκκλησιαστικου δικαιου τριγλωσσον. Βυζαντινον*, p. 313; “Lex – loi – νόμος”, Evangelos Roussos, [Ευάγγελος Ρουσσός], *Λεξίλογιον εκκλησιαστικου δικαιου τριγλωσσον. Λατινικον δικαιον*, p. 133. Cf. si Henri Stephano (ed.), *Θησαυρος της Ελληνικης Γλωσσης – Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*, vol. V, Paris, 1846, col. 1554-1555. See also: Constantin A. Spulber, *Le concept byzantin de la loi*, Bucharest, 1938.

⁶⁴ The *Novellae* are laws promulgated by the Byzantine emperors, starting with Justinian. This technical term emerged in the 6th century, and was used to define the 158 new imperial constitutions, promulgated after 534 AD, when was published *Corpus Iuris Iustiniani*, until the death of Justinian (565 AD); they were included in a collection named «*Novellae – Νεοραὶ*». Thus, the *Novels* (*novellae*) are constitutions issued by Justinian or his successors, mainly Justin II and Tiberius II, published partly in Latin, partly in Greek, and are laws added to *Corpus Iuris Iustiniani*. Cf. Emilio Albertario, *Introduzione storica allo studio del diritto romano giustiniano*, Milan, 1935, p. 35. See also: Nicolaas Van Der Wal, *Manuale Novellarum Iustiniani. Aperçu systématique du contenu des Nouvelles de Justinien*, Groningen-Amsterdam, 1964; Giuliana Lanata, *Legislazione e natura nelle Novelle giustiniane*, Naples, 1984; „Du vocabulaire de la loi dans les Nouvelles de Justinien”, in *Subseciva Groningana* 3 (1989), pp. 37-48.

⁶⁵ Justinian, *Novella CXXXVII*, 3: „εἴτε κατὰ τοὺς θεῖους κανόνας, εἴτε κατὰ τοὺς ἡμετέρους νόμους (sive secundum sacros canones sive secundum leges nostras reum invenit)”; Justinian, *Novella CXXIII*, 2: „κατὰ τοὺς νόμους ἢ τοὺς κανόνας (secundum leges aut canones)”.

⁶⁶ Amilcar Alivizatos [Αμιλκας Αλιβιζάτος], *Οι ιεροί κανόνες και εκκλησιαστικοί νομοί*, Athens, 1949.

⁶⁷ Prodromos I. Akanthopoulos [Πρόδρομος Ι. Ακανθόπουλος], *Κώδικας Ιερών Κανόνων και Εκκλησιαστικών Νόμων*, Thessaloniki, 1991.

⁶⁸ Lambros D. Fotopoulos [Λάμπρος Δ. Φωτόπουλος], *Ιεροί κανόνες και κοσμικοί νόμοι*, Athens, 2010.

⁶⁹ Cf. †Panteleimon Rodopoulos, „Sacred canons and laws”, in *Kanon* 10 (1991), pp. 9-15; Spyros Troianos, „Nomos und kanon in Byzanz”, in *Kanon* 10 (1991), pp. 37-51; Ruth Macrides, „Nomos and Kanon on paper and in court”, in Rosemary Morris (ed.), *Church and People in Byzantium*, Birmingham, 1990, pp. 61- 85; Andreas Schminck, „Leges ou nomoi?”, in Spyridon Flogaitis – Antoine Pantelis, *The Eastern Roman Empire and the Birth of the Idea of State in Europe*, London, 2005, pp. 309-316; Bernard H. Stolte, „Of Nomoi and Kanones”, in *Subseciva Groningana* 6 (1999), pp. 121-136; Evangelos Karabélias, „Le droit ecclésiastique byzantin dans ses rapports avec le droit impérial (du 4^e au 12^e siècle)”, in *Επιτηρίς του Κεντρου της Ιστορίας του Ελληνικου Δικαιου* 37 (2003), pp. 195-267; †Panteleimon Karanicolas, „Synodical Legislation and State Ecclesiastical Laws”, in *Θεολογία* 52 (1981), pp. 217-227; Alexis Kniazeff, „La place de la loi de l’Eglise dans la tradition de l’Orthodoxie”, in *Unité Chrétienne* 76 (1984), pp. 61-73.

⁷⁰ Spyros Troianos, *Le fonti del diritto bizantino*, Torino, 2015, pp. 3-5.

created a new relationship between the Church's *canons* and the Empire's *laws*, no longer observing the New-Testament symmetry, but imposing an equivalence between *ecclesiastical rules* and *juridical norms*. This legislative vision entailed a new stance of the political authority towards the Church: the emperor took the liberty of issuing laws even concerning certain internal aspects of Church life, through his Novels⁷¹.

The Christian Church, however, in keeping with the teaching of our Saviour Jesus Christ: „Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's” (Matthew 22, 21), has clearly asserted, ever since her beginnings, that between the Church and the political authority there must be a relationship of distinct cooperation in the spirit of mutual respect⁷². In practice, this relationship is predicated on one of the fundamental canonical principles in the organization and operation of the Church: the *principle of autonomy*, by which the Church clearly states that in matters of ecclesiastical activities, it is completely independent from any other authority and therefore, it can adopt its own *rules (canons)*.

This type of relationship is based on the canonical doctrine on the nature of Church power, and the relationship between the Church and the state (political) power. In the Law theory, the term *power (potestas – εξουσία)* indicates a means or a set of means by which a particular work is conducted, in order to pursue the goals of a politically organized society; the moral expression of power is the *authority (auctoritas)*. Within the social community, politically organized as a state, power is identified by the phrase „state power” or „political power” which indicates all the moral (ethical) means as well as the material means necessary to obtain and maintain social order and social progress. In the community of the faithful constituting Christ's Church, power is identified by the phrase „Church power” which indicates all religious, moral and material means employed by the Church in carrying out its salvific work⁷³. The main distinction between the two powers – the state's and the Church's – lies in their distinct goals: *state power* aims to obtain and maintain social order, in order to ensure the progress of society organized as a state, whereas *Church power* mainly aims to obtain salvation for the faithful people. The essential characteristic of *Church power* lies in the fact that the main means it resorts to have a religious nature; they are merely underscored by the moral means, and aided by the material means. The religious means, or the elements of *Church power* are derived from the very work of Lord Jesus Christ, while the moral and material means or elements are provided by the will and activity of the Church members⁷⁴. Therefore, *canons* are not and cannot be equivalent to a state's *laws*, regardless of the state's attitude towards the Church and God, since they are *pastoral rules* of the Church, intended to lead the Christians towards communion with Saviour Jesus Christ.

b. *Canons vs laws in the Byzantine Empire*

Even though today this state of affairs is an obvious one and taken for granted, in the past there have been many situations where the political authorities interfered more or less openly in the management of Church affairs. The most frequently quoted case in point is, of course, Byzantium⁷⁵ -

⁷¹ For details, see: Konstantinos Pitsakis, „Les nouvelles dans le droit canonique oriental”, in Luca Loschiavo–Giovanna Mancini–Cristina Vano (ed.), *Novellae Constitutiones: l'ultima legislazione di Giustiniano tra Oriente e Occidente da Triboniano a Savigny: atti del convegno internazionale, Teramo, 30-31 ottobre 2009*, Naples, 2011, pp. 91-109.

⁷² Cf. Alexis Kniazeff, „Le Royaume de César et le Règne de Dieu”, in *Contacts* 39 (1987), pp. 265-278, 40 (1988), pp. 19-36; Pier Cesare Bori, „Date a Cesare quel che è di Cesare (Mt. 22,21). Linee di storia dell'interpretazione antica”, in *Cristianesimo nella storia* 7 (1986), pp. 451-464; Liviu Stan, „Relațiile dintre Biserică și Stat”, in *Ortodoxia* 4 (1952), pp. 353-461.

⁷³ For a thorough analysis of the concept of *Church power* during the first Christian millennium, see: Roberto Interlandi, *Potestà sacramentale e potestà di governo nel primo millennio. Esercizio di esse e loro distinzione*, Rome, 2016, pp. 15-485.

⁷⁴ Cf. Ioan N. Floca, *Drept canonic ortodox. Legislație și administrație bisericească*, vol. II, Bucharest, 1990, pp. 206-213. Liviu Stan, „Jus ecclesiasticum. Dreptul în viața Bisericii”, in *Studii Teologice* 12 (1960), no. 7-8, pp. 467-483; „Biserica și Dreptul”, in *Mitropolia Olteniei* 8 (1956), no. 8-9, pp. 482-489. See also: Elio Dovere, „Auctoritas episcopale e pubbliche funzioni (secc. IV-VI)”, in *Studi sull'Oriente Cristiano* 5 (2001), no. 1, pp. 25-41.

⁷⁵ Cf. Deno John Geanakoplos, „Church and State in the Byzantine Empire. A Reconsideration of the Problem of Caesaropapism”, in *Church History* 34 (1965), pp. 381-403; Evelyne Patlagean, „Théologie politique de Byzance. L'empereur, le Christ, le patriarche”, in G. Filoramo (ed.), *Teologie politice. Modelli a confronto*, Brescia, 2005, pp. 149-161. See also:

where the political authority closely collaborated with the Church authority, according to a system known as *symphony*⁷⁶ or *synallelia*⁷⁷. Actually, the emperor's position within the hierarchy of the Church, a position which according to some authors was accounted for by the sacerdotal character of the basileus (βασιλευς)⁷⁸, lay at the core of this relationship so extensively and intensely debated⁷⁹. Therefore, the issue of the Church-State relationship boils down to the relationship between the emperor and the Church authority.

Of course, the emperor enjoyed some authority with regard to the churchly matters, but this was a rather limited one. The information provided by Pseudo-Codinos is relevant in this sense: in one of his treatises, he states that the Byzantine basileus only held the position of a δεποτάτος (deputy)⁸⁰; the information on the same office of the basileus is corroborated by Symeon of Thessaloniki, in the 15th century⁸¹. In the Byzantine Empire, a deputy was in charge of maintaining order in the church and during church processions⁸². Thus, in the Church the emperor was placed among the laypersons⁸³, and any office he might have held in the Church was far from the sacerdotal service.

One objection may be raised here: there were cases where some clergymen effectively had a subordinate position to the basileus. Unfortunately this relationship, which sums up the entire matter of the rapport between the Church and the political authority, both in Byzantium and in all countries with an Orthodox majority, has almost always been approached only from the juridical-political angle, that is, from the State authority's standpoint; therefore the priority is granted to the basileus, who is within his own realm of authority there. And, even though this realm is a Christian one, and its political doctrine is theocratic, obviously it is not identical with the Church of Christ. The Church and the Empire are two distinct institutions, although they have common members. Clearly, there are interferences and interconnections between the two institutions, but just as clearly, they can never overlap completely.

In its own realm, the Church has its own hierarchy, where basileus holds no place since „church hierarchy is a world in its own right, always distinct from the State's structure, and its ranks and offices cannot coincide with those of state officials”⁸⁴. Of course, one might again point out that, in the Byzantine Empire, the basileus participated in the election of the patriarch⁸⁵, while in his turn, the patriarch was the central figure during the emperor's crowning ceremony⁸⁶.

Moreover, even though the imperial authority did intervene in dogmatic debates – this was a characteristic aspect of Justinian's policy –, we mention that the emperor (basileus) never had the

Konstantinos Pitsakis, „Quelques réflexions au sujet d'individu et pouvoir dans l'Empire romain d'orient : idéologie politique et pensée canonique”, in *Méditerranées* 16 (1998), pp. 138-166.

⁷⁶ Cf. Martin Clauss, „Die συμφωνία von Kirche und Staat zur Zeit Justinians”, in K. Dietz et alii (ed.), *Klassisches Altertum, Spätantike und frühes Christentum: Adolf Lippold zum 65 Geburtstag gewidmet*, Würzburg, pp. 579-593.

⁷⁷ Cf. Konstantinos Pitsakis, „La συναλληλία principe fondamental des rapports entre l'Eglise et l'Etat (Idéologie et pratique byzantines et transformations contemporaines)”, in *Kanon* 10 (1991), p. 17-35.

⁷⁸ See : Konstantinos Pitsakis, „Sainteté et empire. A propos de la sainteté impériale: formes de sainteté «d'office» et de sainteté collective dans l'Empire d'Orient?”, in *Bizantinistica* III (2001), p. 155-227.

⁷⁹ Konstantinos Pitsakis, „Empire et Eglise le modèle de la Nouvelle Rome: la question des ordres juridiques”, in Maria Pia Baccari, (ed.), *Diritto e religione. Da Roma a Costantinopoli a Mosca. Rendiconti del XI Seminario «Da Roma alla terza Roma»*. Campidoglio, 21 aprile 1991, Rome, 1991, p. 105.

⁸⁰ Jean Verpeaux, *Pseudo-Kodinos. Traité des offices*, Paris, 1966, p. 264.

⁸¹ PG, t. CLV, col. 352, 356. Of course, the word «δεποτάτου», occurring in the text, is a mere printing error.

⁸² „dépotatos. On n'a pas déterminé encore à quelle date l'empereur commence à se parer de cet humble titre”, Jean Darrouzes, *Recherches sur les offikia de l'Eglise byzantine*, Paris, 1970, p. 215.

⁸³ Konstantinos Pitsakis, „L'empereur romain d'Orient: un laïc”, in *Kanon* 15 (1999), pp. 196-221.

⁸⁴ „La hiérarchie de l'Eglise est considérée comme un monde à part, toujours distinct des corps d'Etat; ses rangs ne se confondent pas avec ceux des dignitaires auliques dans les cortèges et les réceptions”, Jean Darrouzes, *Recherches sur les offikia de l'Eglise byzantine*, Paris, 1970, p. 28.

⁸⁵ Cf. Leszka B. Malgorzata, „The Attitude of Early Byzantine Emperors towards the Process of Electing Bishops of Constantinople”, in *Mélanges d'histoire byzantine offerts à Oktawiusz Jurewicz à l'occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire*, Łódź, 1998, pp. 110-127.

⁸⁶ Cf. Panayotis A. Yannopoulos, „Le couronnement de l'empereur à Byzance: rituel et fond institutionnel”, in *Byzantion* 61 (1991), pp. 71-91.

right to vote within a synod; this right belonged exclusively to the bishops⁸⁷. We note the fact that despite the privileges held by the basileus, the Church never accepted any *laws* that might have contradicted its *canons*, not even during the Christological controversies of the 5th century, or under the iconoclast emperors of the 8th century, or during the attempts at union with Rome, during the 13th-15th centuries.

Admittedly, in the Byzantine Empire the Church and political authority worked closely together. In the imperial milieu, this unity was manifest through the presence of Byzantine prelates in the ranks of the State official hierarchy. In the ecclesiastical milieu, the Church and the political authority were also cooperating, but political authorities were present only in a lay capacity. The subordination of clergy to lay authority was only relative, as it existed only within the imperial milieu. In the ecclesiastical milieu, however, things were different. Actually, the Byzantine stance on the human society created two hierarchical systems: that of the Church, and that of the Empire. Both were Christian, even if the latter represented the „*rule of the Caesar*”, both were theocratic⁸⁸, for they confessed and acknowledged a single authority – Saviour Jesus Christ; moreover, both coexisted in the same shared space, and pursued the same final goal – the union of the visible world with The Most High. However, the two hierarchical systems were completely distinct and different, and every attempt at merging them proved to be a failure. A relevant illustration of the relationship between the two hierarchical systems was provided by the *Epanagoga / Eisagoga*⁸⁹ (a code of Byzantine law, issued between 879 and 886 AD), where legislators’ intention was to juxtapose the two systems, not combine or merge them. Another example demonstrating this view is provided by the episcopal lists dating from the 9th-10th centuries. These joint lists of prelates and state officials ceased to exist afterwards.

As regards the court trials, already under Emperor Constantine the Great, the existence of Church’s own trial courts influenced the administration – not only of civil justice, but also of criminal justice, by consecrating privileged institutions that favoured either the Church in general (by acknowledging the Church trial courts)⁹⁰, or the clergymen summoned to the Court for trials in private matters, who presented themselves only before the Church authorities (*privilegium fori*)⁹¹.

We also note the influence of Roman law on canon theology, especially after the 4th century when the Church acquired an official standing in the Roman Empire. A substantial part of the terminology describing the institutions and mechanisms by which the Church operates, comes from the Roman law. It was absolutely natural for the Church to tap into the (highly developed) juridical culture of the times. However, it is an undisputed fact that the substance and specific character of canon theology are not borrowed from the Roman law, but are grounded in the Apostolic tradition and the initiatives inspired by the Holy Spirit in carrying out the pastoral mission of the Church, at any point in the history. Consequently, its great importance notwithstanding, the contribution of

⁸⁷ “There is no trace in the acts of the council of Constantine voting with the bishops. He only confirmed their decision and made it legal”, Johannes A. Straub, „Constantin as Κοινος Επισκοπος: Tradition and Innovation in the Representation of the First Christian Emperor’s Majesty”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Paper* 21 (1967), p. 49. See also: Francis Dvornik, „Emperors, Popes and General Councils”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Paper* 6 (1951), p. 9.

⁸⁸ “La doctrine théocratique domine l’histoire de Byzance et l’explique; toutefois, loin d’apporter au pouvoir impérial force et stabilité, elle est pour lui une cause de faiblesse. L’empereur choisi par Dieu ne règne, en effet, que par la protection divine. Si Dieu cesse de le soutenir et de l’inspirer, son mandat est périmé; l’empereur exerce le pouvoir sans droit et il n’est plus qu’un intrus sur le trône. La moindre secousse peut le renverser. Dieu, qui donne le pouvoir, n’en garantit, en effet, la durée que dans la mesure où le pouvoir est exercé selon ses vues, qui sont, d’ailleurs impénétrables. Dans le cas contraire, Dieu peut, selon l’énergique expression de la Bible, *se repentir* et porter son choix sur un candidat plus digne. Il convient donc de scruter à tout moment l’opinion divine pour savoir si elle n’a pas changé.” Rodolphe Guiland, „Le droit divine à Byzance”, in *Seorsum impressum ex commentariis Societatis Philologiae Polonorum XLII* (1947), p. 143.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Epanagoge legis Basilii Leonis et Alexandri*, in Zachariae Von Lingenthal, *Jus Graecoromanum*, vol. 2, Athens, 1931, pp. 229-368.

⁹⁰ Cf. Giulio Vismara, *La giurisdizione civile dei vescovi (secoli I-IX)*, Milan, 1995.

⁹¹ Cf. Antonio Banfi, “*Habeant illi iudices suos*”. *Studi sull’esclusività della giurisdizione ecclesiastica e sulle origini del “privilegium fori” in diritto romano e bizantino*, Milan, 2005. See also: Helen Saradi, „The Byzantine Tribunals: Problems in the Application of Justice and State Policy (9th-12th c.)”, in *Revue des études byzantines* 53 (1995), pp. 165-204.

Roman law to the development of canon theology, especially in the Christian East, is confined to the technical-instrumental aspects, having no doctrinal relevance since canon theology is exclusively rooted in the Christian teachings of the faith⁹².

c. Church canons vs State laws: today's situation

Starting from the 6th century onwards, the State laws addressing the organization and operation of the Church were repeatedly published alongside the texts of the *Holy Canons*, thus creating the false impression that the two categories of regulations were equivalent. Moreover, emperor Justinian's *Novela 131*, declared the canons issued by the first four Ecumenical Councils to have equal authority to the law. Hence the erroneous perception that the Church possesses its own *law system* (*ius/díkaiou*), identified by Western theologians as „*canon law*” (*ius canonicum*) – a phrase subsequently adopted by some Orthodox authors. We note that in Western Europe, Rudolph Sohm (1841-1917) – a Lutheran jurist and an expert in the history of the law, examined the evolution of the influence of Roman law on the Church; he reached the conclusion that since the 12th century, especially by the issuing of *Decretum Gratiani*⁹³, in the Western Church this influence was manifest in the emergence of a legal formalism which resulted in the idea that the state was governed by the Church canons – that is, by *canon law* or *Church law*⁹⁴. Of course, all Roman-Catholic theologians criticized such perception and offered explanations for the statement of the German jurist, generally acknowledging the significant influence of Roman law on Catholic theology but refusing to accept Sohm's conclusions⁹⁵. The result of this controversy was a re-positioning of Catholic theology, which especially in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), began to refer more and more insistently to a „theology of canon law/ canon law theology”⁹⁶ (sic!).

Most Orthodox theologians, however, reject the postulate of an equivalence between State laws and Church *canons*, emphasizing the difference in nature and competencies between these two sets of regulations. The *law* is thus an imperative norm, issued by a holder of authority over a social group organized on a territory, and sanctioned by the collective force of the respective group. The *canon*, on the other hand, is a pastoral rule issued by the Church authority and impacting the ecclesial milieu, having an exclusively spiritual-thaumaturgic character. From the standpoint of their applicability, the law provisions are limited in time and confined to a particular territory, whereas the principles contained by the holy canons are universally valid and relevant for all Christians at all times.

There are, however, some Orthodox theologians who continue ungroundedly regard „*canon law*” as a subset or component part of *law* (*ius*) in general. However, reputed scholars have

⁹² Cf. Konstantinos Pitsakis, „Droit romain et droit canonique oriental”, in *Cristianità d'Occidente e cristianità d'Oriente (secoli VI-XI): 24-30 aprile 2003*, Spoleto, 2004, vol. 2, pp. 1435-1469; „*Ius Graeco Romanum* et normes canoniques dans les Eglises de tradition orthodoxe”, in Raffaele Coppola (ed.), *Atti del Congresso Internazionale „Incontro fra canonici d'Oriente e d'Occidente*, vol. 1, Bari, 1994, pp. 99-132. See also: Elio Dovere, „Diritto romano e prassi conciliare ecclesiastica (secc. III-IV)”, in *I concili della cristianità occidentale: secoli III-IV. XXX incontro di studiosi dell'Antichità cristiana, Roma 3-5 maggio 2001*, Rome, 2002, pp. 7-24.

⁹³ *Decretum Gratiani* is a collection of papal canons and decrees, officially titled *Concordia discordantium canonum*, and compiled by the Camaldolese monk Gratianus in early 12th century (1140-1142). For details, see: Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum*, Cambridge, 2000.

⁹⁴ Cf. Rudolph Sohm, *Das altkatholische Kirchenrecht und das Dekret Gratians*, Munich, 1918, pp. 536-674.

⁹⁵ Cf. Yves-Marie Congar, „Rudolf Sohm nous interroge encore”, in *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 57 (1973), pp. 263-294; Roberto Righi, „Rudolph Sohm e il diritto canonico”, in Carlo Fantappiè (ed.), *Itinerari culturali del diritto canonico nel Novocento*, Torino, 2003, pp. 33-71; Klaus Mörsdorf, „Altkanonisches «Sakramentsrecht». Eine Auseinandersetzung mit den Anschauungen Rudolph Sohm über die inneren Grundlagen des Decretum Gratiani”, in *Studia Gratiani* 1 (1953), pp. 483-503.

⁹⁶ For further details, see: Eugenio Corecco, „Teologia del diritto canonico”, in Giuseppe Barbaglio - Severino Dianich (ed.), in *Nuovo Dizionario di Teologia*, Rome, 1977, pp. 1711-1753; Gianfranco Ghirlanda, *Introduzione al diritto ecclesiale. Lineamenti per una teologia del diritto nella Chiesa*, Rome, 2013. It is noteworthy that some orthodox authors speak about a „theology of orthodox canon law”. Cf. Patrick Viscuso, „A Late Byzantine Theology of Canon Law”, in *The Greek Orthodox Theology Review* 34 (1989), pp. 203-219; Irimie Marga, „Theology of Orthodox Canon Law”, in Casian Rușet (ed.), *Simpozion internațional „Statutul actual pentru organizarea și funcționarea Bisericii Ortodoxe Române”: Caraseneș, 2015*, Cluj-Napoca – Caraseneș, 2016, pp. 128-143.

demonstrated that from the earliest times, there has been a distinction between *Church canons* and *State laws* and that „there was no «*canon law*» in Byzantium”⁹⁷.

Some authors, in order to emphasize the distinction between *canons* and *laws*, stress the exclusively pastoral value of the *Holy Canons* and their character which is thaumaturgical par excellence, also pointing out the risk entailed by this confusion: that the Church might create a juridical system, parallel to that existing in the state where the respective Church is established and operates. The American professor Lewis J. Patsavos, of *Holy Cross University*, Boston, states:

although generally referred to as *canon law*, such a name given to the *Church's law* suggests a parallel to secular law. It would be more correct to call it the *tradition of the holy canons*, since they are the object of its concern⁹⁸.

Actually, *canons* hold no legal status in the states where the Church is established and operates; they (the *canons*) are *pastoral rules* prescribed to Christians by the church authority and received by consensus of the entire Church, in order to help its members to maintain, intensify or regain communion with Saviour Jesus Christ. On the other hand, we must also note that the *laws* passed by the state authorities in order to regulate the regime of religious freedom, as well as the state's manner of relating to the religious communities within it, including the Church, have always constituted a distinct body inside civil law, a body usually identified as *church/ecclesiastical law* (*ius ecclesiasticum*) or *public ecclesiastical law* (*ius ecclesiasticum publicum*). Recently, the French professor Francis Messner, of the *University of Strasbourg*, pointing out that currently in the West there are also non-Christian religious communities that are juridically acknowledged by the states where they are established and operate, suggested that the law addressing them should no longer be termed *church/ecclesiastical law*, but „*law of religions*”⁹⁹.

Based on the above considerations, we deem that all aspects pertaining to the knowledge, observance and application of the *Holy Canons* in the life of the Church, can be exhaustively identified and designated by the phrase „*canon theology*”, and that all state regulations addressing the juridical regime of the Church, in particular, can be defined by the phrase „*ecclesiastical/church law*”, while the general legal framework encompassing the juridical regime of religious freedom and religious communities, can be termed „*law of religions*” or „*religious law*”. In this sense, we note that although canon theology continues to be often assimilated to, or even equated with, the science of law (some authors even deem it to be part of law in general), it does not employ the juridical terminology and concepts. For instance, canon theology does not know the acts of abrogation (complete abolishing or invalidation), derogation (temporary, partial abolishment) or prorogation (extending the validity of a law issued for a particular period)¹⁰⁰. Also, canon theology does not include a criminal section, as the *law* does with the criminal law branch, since the holy canons do not stipulate or prescribe any *punishments* (*poenae*) for the trespassers, but only *epithemia* or penance, exclusively aimed at spiritual healing.

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHURCH CANONS AND DOGMAS

Although originally no clear terminology was in place, in order to designate the different types of conciliar decisions, the Church subsequently consecrated specific terms to distinguish doctrinal from disciplinary decrees. This created a clear distinction between *dogmatic decisions* (ὄρος – ὄροι) and the *disciplinary ones* (κανὼν – κανόνες) issued by the bishops convened in a synod

⁹⁷ David Wagshal, *Law and Legality in the Greek East: The Byzantine Canonical Tradition, 381-883*, p. 152. See also: Danilo Ceccarelli Morolli, *Il diritto dell'Impero romano d'Oriente*, Rome, 2016, pp. 137-166.

⁹⁸ Lewis J. Patsavos, *Valențele duhovnicești ale Sfințelor Canoane*, Sibiu, 2012, p. 21.

⁹⁹ Francis Messner, „Du droit ecclésiastique au droit des religions: évolution d'une terminologie”, in *Revue de Droit Canonique*, 47 (1997), no. 1, pp. 143-160. See also: Francis Messner, *Dictionnaire droit des religions*, Paris, 2015.

¹⁰⁰ Constantin Rus, *Drept bisericesc*, Arad, 2000, p. 46.

or council, and then received and acknowledged by the Church¹⁰¹. According to the Orthodox theologians, the first difference between these two types of Council decisions is that, irrespective of the evolution of the pastoral needs of the Church, the dogmatic decisions (*dogmas*) can never be altered¹⁰², while the disciplinary decisions (*canons*), if the pastoral necessity arises, can be completed, amended, modified or clarified only by an ecumenical council¹⁰³ - the supreme authority in the Orthodox Church¹⁰⁴, when such council can convene, or otherwise by *consensus Ecclesiae dispersae*, if an ecumenical council cannot convene.

A remark is in order here: too often some theologians tend to regard the *synod* in an excessively formal way, more precisely they consider only its organizational side – a different, even opposite perception from that of the Bishop of Rome in the Roman-Catholic Church. To some Orthodox theologians, the synod is not only the Church body exerting the supreme authority but, according to their view, the synod also enjoys an infallibility of sorts. It is then necessary to point out that, according to the canonical tradition and doctrine, the synods as assemblies of bishops represent the supreme authority in the autocephalous Churches and that the *ecumenical council* is the supreme authority in the Orthodox Church; however, the *ecumenical council* is never placed above the autocephalous Churches, because any conciliar decision, even the decisions issued by an ecumenical council, takes effect only if it is accepted by the entire Church, that is, by each autocephalous Orthodox Church.

We must also note the fact that a doctrinal or disciplinary decision passed by a synod of bishops, including an *ecumenical council*, is not immediately applicable in the Church, but it becomes officially valid and takes effect in the life of the Church only after it has been accepted by the entire Church, because according to the Orthodox theology, infallibility does not belong to an ecumenical council but to the entire Church since „the Church as a whole is the body of Christ and as such it is infallible as Christ is infallible”¹⁰⁵.

The second distinction between the two types of conciliar decisions accepted by the entire Church, lies in the fact that the *dogmas* define what Christians believe and confess (the teachings of the faith)¹⁰⁶, while *canons* indicate the practical ways in which Christians experience and confess the teachings of the faith through their very lifestyle. These two types of conciliar decisions constitute the fundamental structure of the Church.

CONCLUSIONS

All the above demonstrate that from its very beginnings, the Church has postulated (based on the words of Saviour Jesus Christ - Matthew 22, 21) a distinction in both nature and purpose between itself and any form of state organization; consequently, it has coined a new

¹⁰¹ Iorgu Ivan, „Ὁρος ἢ κανὼν ἰn dreptul bisericesc ortodox”, in *Orthodoxia* 22 (1970), pp. 365-372. See also: Ioannis Karmiris, „The Distinction between the «Horoι» and the «Canons» of the Early Synods and their Significance for the Acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon by the Non-Chalcedonian Churches”, in *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 16 (1971), pp. 79-107; Nicolae Chitescu, „Deosebirea dintre Oros ἢ Canon ἢ importanța ei pentru receptarea Sinodului de la Calcedon”, in *Orthodoxia* 22 (1970), pp. 347-364.

¹⁰² Cf. can. 1 second Ecumenical Council; can. 7 Third Ecumenical Council.

¹⁰³ “The Ecumenical Councils make two types of decisions: 1. Doctrinal, or theological, which are infallible, unchangeable, and must be believed by every Orthodox. 2. Disciplinary or administrative canons. The disciplinary canons cover various questions as to the performance of sacraments, jurisdiction of parishes, dioceses, marriage and divorce questions, penance and others. These canons are changeable by other Ecumenical Council, and they are not infallible. They are binding upon the faithful, however, and are to be enforced by the clergy”, George H. Demetrakopoulos, *Dictionary of Orthodox Theology: A Summary of the Beliefs, Practices and History of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, New York, 1964, p. 39.

¹⁰⁴ “Selon l’ecclésiologie orthodoxe seule l’Eglise est le royaume de Dieu sur la terre et l’organe de Dieu pour le salut des hommes, et les conciles œcuméniques sont ses organes d’autorité suprême”, Nicolae Dură, *Le régime de la synodalité selon la législation canonique conciliaire, œcuménique du I^{er} millénaire*, Bucharest, 1999, p. 304; Cf. also: Serge Verkhovskoy, „The Highest Authority in the Church”, in *Saint Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 4 (1960), pp. 76-88; † Pierre L’Huillier, „Le concile œcuménique comme autorité suprême dans l’Eglise”, in *Kanon* 2 (1974), pp. 128-142.

¹⁰⁵ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, vol. 2, Bucharest, 1997, p. 118. See also: Bernard Sesbotié, *Histoire et théologie de l’infaillibilité de l’Eglise*, Bruxelles, 2013.

¹⁰⁶ For a presentation of the concept of *dogma* in the Orthodox Church, see: Dumitru Stăniloae, „Noțiunea dogmei”, in *Studii Teologice* 16 (1964), no. 9-10, pp. 533-571.

term: *canon* (κανόν), by which it defined its own *pastoral rules* leading to communion with Lord Jesus Christ.

Etymologically, the term *canon* designates a rule, prescription, norm, guideline, model, principle, standard; it differs from the concept of *law* (νομος – *lex*) both by its nature and by the authority issuing it, as well as its purpose. In a State, the *law* is a mandatory norm, issued and defended by the state authority, describing or regulating specific relationships between persons and organizations, and prescribing the punitive measures against the trespassers. In contrast, within the Church the *canon* is a pastoral rule given to the Christians by the ecclesiastical authority, in order to assist them in their free (voluntary) decision to maintain, to boost or to regain communion with Christ our Saviour; such rule has already been received by the consensus of the entire Church. Thus in the theological idiom, the term *canon* has been used ever since the apostolic times, originally to designate a „*guideline*” for Christian life, including all the evangelical and apostolic prescriptions. Subsequently, from the 4th century onwards, the term *canon* became established as a denominator for the disciplinary decisions passed by ecumenical councils, to distinguish them from the dogmatic decrees of the councils and to indicate the pastoral rules of the Church, in contrast with the State laws. Also, the ecclesiastic language employs the term *canon* to identify particular ecclesial realities, structured according to precise rules. Thus since the first Christian centuries, the list of Bible books accepted by the Church has been known as the „*biblical canon*”, and the catalogue of saints has been known as „*saints’ canon*”. Also, the phrase „*Eucharistic canon*” designates the main part of the Holy Liturgy – the liturgical anaphora. From the 7th century onwards, a particular type of poetic hymn made up of nine odes has been termed *canon*.

However, in today’s theological language, the most widely used connotation of the term *canon* is that of a pastoral rule, passed by a council and received by the entire Church. The term is usually employed in the plural form, in the phrase „*holy canons*” or „*holy and divine canons*” to define the set of pastoral rules applied in the Church. In conclusion, the holy canons are pastoral rules sanctioned by the Church authority, and indicating how the Church members ought to act and behave under concrete circumstances, so that their actions may receive a positive assessment in relation to religious faith; ultimately, they aim at bringing man in communion with Lord Jesus Christ. The fundamental principles contained in the *holy canons* are valid at all times, for all those who confess Christ and want to reach full communion with Him.

In its interaction with the state authority, the Church has resorted to State legislation in order to make it into an auxiliary to its salvific work. The synthesis between the State’s need to know and issue legal regulations for the ecclesiastic communities established on its territory, on the one hand, and the Church’s efforts to build a distinct cooperation with the authorities of the State where it is organized and operates, in the spirit of mutual respect, on the other hand, has produced a specific domain of the Law, including all the state legislation that addresses ecclesial life; this used to be known as „*ius ecclesiasticum*” („*Church law*”). Today, however, some authors consider this to be an outdated phrase (rendered obsolete by the existence of religious non-Christian communities, acknowledged by States) and suggest the alternative phrase „*religious law*”.

Regarding the relationship between Church *canons* and *dogmas*, we note that both are decisions reached by the ecclesiastical authority, sanctioned by councils and consensually accepted by the entire Church. The main distinction between them lies in the contents they define, as well as the manner in which they can or cannot be amended, completed or explained if the pastoral necessity arises.

Thus we may assert that the *holy canons* provide the practical solutions for the problems met by the Church at the respective times, solutions provided by pastoral rules consensually throughout the Church; every ecclesiastical regulation (decisions issued by councils/synods or by bishops) in the Church, at any time, must express both the canonical tradition and doctrine, and the pastoral-missionary attitude of the ecclesiastical authority bodies.

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THE PRAYER “GOD OF THE SPIRITS...” - SHORT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Although it seems a “common prayer”, devoid of any feature, given its repeated presence in the Funeral Ordinances, the prayer “God of the Spirits...” has a certain value, being considered one of the representative prayers for the dead; We would therefore like to dwell in this short article on some of its textual forms, which, in our opinion, are decisive in particular as regards the origin.

Keywords: hymnography; liturgical manuscripts; prayers for the dead; funeral practices; the Funeral Ordinance;

1. THE PRAYER “GOD OF THE SPIRITS...” - TEXT

Before analyzing¹ the significant textual forms² of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”, we believe it is necessary and useful to reproduce the text in its entirety, as it appears in the *Psalter* from 1818:

“God of the Spirits (Revelation 22:6)³, and of all flesh (Numbers 16:22; 27:16), you didst thrust death, and thou didst break the devil (cf. Hebrews 2:14)⁴, and you gave life to your world (cf. 2 Maccabees 3:35; John 6:33)⁵, You God rest (cf. Matthew 11:28)⁶ the soul of thy servant, who is deceased, in a lighted place, in a place with sward, in a resting place (Genesis 8:9; Numbers 10:33, etc.), from where the pain, sorrow, and sighing fled (cf. Isaiah 35:10; 51:11). All the error he did with the word, or with the thing, or with the thought, as a God good and people lover (cf. Exodus 34:6; Luke 18:19)⁷ forget, that he is not a man to be alive and not to be wrong (2 Chronicles 6:36)⁸; that You alone are without sin, Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth (Psalms 118:142; John 17:17)⁹”.

¹ See also N. Preda, *Rânduiala rugăciunii ce se face după ieșirea sufletului din trup, conform Psaltirii de la 1818 (Kishinev): noțiuni de liturgică (The Ordinance of the Prayer to be Made after the Soul left the Body, according to the Psalter from 1818 (Kishinev): Notions of Liturgy)*, Bucharest, Basilica Publishing, 2015, pp. 208-266.

² To observe other textual particularities of this prayer in the manuscript tradition (sec. X-XII), see Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία κατὰ τοὺς χειρογράφοις κώδικες 10ου-12ου αἰώνου*. Τόμος Β'. Εἰσαγωγικά, Κωδικολογικά καὶ Παλαιογραφικά Κείμενα, Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Προφήτου Ἡλιοῦ Θήρας, Ἐκδόσεις Θεσβίτης, 2005, pp. 40-41, the footnotes.

³ Biblical references do not appear in the original text, but they are meant to facilitate textual analysis.

⁴ Cf. S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, *L' Eucologio Barberini gr. 336*. Seconda edizione riveduta con traduzione in lingua italiana, *Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae. Subsidia* 80, Roma, Centro Liturgico Vicenziano-Edizioni Liturgiche, 2000, p. 235 and Δ. Β. Τζέρπος, *Ἡ Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Νεκρωσίμου Εὐχελαίου κατὰ τὰ χειρόγραφα Εὐχολόγια τοῦ ἰδ' -ις' αἰ.*, Ἀθήνα, Ἴδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας. <<Λατρευολογήματα 1>>, 2000, p. 244.

⁵ Ἀθηναγόρας (Μητροπολίτης), “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων”, in *Ἐκκλησιαστικός Φάρος* 36 (1937), p. 189.

⁶ Ἀθηναγόρας (Μητροπολίτης), “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων”, p. 189.

⁷ Ἀθηναγόρας (Μητροπολίτης), “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων”, p. 190.

⁸ Ἀθηναγόρας (Μητροπολίτης), “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων”, p. 189.

⁹ Cf. *Psalter*, Kishinev, In the Exarchate Printing of Bessarabia, 1818, p. 305r.

2. THE PRAYER “GOD OF THE SPIRITS...” – TEXT ANALYSIS

On textual analysis we would like to recall that it will only sum up the examination of some of the forms and expressions which, in our opinion, require special attention. So, in order to give some sort of systematic account of these aspects, we will begin in the order in which they can be found in the content of the prayer.

3. THE EXPRESSION: “GOD OF THE SPIRITS AND OF ALL FLESH”

A first aspect related to the text of this prayer (and we refer here to the incipit¹⁰) is that in the manuscripts (see E. Velkovska, *Appendix*)¹¹ we already find more prayers for the dead which start the same (*God of the Spirits and of All Flesh...*):

- a) “Ο θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ τῶν ὀρωμένων καὶ τῶν ἀοράτων ποιητής...”¹²;
- b) “Ο Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, τῶν ὀρωμένων καὶ τῶν ἀοράτων, ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἀπόρρητόν Σου...”¹³;
- c) “Ο θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ Κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων...”¹⁴;
- d) “Ο Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ μεταφέρων ἀπὸ τῶν Σῶν καὶ τὰ Σά, ὁ εἰπὼν πᾶσαι¹⁵...”¹⁶;
- e) “Ο Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ μεταφέρων ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν εἰς τὰ σά, ζωῆς καὶ θάνατον...”¹⁷.

¹⁰ The word “incipit” also mentions the first words with which a text begins, in the present case, a prayer.

¹¹ See E. Velkovska, “Funeral Rites according to the Byzantine Liturgical Sources”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001), pp. 46-51.

¹² *Grottaferrata G. β. X* [*Euchologion*, the 10th century]: 81r-81v, cf. E. Velkovska, “Funeral Rites...”, p. 49 and Th. Christodoulou, *L’ ufficio funebre nei manoscritti greci dei secoli X-XII*, Excerpta ex Dissertatione ad Doctoratum, Romae, Pontificium Institutum Orientale - Facultas Scientiarum Ecclesiasticarum Orientalis, 1996, p. 62; Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία κατὰ τοὺς χειρογράφους κώδικες 10ου-12ου αἰῶνος*. Τόμος Α’. Γενικὴ Εἰσαγωγή, Κατάλογοι, Πίνακες, Ἱερά Μονὴ Προφήτου Ἡλίου Θήρας, Ἐκδόσεις Θεσβίτης, 2005, p. 651; *Grottaferrata G. β. X*: [81α]: Ὁ Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ τῶν ὀρωμένων καὶ τῶν ἀοράτων ποιητής..., cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 51; *Vat. gr.* 1836 [*Σχηματολόγιον*, sec. XI-XII]: [121β]: Ὁ Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ τῶν ὀρωμένων καὶ τῶν ἀοράτων ποιητής..., cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 427; see more on this prayer in Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., pp. 193-194.

¹³ As it appears from the article of Metropolitan Athenagoras [cf. Ἀθηναγόρας (Μητροπολίτης), “Ὁ Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων”, pp. 185-186], this incipit is not really of a prayer in a codex, but an ancient burial inscription in Egypt; the prayer seems to be an abbreviation of the one in the manuscripts cited before (*Grottaferrata G. β. X*: [81α] and *Vat. gr.* 1836: [121β]).

¹⁴ *Grottaferrata G. β. X*: 82r, cf. E. Velkovska, “Funeral Rites...”, p. 50 and Th. Christodoulou, *L’ ufficio funebre...*, p. 64; *Grottaferrata G. β. X*: [82α]: Ὁ Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ Κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων..., cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 54; *Messin. Bibl. Univ. S. Salvat. gr.* 153 [*Σχηματολόγιον*, the 11th century]: [92β]: Ὁ Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ Κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων..., cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 292; see more on this prayer in Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., pp. 194-195.

¹⁵ *Vat. gr.* 1970 [*Euchologion*, the 12th century]: 38v: Ὁ θεός τῶν πνευματων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ μεταφέρων ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν εἰς τὰ σά, ὁ εἰπὼν πᾶσαι..., cf. H. W. Codrington, *The Liturgy of Saint Peter*, Liturgiegeschichtliche Quellen und Forschungen, Heft 30, Münster in Westfalen, Verlag der Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1936, p. 144; *Vat. gr.* 1970: [38β]: Ὁ Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός ὁ μετὰ τὰ σά ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν εἰς τὰ σά, ὁ εἰπὼν πᾶσαι..., cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 349.

¹⁶ It is a prayer of the pulpit for the dead within “*The Liturgy of Saint Apostle Peter*”, cf. H. W. Codrington, *The Liturgy of Saint Peter...*, pp. 144-145.

The meaning and age of this incipit (“*God of the Spirits and of All Flesh*”) are reported by V. Bruni also in another context, more precisely when referring to one of the oldest Roman (rite) prayer of intercession¹⁸ (the 5th-6th centuries)¹⁹, that is “*Deprecatio Gelasii*”:

“L’expression ‘Ο Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός’ richiama alla mente la XIV intenzione²⁰ della celebre preghiera intercessoria romana di tipo orientale che porta il nome di *Deprecatio Gelasii*. In essa si prega per il riposo dei trapassati il <<Dominum spirituum et universae carnis iudicem>>”²¹.

About the authenticity of this incipit (starting formula) G. Munarini also reminds, who refers to Jean Tabet’s²² study:

“A questo proposito, rammento che il p. J. Tabet ha ben messo in evidenza l’importanza della formula iniziale assai arcaica, che si trova in soli due passi della Scrittura (Numeri 16, 22 e Numeri 27, 16)”²³.

In fact, this introductory formula is actually a biblical expression taken from *The Book of Numbers* (chapter 16, verse 22 and chapter 27, verse 16), being well-known to the Jews, since it is found in the ritual of the feast *Iom Kipur*²⁴.

The authenticity and age of the expression “*God of the Spirits and of All Flesh*” are confirmed, on the other hand, by its presence in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, more precisely at St. Clement of Rome²⁵ († 97), in *Epistle I to the Corinthians*²⁶.

¹⁷ Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 651; *Messin. Bibl. Univ. S. Salvat. gr.* 153: [140β]: ‘Ο Θεός τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ] μεταφέρων ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν εἰς τὰ σά, ζωῆς] καὶ θάνατον..., cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 302; see more on this prayer in Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., pp. 206-207.

¹⁸ “E. Bishop, faisait observer que l’invocation pour les *sacerdotes qui HUIC ecclesiae praefuerunt CATHOLICAE* (n° XIV) désigne, dans un style de chancellerie qui trahit la période allant de 466 à 540, l’Église romaine. Ailleurs il déclare sans ambages que <<quiconque a fait une étude sérieuse des styles liturgiques Romain, Gallican, Espagnol, Irlandais, ne peut aboutir qu’à la conclusion que la litanie (= la *Deprecatio Gelasii*) est d’origine romaine>>”, D. B. Capelle, “Le Kyrie de la Messe et le Pape Gélase”, in *Revue Bénédictine* 46 (1934), p. 140.

¹⁹ “Reconnaissant que la *Deprecatio* est romaine et qu’elle remonte au V-VI^e siècle, ils ne voient pas pourquoi on refuserait de croire au titre qu’elle porte, et qui l’attribue au pape Gélase (492-496)”, D. B. Capelle, “Le Kyrie de la Messe et le Pape Gélase”, p. 140; “Secondo il Capelle, che ne ha pubblicato il testo critico, la composizione di questa supplica litanica risale al sec. V-VI”, V. Bruni, *I funerali di un sacerdote nel rito bizantino, secondo gli Eucologi manoscritti di lingua greca*, Pubblicazioni dello Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collectio Minor n. 14, Jerusalem, Franciscan Printing Press, 1972, pp. 155-156, note 264.

²⁰ “*Deprecatio Gelasii* (...) XIV. Pro refrigerio fidélium animárum, praecique sanctorum dómini sacerdotum, qui huic ecclesiae praefuerunt cathólicae Dominum spirituum et universae carnis iudicem deprecámur [Ky. el.]”, D. B. Capelle, “Le Kyrie de la Messe et le Pape Gélase”, pp. 136-138.

²¹ *I funerali di un sacerdote*..., pp. 154-155, note 264.

²² “Il s’agit là d’une formule assez archaïque. Celle-ci se rencontre uniquement dans deux passages de l’Écriture: - <<Ils tombèrent (Moïse et Aaron) la face contre terre et s’écrièrent: O Dieu, Dieu des esprits qui animent toute chair, vas-tu t’irriter contre toute la communauté quand un seul pêche?>> (Nb 16, 22). - <<Moïse parla ainsi à Yahvé: Que Yahvé, Dieu des esprits qui animent toute chair, établisse sur cette communauté un homme...>> (Nb 27, 16)”, *L’office des morts*. Notes à l’usage privé des auditeurs. Année académique 1984-1985, Kaslik, Liban, Université Saint-Esprit. Institut de Liturgie, 1984, pp. 65-66.

²³ “I funerali secondo la tradizione liturgica bizantina - Le esequie dei laici”, in *Oriente Cristiano* 32 (1992) n° 2-3, p. 12.

²⁴ “La formule paraît également dans la liturgie juive de Kippur”, Jean Tabet, O.L.M., *L’office des morts*..., p. 66; “La formula, conosciuta anche dagli Israeliti e usata nella solennità del *Kippur*”, G. Munarini, “I funerali secondo la tradizione liturgica bizantina...”, p. 12; Father Themistoclis Hristodoulou calls it prayer and not an introductory formula (incipit): “Αὐτὸς ὁ τύπος εὐχῆς εἶναι γνωστὸς καὶ στοὺς Ἑβραίους καὶ χρησιμοποιεῖται στὴν ἐπίσημη γιορτὴ τῶν Kippur”, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 188.

About the theological meaning of this ancient biblical expression we would like to recall just one aspect that J. Tabet points out, namely its penitential character from the liturgical context of the first centuries:

“La formule exprime d’abord la transcendance de Dieu qui gouverne le sort des hommes sous le régime du péché et de la grâce; son contexte liturgique primitif, celui de Kippur, y mêle une note pénitentielle; en effet, c’est dans la prière d’intercession pour les coupables qu’elle paraît dans l’épître de Clément”²⁷.

3.1. THE FORM OF THE WORD “SPIRITS”

The Form of the Word “*Spirits*” from the expression “*God of the Spirits...*”, capitalized in the original text²⁸, but also in other texts²⁹, is the first to draw our attention. As mentioned above, the formula “*God of the Spirits and of All Flesh...*” is of scriptural origin and appears only in two verses of the *Book of Numbers* (16, 22³⁰ and 27, 16³¹). The first part of the expression also appears in the *Revelation* (22, 6)³², but in another form: “*The God of the spirits of the prophets*” or even: “*God of spirits and prophets*”³³.

Although, at first sight, we are tempted to put everything at the expense of a simple happening, such as, for example, the freedom of writing or a mistake, in reality, we think it is in this context a theological way of seeing and understanding some nuances, which also give beauty and weight to liturgical texts.

Therefore, the form of the word “*Spirits*”, capitalized, refers, undoubtedly, to the venerable Heavenly Powers [*Seraphim, Cherubim*³⁴, *Thrones (Angels); Dominions, Powers,*

²⁵ “ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΟΝ ΝΗ΄. Ὁ παντεπόπτης Θεος, [καὶ] Δεσπότης τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ Κύριος [πά]σης σαρκός...”, St. Clement of Rome, *Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Κορινθίους Α΄*. PG 1, p. 328; “LIX. (...) μόνον εὐεργέτην πνευμάτων καὶ θεὸν πάσης σαρκός...” and “LXIV. Λοιπὸν ὁ παντεπόπτης θεὸς καὶ δεσπότης τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ κύριος πάσης σαρκός...”, Κλήμης ὁ Ρώμης, *Πρὸς Κορινθίους Α΄*, in *Βιβλιοθήκη Ἑλλήνων Πατέρων καὶ Ἐκκλησιαστικῶν Συγγραφέων* 1 (1), Ἀθήναι, Ἐκδοσις τῆς Ἀποστολικῆς Διακονίας τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 1955, pp. 37 and 38.

²⁶ “La formule (...); elle est aussi attestée dès la fin du premier siècle dans l’épître de St. Clément aux Corinthiens: LIX, 3: <<Ouvrant les yeux (...) Unique bienfaiteur des esprits/ Et Dieu de toute chair...>>”, Jean Tabet, O.L.M., *L’office des morts...*, p. 66; “La formula (...), in contesto cristiano è attestata pure nella Lettera di San Clemente ai Corinti”, G. Munarini, “I funerali secondo la tradizione liturgica bizantina...”, p. 12; see also G. Munarini, “I funerali secondo la tradizione liturgica bizantina...”, p. 12, note 34; Father Themistoclis Hristodoulou let it be understood that the text of the prayer itself, and not just the introductory formula (the incipit), would be found at St. Clement of Rome: “Τὸ κείμενο αὐτῆς τῆς εὐχῆς βρῖσκεται ξεκάθαρα καὶ στὴν ἐπιστολὴ τοῦ ἁγίου Κλήμεντος πρὸς Κορινθίους”, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 188; see also Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 188, note 391.

²⁷ *L’office des morts...*, p. 67; see also G. Munarini, “I funerali secondo la tradizione liturgica bizantina...”, pp. 12-13.

²⁸ “Spirits”, *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1818, p. 305r and *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 46r.

²⁹ “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν Πνευμάτων...”, Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 187; “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν Πνευμάτων...”, J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive Rituale Graecorum complectens ritus et ordines Divinae Liturgiae, officiorum, sacramentorum, consecrationum, benedictionum, funerum, orationum etc.*, Venetiis, Ex Typographia Bartholomaei Javarina, 1730², pp. 424, 431, 445, 446 etc.

³⁰ “Θεὸς θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός...”, LXX [*Ἡ Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη κατὰ τοὺς Ο΄ (Septuaginta)*], Ἀθήνα, Ἑλληνικὴ Βιβλικὴ Ἐταιρία, (s. a), p. 244.

³¹ “κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός...”, LXX, p. 266.

³² “καὶ ὁ κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν προφητῶν...”, *Greek-English New Testament*. Greek text Novum Testamentum Graece, in the tradition of Eberhard Nestle and Erwin Nestle, edited by Barbara and Kurt Aland [et al.]. Eleventh corrected edition, Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2008, p. 679.

³³ “καὶ ὁ κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ τῶν προφητῶν”, *Greek-English New Testament*., p. 679, note 6.

³⁴ “Cherubim”, *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1818, p. 315r and *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 55r.

Principalities; Virtues, Archangels, Angels], beings named and recorded, all the time, in the theological and liturgical texts in capital letters.

3.2. THE ADDITION OF THE WORD “Αἰδιος” (“ETERNAL”)

Another particularity related to this introductory formula is the addition of the word “αἰδιος” (“eternal”), recorded only twice in codex *Vat. gr. 1836*³⁵: “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκὸς αἰδίου...”³⁶.

Beyond the theological connotation of this expression, we want to point out that it is not alien to the liturgical tradition, being also mentioned in a prayer in *The Ordinance of Making “Cross” Brothers*: “Δέσποτα Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ ποιήσας τὸν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα σὴν καὶ ὁμοίωσιν, καὶ δούς αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν πάσης σαρκὸς αἰδίου”³⁷...³⁸. On the other hand, we consider that this is a profoundly theological one, and it is worthwhile for those interested to check whether it belongs to the Fathers of the Church in the first centuries, given its presence in manuscripts written relatively late (the 11th-16th centuries).

Even more, it manages to capture a theological truth of overwhelming importance: “the eternity of the body”, that is “the body has a beginning, but it does not have an end”. This is, moreover, a confirmation of what the Church has always confessed (see “*Prayers of forgiveness*”, cf. *Euchologion*, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 2006, p. 233), that the body is not destroyed by death, but it “is decomposed in what it was made of”³⁹.

4. THE EXPRESSION: “YOU DIDST THRUST DEATH, AND THOU DIDST BREAK THE DEVIL”

Another expression that we are directly interested in is: “*You didst thrust death, and thou didst break the devil...*”⁴⁰. On the depth of this speak both the many biblical references (2 Timothy 1:10; 1 Corinthians 15:26 and Hebrews 2:14)⁴¹, and some primary forms which we will analyze further on.

³⁵ *Vat. gr. 1836*: [78β]: Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκὸς] αἰδίου... and [79α]: Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκὸς αἰδίου]..., cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 407.

³⁶ Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 650.

³⁷ *Costant. 182* [*Euchologion*, the 15th century]: καὶ δούς αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν ζωῆς αἰδίου..., cf. A. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей, хранящихся в библиотеках Православного Востока*. Томъ II. *Εὐχολόγια*, Κίεβ, Типографія Императорскаго Университета Св. Владимира, 1901, p. 466.

³⁸ It should be noted that the study on the Internet does not indicate unfortunately the number of the cited manuscript, but the mere mention: “ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΑ ΕΙΣ ΑΔΕΛΦΟΠΟΙΗΣΙΝ / Ἁγιον Ὄρος, μονὴ Παντελεήμονος, φύλλα 60-62”, cf. <http://athriskos.gr/web/05/10/2012/1922/> (page visited on 18.12.2012). In our opinion, the recorded manuscript should be the codex *Panteleimon 780*, the only one that corresponds to the previous clues: “л. 60. Ἀκολουθία εἰς ἀδελφοποίησιν”, A. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 831; *Panteleimon 780* [*Euchologion*, the 16th century], cf. ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΑ ΕΙΣ ΑΔΕΛΦΟΠΟΙΗΣΙΝ, cf. <http://athriskos.gr/web/05/10/2012/1922/> (page visited on 18.12.2012).

³⁹ “And his body release it from what it was made of...”, *Euchologion*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2006, p. 234; “and the body be given to the one nature made by You...”, *Euchologion*, Bucharest, 2006, p. 236.

⁴⁰ “ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταπατήσας, τὸν δὲ διάβολον καταργήσας”, J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive Rituale Graecorum...*, p. 424.

⁴¹ “<<Καταργήσαντες μὲν τὸν θάνατον, φωτίσαντες δὲ ζωὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν>>. Β. Τιμοθ. Α, 10; <<Καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος>> Α. Κορινθ. ΙΕ, 26; <<Καταργήσῃ τὸν τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου, τοῦτ’ ἐστὶ τὸν διάβολον>> Ἐβρ. Β, 14.”, Αθηναγόρας (Μητροπολίτης), “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων”, p. 189; see also S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, *L’ Euchologio...*, p. 235 and Δ. Β. Τζέρπος, *Ἡ Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Νεκρωσίμου...*, p. 244.

If everything is clear about the biblical references, we can not say the same when we speak of the primary forms of this phrase. In our opinion, the diversity of these forms is perfectly perceived by specialists who notice that the current text of the prayer “*God of the Spirits and of All Flesh...*” has undergone considerable alteration:

“DUMONT (p. 588)⁴² ricorda che la redazione moderna ha alterato più volte l’antico testo che è linguisticamente più puro. Secondo lui, per es., l’espressione τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας che si ritrova in san Paolo (*II Timothy 1:10*), è da preferirsi a τὸν θάνατον καταπατήσας^{43,44}.”

Starting from A. Dumont’s remark, we could distinguish at least three forms of this expression: that of the old funeral inscriptions (which, as we shall see, gives an extra peculiarity); that of manuscript tradition and the last one (we could name it of the printed books of worship).

What remains unclear is how it came to the present form, which, although it does not have a direct scriptural theme (as have the first two), will manage to impose itself in practice.

a) The first form of the old funeral inscriptions is: “ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας καὶ τὸν Ἄδην καταπατήσας”⁴⁵.

Regarding this “primary form”, we distinguish two particularities, namely: the correct rendering of Scriptural expression from 2 *Timothy 1:10* (“καταργήσαντος μὲν τὸν θάνατον”)⁴⁶, as well as mentioning of the word “hell” instead of “devil”, feature also signaled by V. Bruni:

“In questo⁴⁷ e in tutti gli altri eucologi si ha sempre la parola διάβολον (linea 7), contrariamente a quanto avviene in tutte le lapidi funerarie che hanno regolarmente la parola Ἄδην”⁴⁸.

b) The second form of the manuscripts is: “ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας καὶ τὸν διάβολον καταπατήσας”^{49, 50}.

⁴² “La rédaction moderne a, plusieurs fois, altéré le texte tel qu’il était fixé à l’époque de notre épitaphe; la rédaction ancienne est plus pure, plus grecque que celle de la prière actuelle”, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque sur une inscription d’Égypte”, in Th. Homolle, *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’épigraphie*, Paris, Ernest Thorin, 1892, p. 588.

⁴³ “Τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας, par exemple, est préférable à l’expression τὸν θάνατον καταπατήσας, et se retrouve dans saint Paul, à *Timothée*, II, I, 10”, A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, p. 588, note 1.

⁴⁴ V. Bruni, *I funerali di un sacerdote...*, p. 153, note 264.

⁴⁵ Cf. “*Variantes données par l’inscription*”, A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, p. 587; “ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας καὶ τὸν Ἄδην καταπατήσας”, cf. “*Variantes du texte restitué de l’inscription*”, H. Leclercq, “Ame”, in *Dictionnaire d’Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, t. I, première partie: A-Amende, Paris VI, Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1924, p. 1536; see other forms in H. Leclercq, “Ame”, pp. 1529 and 1531.

⁴⁶ *Greek-English New Testament...*, p. 551.

⁴⁷ It is codex *Barberini gr.* 336.

⁴⁸ *I funerali di un sacerdote...*, p. 153, note 263.

⁴⁹ *Barberini gr.* 336 [*Euchologion*, the 8th century]: 248r, cf. S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, *L’Eucologio...*, p. 235; see also M. Arranz, *L’Eucologio Costantinopolitano agli inizi del secolo XI. Hagiasmatarion & Archieratikion (Rituale & Pontificale) con l’aggiunta del Leiturgikon (Messale)*, Roma, Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1996, p. 309 and J. Duncan, *Coislin 213. Euchologe de la Grande Eglise*, Dissertation ad Lauream, Romae, Pontificium Institutum Orientale, 1983, p. 136; see Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 41, note 222, all the manuscripts in which this form compares.

⁵⁰ *Panteleim.* 305 [*Euchologion*, the 16th century]: 81v: ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας τὸν δὲ διάβολον καταπατήσας, cf. Δ. Β. Τζέρπος, *Ἡ Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Νεκρώσιμου...*, p. 244; “ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας, καὶ τὸν διάβολον καταπατήσας”, Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. I)..., p. 650; *Crypt. gr. Γ.β.* XI [*Euchologion*, the 12th century]: [ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας καὶ τὸν διάβολον πατήσας, cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 41, note 222.

One of the few liturgists who signals the difference between the text of the manuscripts and those of the printed editions is J. Duncan⁵¹. Father Themistoclis Hristodoulou also records two new forms (one inverted and one shortened) of this expression, which appear in two manuscripts from Italy: *Messin. Bibl. Univ. S. Salvat. gr. 153*⁵² and *Grottaferrata Γ. β. X*⁵³. About abridged form, rendered in codex *Grottaferrata Γ. β. X*, which at the same time certifies the oldest compact structure of the *Funeral Ordinances*, we can say that, beyond being the most faithful form of the Scriptural expression from 2 *Timothy* 1:10 (“καταργήσαντος μὲν τὸν θάνατον”), also confirms the truth of A. Baumstark’s statement, according to which the abbreviated structures (forms) are the primary ones (ancient, authentic)⁵⁴.

c) The third form, the current one, is: “ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταπατήσας, τὸν δὲ διάβολον καταργήσας”⁵⁵.

The peculiarity of this last form lies in the fact that it reverses the primary meaning of the Scriptural expression in 2 *Timothy* 1:10, replacing it with the one in *Hebrews* 2:14 (“καταργήσῃ τὸν τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου, τοῦτ’ ἔστιν τὸν διάβολον”)⁵⁶. Unfortunately, the specialists do not remember anything about how these changes took place and how they came to the present form, already rendered by a twelfth-century Sinai codex (*Sinai 963*)⁵⁷. In our opinion, this last form, which appears not at all by chance also in the manuscript *Sinai 963*, could be one of the features of the “imprint” which the “Sinaitic” liturgical tradition would leave to this prayer.

5. THE EXPRESSION: “AND YOU GAVE LIFE TO YOUR WORLD”

Another feature worth highlighting is the form of the verb (“δωρησάμενος”) from the expression: “and You gave life to Your world”⁵⁸, which also has an indirect basis in the Holy Scripture (cf. 2 *Maccabees* 3:35; *John* 6:33).

This form would be imposed relatively late, along with the printed editions of the cult books, but as we shall see, it can be found even in some manuscripts dated in the eleventh century. According to V. Bruni, the form “δωρησάμενος” would not appear in manuscripts earlier than the 12th century, being very likely a particularity of savait origin: “Quanto alla parola δωρησάμενος (linea 9) ricordiamo che appare già al sec. XII nel cod. *Paris C362*⁵⁹ (f. 160v), il cui contenuto è legato alla Laura di san Saba”⁶⁰. Returning to the forms of this verb, it must be first remembered that the primary texts containing the prayer “*God of the Spirits and of All Flesh...*”, that is, those of old burial inscriptions, are the first to produce a

⁵¹ *Coislin* 213..., p. 136, note 1.

⁵² *Messin. Bibl. Univ. S. Salvat. gr. 153*: ὁ τὸν διάβολον καταργήσας καὶ τὸν θάνατον, cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 40, nota 221; see also Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 299.

⁵³ *Grottaferrata Γ. β. X*: ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας, cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 40 and E. Velkovska, “Funeral Rites...”, p. 46.

⁵⁴ “L’*évolution même de la simplicité primitive vers la richesse*”, *Liturgie comparée*, Chevetogne, 1953³, p. 26.

⁵⁵ J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive Rituale Graecorum...*, p. 424.

⁵⁶ *Greek-English New Testament...*, p. 565.

⁵⁷ *Sinai 963 [Euchologion, the 12th century]*: [ὁ τὸν θάνατον πατήσας καὶ τὸν διάβολον καταργήσας, cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 41, note 222.

⁵⁸ “καὶ ζωὴν τῷ κόσμῳ σου δωρησάμενος”, J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive Rituale Graecorum...*, 424.

⁵⁹ “Rituale, et euchologium lauræ S. Sabæ”, H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque nationale, Troisième partie: Ancien fonds grec, codd. 2542-3117. Coislin. Supplément grec. Autres bibliothèques de Paris. Départements*, Paris, Librairie Alphonse Picard, 1888, p. 189.

⁶⁰ *I funerali di un sacerdote...*, pp. 153-154, note 264.

unique form, distinct from the present one, and then, for a long time, recorded by the manuscript tradition: “καὶ ζωὴν τῷ κόσμῳ χαρισάμενος”⁶¹. If the primary texts of the funeral inscriptions and the current ones of the printed worship books carry a single form of the verb (that is “χαρισάμενος” and respectively “δωρησάμενος”), the same can not be said about the manuscript tradition, which uses them both. The first of the manuscripts that record the primary form (“χαρισάμενος”) is, undoubtedly, *Barberini gr.* 336 (the 8th century)⁶². Here are some other manuscripts that reproduce the same form: *Coisl.* 213⁶³ and *Grottaferrata gr. G. b.* 1⁶⁴. Regarding the presence of the current form in the manuscript (“δωρησάμενος”), we would like to say that Father Themistoclis Hristodoulou remembers two manuscripts from Italy, which already indicates it in the eleventh century: *Vat. gr.* 1836⁶⁵ and *Barb. gr.* 431⁶⁶. It is very likely that the number of manuscripts in which the current form is indicated (“δωρησάμενος”) is much higher, so specialists should also focus on these issues.

We would conclude the brief analysis of the verb form (“χαρισάμενος” respectively “δωρησάμενος”), stating that a strict delimitation in the manuscript tradition of the use of the two forms would be, on the one hand, difficult to signal, and, on the other hand, difficult to explain, since we encounter manuscripts that record the current form beginning with the eleventh century and even in the sixteenth century⁶⁷.

6. THE EXPRESSION: “IN ABRAHAM’S, ISAAC’S AND JACOB’S BOSOMS”

One of the fundamental additions in the prayer “*God of the Spirits and of All Flesh...*” is the expression: “*in Abraham’s, Isaac’s and Jacob’s bosoms*”⁶⁸, which is unfortunately missing from the present form of the prayer, and which has direct and indirect grounds in the Holy Scripture (*Luke* 16:22-23⁶⁹; cf. *Matthew* 8:11⁷⁰; *Luke* 13:28⁷¹; *4 Maccabees* 13:17⁷²).

⁶¹ A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, p. 584 and H. Leclercq, “Ame”, pp. 1531, 1532; “τῷ κόσμῳ χαρισάμενος”, cf. “*Variantes données par l’inscription*”, A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, p. 587; “τῷ κόσμῳ Χαρισάμενος”, cf. “*Variantes du texte restitué de l’inscription*”, H. Leclercq, “Ame”, p. 1536.

⁶² *Barberini gr.* 336: 248r: καὶ ζωὴν τῷ κόσμῳ χαρισάμενος, cf. S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, *L’Eucologio...*, p. 235.

⁶³ *Coisl.* 213 [*Euchologion*, a. 1027]: 89r: καὶ ζωὴν τῷ κόσμῳ χαρισάμενος, cf. J. Duncan, *Coislin 213...*, p. 136; see also M. Arranz, *L’Eucologio Costantinopolitano...*, p. 310, note 1 atop.

⁶⁴ *Grottaferrata gr. G. b.* 1 [*Euchologion*, the 11th century]: 115v: καὶ ζωὴν τῷ κόσμῳ σου χαρισάμενος, cf. M. Arranz, *L’Eucologio Costantinopolitano...*, p. 309.

⁶⁵ *Vat. gr.* 1836: [78β] and [79α]: δωρησάμενος, cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Η νεκρώσιμη ακολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 41, note 224.

⁶⁶ *Barb. gr.* 431 [*Euchologion*, the 11th-12th centuries]: [132α]: δωρησάμενος, cf. Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Η νεκρώσιμη ακολουθία* (vol. II)..., p. 41, note 224.

⁶⁷ *Panteleim.* 305: 81v: καὶ ζωὴν τῷ κόσμῳ σου δωρησάμενος, cf. Δ. Β. Τζέρπος, *Η Ακολουθία τοῦ Νεκρωσίμου...*, p. 244.

⁶⁸ “ἐν κόλποις Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ”, A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, p. 584.

⁶⁹ “εἰς τὸν κόλπον Ἀβραάμ: (...) ὁρᾷ Ἀβραάμ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν καὶ Λάζαρον ἐν τοῖς κόλποις αὐτοῦ”, *Greek-English New Testament...*, p. 215; see also S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, *L’Eucologio...*, p. 236, note e, etc., B. Botte, “Les plus anciennes formules de prière pour les morts”, in *La maladie et la mort du chrétien dans la Liturgie*, Conférences Saint-Serge XXI^e semaine d’études liturgiques, Paris, 1^{er}-4 juillet 1974, *Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae. Subsidia* 1, Roma, Centro Liturgico Vicenziano-Edizioni Liturgiche, 1975, p. 93 and Δ. Β. Τζέρπος, *Η Ακολουθία τοῦ Νεκρωσίμου...*, p. 243, note 3, etc.; “<<Κόλπους Ἀβραάμ>> Λουκ. ΙΣΤ, 23”, Ἀθηνᾶγορας (Μητροπολίτης), “Ο Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων”, p. 189; “Saint Luc, *Év.*, XVI, 22”, A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, p. 588, note 2; “LE SEIN D’ABRAHAM.– L’image du sein d’Abraham, comme celle du rafraîchissement, vient de la parabole de Lazare et du mauvais riche: après sa

About this expression, the specialists have written a lot, since it is, on the one hand, the only one that portrays the real difference between the various texts (funerary inscriptions, manuscripts, printed texts), and, on the other, because it is able to give us even data about the origin of this prayer. A detailed analysis of this expression we also made in a study⁷³ and in an article⁷⁴, which is why we will not insist on it here.

7. THE EXPRESSION: “YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS RIGHTEOUS FOR EVER, AND YOUR WORD THE TRUTH”

The expression “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth*”⁷⁵, which concludes the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”, and which is directly grounded in the Holy Scripture (*Psalms* 118:142; *John* 17:17), is the one that actually pushed us to analyze this prayer. But what caught our attention in particular was the form of the word “*Word*” (cf. *Psalter*, Kishinev, In the Exarchate Printing of Bessarabia, 1818, p. 305r and *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 46r), used in the first editions of the *Psalter* printed in Kishinev (1818 and 1857), with capital letters; a form that sadly does not appear in any place in the Holy Scripture. Moreover, in many editions of the Holy Scriptures does not appear this word, but another one (“*law*”). Although there might be many “speculations” about this form, we are of the opinion that only a precise textual analysis is able to bring to light its real significance, which is why we will continue to refer to matters strictly related to the text and to the context in which its meaning is stated.

First of all, we want to say the verse: “*Your word the Truth*”, from *The Gospel after John*, chapter 17, verse 17⁷⁶, previously specified, is not signaled by the studies mentioned as biblical reference, in the context in which these works recall and analyze, more or less, the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”. The only one pointing to this reference is Metropolitan Athenagoras, who gives it exactly as it appears in the editions of the *Psalter* printed in Kishinev (1818 and 1857), that is, in capital: “<<Ο Λόγος ὁ Σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστι>> Ἰωάν. ΙΖ. 17.”⁷⁷. On the other hand, the omission of biblical reference from *John* 17:17 by the specialists does not seem to be at all accidental, since textual logic clearly shows that it is an

mort, Lazare est transporté dans le sein d’Abraham (*Luke* 16:22-23). L’expression est connue de l’Ancien Testament”, B. Botte, “Les plus anciennes formules...”, p. 93.

⁷⁰ “ὅτι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἤξουσιν καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν”, *Greek-English New Testament...*, p. 18; see also B. Botte, “Les plus anciennes formules...”, p. 93, S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, *L’ Eucologio...*, p. 236, note f, etc. and Δ. Β. Τζέρπος, *Ἡ Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Νεκρωσίου...*, p. 243, note 3, etc.

⁷¹ “ὅταν ὄψησθε Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ καὶ πάντα τοὺς προφῆτας ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ”, *Greek-English New Testament...*, p. 207; see also S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, *L’ Eucologio...*, p. 236, note f, etc.

⁷² “οὕτω γὰρ θανόντας ἡμᾶς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ὑποδέχονται καὶ πάντες οἱ πατέρες ἐπαινέσουσιν”, *LXX*, p. 1176; see also B. Botte, “Les plus anciennes formules...”, p. 93.

⁷³ See N. Preda, *Rânduiala rugăciunii ce se face după ieșirea sufletului din trup (The Ordinance of the Prayer to be Made after the Soul left the Body)*, pp. 234-259.

⁷⁴ See N. Preda, “The prayer <<The God of the spirits...>> (an expression that disappeared from liturgical structures: <<in Abraham’s, Isaac’s and Jacob’s bosoms>>”, in *International Journal of Theology, Philosophy and Science*, Vol. 1, No. 1/2017, Târgoviște, Valahia University Press, pp. 36-44.

⁷⁵ “ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ λόγος σου ἀλήθεια”, J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive Rituale Graecorum...*, p. 424; “ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου, δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ νόμος σου, ἀλήθεια”, *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, σπουδὴ καὶ ἐπιστάσια Σπυρίδωνος Ζέρβου, Ἀθήναι, Ἐκδοτικὸς οἶκος Ἀστήρ, 1992, p. 395.

⁷⁶ “ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστιν”, *Greek-English New Testament...*, p. 306.

⁷⁷ “Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων”, p. 190.

integral verse (142) from *Psalms* 118, written, is right, in an unprecedented form, recorded for the first time in a fourth-century manuscript, that is “codex S”⁷⁸ or “Codex Sinaiticus”⁷⁹.

It is very interesting to see how this form (that from “Codex Sinaiticus”) will still be imposed early in the liturgical tradition, proof being, on the one hand, the texts of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*” from the funeral inscriptions⁸⁰, and, on the other hand, those texts written by the vast majority of manuscripts⁸¹, some of them decisive for the study of the evolution of Orthodox Byzantine worship.

In our opinion, the form “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth*” would be imposed first of all because it would be able to best express the truths of faith that the Church began to formulate and propose even in the cult ordinances. However, we encounter old texts of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”, this time giving the other form: “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth*”⁸². If things seem to be somewhat clear about the primary forms of the expression “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth*”, in the sense that they represent a unitary form, not the same can be said about the printed texts, where we seem to have a variety of forms⁸³ whose occurrence can only be explained to a small extent.

The fact is that we are confronted with a phenomenon that would not be overlooked even by specialists, who note that the current text of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*” has been altered and no longer corresponds to the primary form, which was much cleaner (neat): “*La rédaction moderne a, plusieurs fois, altéré le texte tel qu’il était fixé à l’époque de notre épitaphe*”⁸⁴; *la rédaction ancienne est plus pure, plus grecque que celle de la prière actuelle*”⁸⁵. A satisfactory explanation for this phenomenon is hard to propose, which is why we will try to limit ourselves only to point out certain elements which, we think, can bring more clarity. A first form we have noted in our books of worship is that of *Euchologion*,

⁷⁸ Cf. LXX, p. XXIII and A. Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis*, in *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, vol. X, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979, p. 11.

⁷⁹ *Codex Sinaiticus*: 122v: Η ΔΙΚΑΙΟCYNΗ COY ΔΙΚΑΙΟCYNΗ EIC TON AIΩNA KAI O ΛOΓOC COY AΛHΘIA, cf. *Codex Sinaiticus*, <http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/manuscript.aspx?dir=next&folioNo=3&lid=en&quireNo=6&side=r&zoomSlider=3> (page visited on 18.03.2013); see also LXX (vol. II), p. 139, note 142, and A. Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis...*, p. 300, note 142.

⁸⁰ “καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ὁ λόγος σου ἡ ἀλήθεια”, cf. “*Variantes données par l’inscription*”, in A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, pp. 587-588; “καὶ δικαιοσύνη σου δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ λόγος σου ἡ ἀλήθεια”, cf. “*Lapide di Daninos*”, in V. Bruni, *I funerali di un sacerdote...*, pp. 152 and 154.

⁸¹ “καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου δικαιοσύνη <εἰ>ς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ λόγος σου ἀλήθεια”, Θ. Στ. Χριστοδούλου, *Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (vol. II)..., 41.

⁸² “*justitia est testimonium tuum in aeternum et vera est lex tua*”, I. Guidi, “Due antiche preghiere nel Rituale abissino dei Defonti”, in *Oriens Christianus*, n. s. 1 (1911), p. 23; to be noted that I. Guidi gives also the Greek text of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”, using the edition of a *Euchologion* which he does not indicate, but which contains the form from “codex S”: “ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ὁ λόγος σου ἀλήθεια”, cf. “*Due antiche preghiere...*”, pp. 22-23.

⁸³ “ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου, δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ νόμος σου, ἀλήθεια”, *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, Ἀθῆναι, 1992, p. 395; “ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ὁ νόμος σου ἀλήθεια”, cf. “*Grand Euchologe*, Venise, 1869, p. 394”, in A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, pp. 587-588.

⁸⁴ “Si tratta di una lapide, che Daninos Pascià raccolse in un bazar del Cairo nell’anno 1870 e che sembra provenire ugualmente della Nubia. Centro di interesse e di discussione tra gli specialisti è la datazione, i cui estremi oscillano tra il 344 e il 1243”, V. Bruni, *I funerali di un sacerdote...*, p. 150.

⁸⁵ A. Dumont, “Fragment de l’office funèbre de l’Église grecque...”, p. 588; “DUMONT (p. 588) ricorda che la redazione moderna ha alterato più volte l’antico testo che è linguisticamente più puro”, V. Bruni, *I funerali di un sacerdote...*, p. 153, note 264.

where the expression “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth*”⁸⁶ from the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*” corresponds to that in Psalm 118 (“*Blessed are the undefiled in the way...*”) from the *Funeral Ordinances for the Laity*⁸⁷. Unfortunately, the concordance between the two texts will appear in the *Euchologion* relatively late, only in the 1965 edition⁸⁸. Until the 1965 edition, most of the *Euchologions* present an unique form in the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”⁸⁹ and another one in Psalm 118 from the *Funeral Ordinances for the Laity*⁹⁰. Nuances of this expression are also found in Greek-language cult books. So if in old *Euchologions* we find an unique form in the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”⁹¹, in Psalm 118 from *Funeral Ordinances for the Laity* we find the “ordinary” one from the *Psalter*⁹². There is, however, one exception recorded by one of the printed editions of the *Euchologion* in Greek, found even today in use, which also mentions an unique form in the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”⁹³, which appears also in Psalm 118, namely “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth*”⁹⁴. A second form that drew our attention is that of the verse 142, from Psalm 118, reproduced in *Horologion*, in *The Midnight Office for Weekdays*: “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth*”⁹⁵. But it happened that we noticed the form of the verse 142, from Psalm 118, in an older edition of the *Horologion*⁹⁶, where, to our surprise, we found another form: “*Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth*”⁹⁷. This form was to be introduced into the *Horologion* only in the edition from 1973⁹⁸; in the other editions (“the first”⁹⁹ and the fourth¹⁰⁰) was to be reintroduced the “ordinary” from the *Psalter*¹⁰¹.

⁸⁶ *Euchologion*, Bucharest, 2006, p. 205.

⁸⁷ *Euchologion*, Bucharest, 2006, p. 216: “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth”.

⁸⁸ *Euchologion including sermons, ordinances and prayers that the priest performs in different circumstances in the life of Christians*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1965, pp. 171 and 182.

⁸⁹ “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth”, *Rich Euchologion*, Bucharest, In Eliad’s Typography, 1832, p. 158.

⁹⁰ “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *Rich Euchologion...*, p. 170; this form of Psalm 118, verse 142, is the same with that in the *Psalter*.

⁹¹ “ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ λόγος σου ἀλήθεια”, *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, Ἐνετίησιν, Παρὰ Νικολάου Γλυκεῖ τῷ ἐξ Ἰωαννίων, 1806, p. 440.

⁹² “Ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου, δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ νόμος σου ἀλήθεια”, *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, Ἐνετίησιν, 1806, p. 451.

⁹³ “ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου, δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ νόμος σου, ἀλήθεια”, *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, Ἀθῆναι, 1992, p. 395.

⁹⁴ “Ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου, δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ νόμος σου ἀλήθεια”, *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, Ἀθῆναι, 1992, p. 405.

⁹⁵ *Horologion*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2001, pp. 22 and 30; this form coincides with that in the current Bible (the synodal text).

⁹⁶ *Horologion*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1979³.

⁹⁷ *Horologion*, Bucharest, 1979³, p. 23.

⁹⁸ “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth”, *Horologion*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1973², p. 23.

⁹⁹ “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *Horologion*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1970, p. 23.

¹⁰⁰ “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *Horologion*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1984⁴, p. 24.

¹⁰¹ “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *Psalter of the Prophet and Emperor David*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1971³, p. 199; “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *Psalter of the Prophet and*

An original form of the verse 142, from Psalm 118, reproduced also in the *Horologion*, in *The Daily Midnight Prayer*, is the one in the edition from 1945, which also appears in the *Little Horologion*¹⁰²: “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Pure Truth”¹⁰³.

It should be noted, however, that these forms are not arbitrary, but they are found in one of the editions of the Holy Scripture, thus:

- a) “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your word the Truth”¹⁰⁴;
- b) “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”¹⁰⁵;
- c) “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Pure Truth”¹⁰⁶.

In our opinion, all this variety of forms indicated in the precedent “betrays” a particular affinity of the editors of the cult books to the biblical texts that we encounter in the cult. On the other hand, we would like to draw attention to a statement made by Fr. Prof. Ene Braniște in *General Liturgy*: “... in the new version of the *Horologion* from 1970, reproduced exactly in 1973”¹⁰⁷, which is not entirely true, since there are differences in text between the two editions of the *Horologion*, as we have seen above. Inaccuracies of this kind appear, we believe, because of the lack of textual liturgical studies. So research on the text should be a priority for today’s liturgists, given that we have a great deal of material to which, unfortunately, no one has turned.

A final analysis, which has helped us bring extra light into all this issue, takes into account the form of the verse 142, from Psalm 118, from the *Psalters* which we have used in drafting the text “*The Ordinance of the Prayer to be Made after the Soul left the Body*”¹⁰⁸. Here are these forms:

- a) “Your righteousness is righteous for ever/ and Your law the Truth”¹⁰⁹;
- b) “Your righteousness is righteous for ever/ and Your law the Truth”¹¹⁰;
- c) “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law/ the Truth”¹¹¹.

Emperor David, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1975⁴, p. 194.

¹⁰² “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the pure Truth”, *Little Horologion*, Bucharest, Printing House of Church Books, 1939¹⁰, p. 14.

¹⁰³ *Horologion*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1945, pp. 11 and 17.

¹⁰⁴ *The Bible that is the Divine Scripture of the Old and New Testaments*, Bucharest, “King Carol II” Foundation for Literature and Art, 1938, p. 617 and *New Testament*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1930, p. 96.

¹⁰⁵ *The Bible or the Holy Scripture*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1975, p. 626 and *The Bible or the Divine Scripture*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1982, p. 626; “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *The Bible or the Divine Scripture*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1968, p. 626; “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *The Bible, that is God's Scripture of the Old and New Laws*, Bucharest, Printing House of Church Books, 1914, p. 758.

¹⁰⁶ *The Holy Scripture*, Bucharest, Printing House of Church Books, 1936, p. 658 and *The New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Psalms*, Bucharest, Printing House of Church Books, 1937, p. 103.

¹⁰⁷ *General Liturgy with notions of Church Art, Architecture and Christian Painting*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1993², p. 656.

¹⁰⁸ We have already mentioned this study in the previous notes.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1818, p. 217r, lines 9-10; “Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law the Truth”, *Psalter*, Iași, 1818, p. 156r, lines 13-15.

¹¹⁰ Cf. *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 201r, lines 3-4.

¹¹¹ Cf. *Psalter*, Kishinev, 1907, p. 363, lines 5-6.

So none of these *Psalters* contains the form given in the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”.

CONCLUSION

Due to its seniority in particular, but also to the fact that it still exists in all the ordinances from the funeral, the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*” is considered by experts as one of the oldest Christian prayers for the dead.

Concerning the various textual forms of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*”, which appear in the books of worship and which have a direct theme in the Holy Scripture, we would like to underline an essential point, that is, that the introduction of a synodal “preferential” text of the Holy Scriptures into the books of worship is not always a success, since this fact confers uniformity on liturgical texts, but, on the other hand, impoverishes the variety of shapes and shades that essentially define the Byzantine cult. Moreover, we consider the statement of Father Robert Taft, one of the liturgists who studied closely the Byzantine liturgical phenomenon, on the improper name of “*Biblical Psalter*” (cf. “Mount Athos: A Late Chapter in the History of the <<Byzantine Rite>>”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 42 (1988), p. 181) is more than eloquent.

About the textual forms of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*” one could write a lot more, since we are confronted with a phenomenon that will not be overlooked even by specialists, who note that the current text of the prayer “*God of the Spirits...*” has been altered and no longer corresponds to the primary form, which was much cleaner (neat), but, as we have said, our analysis only addresses some aspects that might be taken into account, we would say, when determining the origin of this prayer, but not only.

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THE IMPORTANCE AND ROLE OF VIRTUES IN THE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSON

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ABSTRACT

Virtues are the first to contribute to the deeper definition of the soul that is why the acquisition of virtues is a continuous and steady training to imitate the life of obedience and the sacrifice of Christ's love for its fellowmen. Acquiring virtues is a precondition for man to open up his ability to love. All virtues lead the mind to the pursuit of divine love, which is, in fact, an embodiment of the divinity that is secretly lowered into the nature of man. It is the virtue that gives man the constant disposition to do the good. This virtuous disposition of man is mysteriously hidden by God in the depth of the soul. It is revealed through body in the process of doing. If the soul lacked the flesh, it would only have a virtuous mood or enjoy the virtues of virtue itself. That is why, it is by the flesh that the manifestation of these goods of virtues towards all the others is done. From this point of view, the social character of virtues is observed.

Keywords: virtues; spiritual life; moral life; Christianity;

1. INTRODUCTION

Virtues are the means of connecting and communication between man and God. They are a rational skill of the man who perseveres in freeing from the bondage of passions and imprinting, by imitation, the divine attributes in his nature. "Virtue means the rule of mind by mind, the mind being the one who wants all that God desires from the human nature; guided, taught and guided by reason, the mind desires all that God desires in regard to the human nature," says St. Maximus¹. In this sense, virtue is the one that appears to be the "last desired good" by man, for through virtue that total imprint of divine goodness in man is accomplished, the one which St. Maximus calls "perihoretic action."

Only in God, by virtue, is everything known by its being, but in connection with God. In God (in virtue) we will find out what, how and to what purpose are they. By virtue of "we will not direct our desire to know towards something determined, the knowledge of

¹In the thought of St. Maximus, virtue is a rational skill because reason, as the power of mind of analytical and distinctive knowledge, is that which constrains and submits the idleness and lust to the mind, as powers that bind the soul either to the body or to the plan above nature that opens to your mind. It is the mind that stands above these three powers of mind (reason, indolence, and lust) analytically analyzing both the totals of the nature and those that are above the wings. Virtue is a rational understanding because it is the reason that cleanses sinful thoughts, both indolence and lust (as spiritual powers), thereby succeeding in gaining from them an undivided will between good and evil, thus lifting man to knowledge full of pure feeling. See St. Maximus, *Ambigua*, PG. 91, col. 1068C; Romanian translation, PSB 80, p. 68;

any thing or the one directed at anything after God being overtaken by us," says Saint Maximus².

Virtue is from God and toward God. St. Maximus sees it as being:

“the movement of the will in resonance to the reason we were created from, pre-existing in God, which is in God and within God, and if its movement is in accordance with reason, man will fully reach into God, becoming through full growth more and more in God, or even God by grace”.³

Following Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, Saint Maximus states that rationales are "*divine willingness*," but they are not inertial models, but are God's creative powers that call created rational beings to contemplate the patterns of things, and "one who has been taught to look godly to the rationale of things can easily develop and differently the meaning of these ideas". Thus, any reason of any existing created thing is, in some way, the being of virtue, and because reason is the expression of the God's will, that is, what God wished and still wishes for created rational beings to make, we can powerfully state that the virtue of all virtues is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Reason or the Incarnated Word. That is why St. Maximus states: "*Everyone who shares virtue with an unshakable manner undoubtedly partakes himself of God, the being of virtues*"⁴.

Virtues are naturally natural, they exist in all men the same way, the inequality between us consisting in the fact that we do not all put the same thing into the work of the flesh. In this sense Saint Maximus says: "The purpose for which we were created is to put into the work all the same things of nature, so that it should look like a nature in all, so a virtue, not receiving in it more for some or less in others, and the endeavour and the struggle that follows have been added to the virtue lovers only for the purpose of removing the deceit that is being introduced into the soul by the senses and not to introduce virtues like something new from the outside". So, virtues are in us since our creation. That is why, says Saint Maximus, "*as soon as the deception is fully removed, the soul shows the brightness of virtue.*"⁵

1. VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL PROGRESS OF MAN

The spiritual progress of man takes place in two stages: the practical stage and the contemplative stage. Those who are in the first stage have not yet gained steadfastness in the realization of the good because they have failed to totally remove himself from the world, from the bodily affection. That is why, for those in the practical phase, a determination in the realization of virtues is required, because the virtues are those that break the chains of the bodily affection, realizing the total estrangement from those belonging the being and those from the outside, while being familiar with contemplation and with God, says St. Maximus.⁶ By means of virtues one can accede to the stage of contemplation, in which those who are in

²St. Maximus says that the natural tendency of the will created for Good is present in man, because there is a supreme all-powerful Good, therefore the will tends naturally for the good, and once in God, as All-encompassing Good, it can no longer depart from Him . See St. Maximus, PG. 91, col. 1077B; English translation from Romanian., p. 79;

³*Ibid*, PG. 91, col. 1080C; English from Rom., p. 81;

⁴*Ibid*, PG. 91, col. 1081D-1084A; English from Rom., p. 85

⁵Idem, The dispute of Saint Maximus with *Pyrhus*, PG. 91 col. 309C, Rom. translation by Father. Dumitru Stăniloae, in P.S.B. 81, Ed. I.B.M. al B.O.R., 1990, p 333

⁶Idem, *Ambigua*, PG. 91, col. 1109AB; .rom. translation, PSB 80, pp. 108-109

this phase are resolute, are totally immersed in knowledge, through perseverance and steadfastness in virtue.

By virtue of virtue it is necessary to overcome this body which is under the control of affection towards passions. Through the two stages, practical and contemplative, virtues work by overcoming the body possessed by passions (subject to degradation). St. Maximus says that it is not the body, in general, that must be overcome, but the passionate state of the body, enshrined in the flesh by means of passions.

The manifestation of virtues in the flesh removes this sinful state, the purification and elevation of its model, God, its Creator being performed. Besides, this is also a desire of the body that it is longing for. St. Maximus says that the virtue of the body makes the body "beautified with divine appearances".⁷ Just as the soul takes "earthly face" through the body, so does the body takes "the divine image" through the intercession of virtues within it. Through the intercession of virtues in the flesh, the imprinting of divine spirituality in the flesh is accomplished. A convincing example of this is the Holy Revels of the Saints, who, being filled in the flesh, by printing, by the intercession of virtues, by divine grace, become whole, sacred and carriers of the "spirit".

St. Maximus says that divine life is an icon of virtues laid for everyone's sight, for imitation purpose, through the body, "the body is the above-virtuous mother of virtues."⁸ Virtue is the harmonization of the soul as an opening to love made through the body. When virtue is related to love, it creates true communion, and when it is related to passions, this communion is destroyed.⁹ Virtues are the ones that make man permanent with God, so much so that he becomes "god," after receiving the grace within. For this we must understand virtue as the continuous movement of nature toward God. Virtue requires a continuous effort, for "the only way to end the virtue is the fall," Saint Maximus states. Virtue is the one that never dies, because it is understood as a continuous state of fulfilment of good. Therefore, understood as a state, virtue can never stop, but understood as a way of being, virtue decreases or becomes inactive.¹⁰

St. Maximus states: "*Stopping on the way of acquiring virtues is the beginning of sin*", so any hesitation in getting the virtuous state is dangerous, even if this stop does not mean falling into sin. Stopping on the way of gaining virtue is temptation, the moment when reason still fulfils its role of showing the false character of the deed, but an extension of this interruption will surely lead to the fall of sin.

In the sinful state, virtue remains at the state of remembrance, and may encompass potentiating forms with the help of reason, which in sin always has the form of consciousness; the latter cannot be conceived as a blind movement, but as a moral power, a form of rebellion of the our nature against the irrationality and the falsehood created by sin. This form of revolt of reason is moved by the Holy Spirit, but also by the Holy Angels, St. Maximus states¹¹.

⁷*Ibid*, PG. 91, col. 1112A; Romanian translation, p 110;

⁸Idem, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, PG, 90, col. 244BC; Romanian translation., Father. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae in *Romanian Philokalia*, vol. III, electronic edition, Apologeticum Publishing House, (www.angelfire.com/space2/carti/), 2009, p. 22

⁹See Aristotel Papanikolaou, *Learning How to Love: Saint Maximus on Virtue*, in *Knowing the Purpose of Creation Through the Resurrection-Proceeding of the Symposium on St. Maximus the Confessor*, Sebastian Press & The Faculty of Orthodox Theology- University of Belgrade, 2013, p.241

¹⁰ Virtue is a state of human being, not a state of its own, but a mood for the realization of the good.

¹¹Of Saint Maximus, PG 90, col. 305ABC; rom. translation, p. 81

Therefore, only virtuous life is the only life according to the reason of nature, virtue being the active mode of the being of man, while sin is the passive mode of being. But according to the active or passive work of man, the work of virtues is mysterious, and it is only performed in grace by the Holy Spirit.

2. VIRTUES - MEANS OF KNOWING AND UNION OF MAN WITH GOD

Virtue is the development of man according to God, with absolute good through self. This human development is accomplished, as we can see, through skill. It is considered to be a good practice for us who cannot have good by being, and this good development of man through virtue means, in fact, participation to God's life, to the good life. The willingness to contribute to our perfection is expressed by virtue, which is the expression of our liberty, as the gift of God. Virtue is the one that highlights the good that exists in us since creation, as a cause and purpose at the same time.

St. Maximus says, "*By pushing the way of good by virtue we become gods, receiving the power of being gods from God, as some who have freely added, by our own choice, the resemblance, made by virtue, to the natural good of the form*". By doing so, Saint Maximus wants to show that the good we have received along with the creation is developed by us by means of virtues. The performing of good by means of virtue equals the development according to the nature and the reason planted in nature by the Creator, which will bring, through progress according to nature, the deification of the human nature by grace. Thus, by means of virtue a progress is being aimed at, a development of nature to its deification in accordance to nature. In this regard, Saint Maximus states: "*God descends by grace to man, because man is raised up in grace of God by means of virtues,*" for "it is with and through Him that we are alive, we move and we are" (Acts 17:28).

Man, as a "theological" being, rational, free, spirited, has the tension of uniting with God planted in his being, by reason; this unconditionally draws him and takes the whole weight of sin off, making him truly free and rational, worthy of union with Him, living by virtue, the fullness of existence, in the light of which he truly knows himself. By knowing himself, he recognizes the infinite beauty of the Archetype, forgotten because of the sin; because man is from God "as God", in and through God. This union is accomplished in grace through the work of the Holy Spirit, a work that exceeds both our powers and the world we live in, assisted by the power of virtues planted in the human being.

In this process all virtues contribute to the formation of an inseparable organism, worthy of union with God. St Justin Popovich states:

"All virtues are in themselves a spiritual chain that connects man to God, each virtue increasing its power with another virtue to becoming the same being, the differences between them being the honour granted to each one"¹².

In this regard, the relationship between the theological virtues, faith, hope and love, with the other virtues, must be understood.

Considered to be divine goods flowing directly from God over our nature and being in direct connection with God, virtues help us to come closer to God and to get intimate to Him, because of the grace that is poured upon us through them. Faith, hope and love, as theological virtues ("divine virtues"), are the complete, perfect means of knowing and uniting man with God. That is why Saint Maximus states:

¹²Saint Justin Popovich, *The Path to Knowing God*, rom. transl. by Monahia Domnica (Țalea), Egumenița Publishing House, Galați, 2014, p. 117;

“Knowledge and union are gained in the paths of love so that we can always be in and with God. In this union the intellect receives intelligible enlightenment, in this light man knows God. Then, as far as possible for the human spirit, we fully enter into the nature of God's attributes through the Holy Spirit”.¹³

We could say that these three virtues, called theological virtues, are the ones that bring us into the divine universe, to God, because through them God infiltrates ineffably in the mind and heart of man.

Virtue unfolds on two levels: sensitive and intelligible. The virtue of the body has as its tendency the end or the victory over the passions that bring the unmixed good to the being, and the virtue of the soul is aimed at the end or the removal of any ignorance enveloping the mind and reason, thus bringing simple truth to the being, according to Saint Maxim. Un combined good and simple truth are the effects of the theological virtues or, more precisely, the purpose of these virtues, since faith is the firmness of nature into the truth and the good, hope is the promise of nature in the acquisition of the truth and the good, and love is the desire for unity, in truth and in goodness, with God, as the last desired good.

We could say that these three virtues, called theological virtues, are the ones that bring us into the divine universe, to God, because through them God infiltrates ineffably in the mind and heart of man. Virtue unfolds on two levels: sensible and intelligible. The virtue of the body has as its tendency the end or the victory over the passions that bring to the being the unmixed good, and the virtue of the soul is aimed at the end or the removal of any ignorance enveloping the mind and reason, thus bringing simple truth to the being, says Saint Maxim. Un-blamed good and simple truth are the effects of the theological virtues or, more precisely, the purpose of these virtues, since faith is the non-clinging of the flesh in truth and good, hope is the promise of the flesh in the acquisition of truth and good, and love is the desire for unity, in truth and in goodness, with God, as the last desired good. Knowledge and union of man with God are the effects of these three virtues, which at the same time, stands for a crowning of all virtues. *“Love is the virtue of all virtues, all virtues assist the mind in the pursuit of divine love.”*¹⁴. The theological virtues are the only virtues that, by their substance, materialize all other virtues. In this regard, Saint Maximus states:

“He who loves God surely loves his neighbour, for the fruits of love are: doing good to the neighbour from the bottom of your heart, to endure for a long time, to be tolerant, and to use things for the right reason”.¹⁵

Love is the essence and connection of the person. By love, the human person frees himself from the impersonal nothingness and draws near the personal God. *“Perfect becomes the being of person whose love never ceases,”* says St. Justin Popovich.¹⁶ The power of love shared with the soul of the Holy Spirit, though distinct from the divine hypostasis of the Spirit, is not a created effect, a mere coincidence whose existence would hinge upon our created nature, but an uncreated grant, divine and deifying energy in which we partake in God in a realistic manner. Love is from God, says St. John the Evangelist (1 John 4: 7). But this love as a divine gift presupposes a personal disposition of human nature, a seed or power of love in the human being called to attain perfection in love.

¹³ Maxime le Confesseur, *Centuries sur la Charité*, II, 26. trad. Pegon, Sources chrétiennes 9, p.101, apud Vladimir Lossky, *Vision of God*, translated by Prof. dr. Remus Rus, EIBMBOR, Bucharest, 1995, p. 111

¹⁴ Aristotel Papanikolaou, *op.cit.*, p. 241;

¹⁵ Saint Maximus the Confessor, *Heads of Love*, rom. translation by Rev. prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2009, pp. 53-54;

¹⁶ Saint Justin Popovich, *op.cit.*, p. 127;

3. VIRTUE OF LOVE AND DEIFICATION OF MAN

The purpose of a Christian is to unite with God through and in love. In order to achieve perfection, the experience of God must first be purified. Ascetism, performed through love, purifies reason, and descends into the heart, the mystic of the intellect unites by love with the mystic of the heart, the union of these two opening the way to a type of spiritualization that will engage the whole being of man.

Perfection involves the whole human being; while man remains human with his soul and body by nature, he becomes with his soul and body entirely god out of grace, Saint Maxim the Confessor states.¹⁷ Deification determines everything; it is the supreme target of human will. This causes man to feel urged to come to unity with God, to overcome the limited nature in its pursuit.¹⁸ Perfection stands for a mystical experience of the eternal presence of God within man, and this is accomplished beyond intellect and senses, by overcoming them; that is why it is addressed to man as a whole. Man's perfection is the result of an infinite process of reason that loves the Good. Only the love of good lives forever; only this love is true knowledge.

Deification is the fruit of perfect love, a mind cleansed of passion and affection for everything in the world. Impassion is the most active opening of the soul toward God and toward others; it is love as the culminating virtue or is the unity of the soul with the body and man as a whole with the universe as a whole. Love is in all; it is the tool for deification by excellence, salvation being gained by the love for God and by deeds: "Through one's patience one will acquire his soul" (Luke 21:19). St. Maximus says, "God draws to Him the mind purified through love, as the sun draws the healthy eye to light"¹⁹, and once the mind is united to God, it bears in itself almost all the divine qualities.

In God, man and the world do not become two distinct realities, but they are enlightened, transfigured, they become a true being, freeing themselves from non-being. The peak of spiritual life, as Nicolai Berdyaev states, is not only the union with God, but the realization of its love and creative force through this union directed towards any creature: "Love is truly the creation. Through this love the commandment of Christ is fulfilled: love for God, love for man."²⁰ "Happy is the man who can love every being with the same love," St. Maximus says. It is the love that crowns the being and spiritualizes the soul. It is the mystical love or the mystic (mystery) of the love of the new birth, of the spiritual birth. In other words, it is the fulfilment of the commandment of Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbour as thyself" (Mark 12: 30)²¹, or "love more, learning at the same time how to love."

In love, God and man become models for each other: God is the model by which man has become saint, and the holy man is the pattern God has become man,²² St. Maximus says. Out of love, God's greatest nearness to the world has come about, which has produced His relation to man, and man's love produces deification as the closest approach to God. God equals man through love, and man rises to God through love. The mind that rises to God

¹⁷ See Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, PG. 91, col. 1344D; Rom. transl., PSB 80, p. 291;

¹⁸ Deification is the participation in the life of God; the deified man, however, does not become God by nature, but he remains human, just as reddened iron does not become fire but remains iron. Christ being God, communion with Him is communion with God, that is, deification through grace.

¹⁹ Idem, *Capita de charitate*, PG. 90, col. 967A; rom. transl., p. 54

²⁰ Nicolai Berdyaev, *Spirit and freedom. A test of Christian philosophy*, transl. by Stelian Lăcătușu, Paideia, Bucharest, 2009, p. 283;

²¹ Aristotel Papanikolaou, *op.cit.*, p. 241;

²² Saint Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, PG. 91, 1113B; Rom. transl., PSB 80, p. 112;

through love becomes at that moment divine; love makes us become "god" as the effect of the presence of Christ descended to us out of love for us people.²³

The whole spiritual progress of man is realized through and in love, the ascetic mood cannot lead anywhere without love. Therefore, to the extent that reason is maintained in the constant love of God, the power of knowledge grows and love grows, and becomes stronger. Perfection consists in this stability and the consolidation of reason in the love of God.

The virtue of love, as a theological virtue, ultimately, immediately and directly aims to the union of man with God, the source of love. Love is the appearance of God in the soul of man, such as faith is the revelation of man before God, St. Justin Popovich notices.²⁴ To gain this virtue, man needs divine grace, as a worker of love within man. Love cannot be attained very easily or in an automatic way; the latter is acquired with much effort, patience, vigilance and struggle. That is why the one who has love will never fall, because he is in a constant struggle for this love. Man cannot attain love alone by himself but by participating in this process with his own will, by freely receiving the loving power that is accomplished in the mutual dialogue, by grace, with God. With the help of grace, love becomes a powerful completion by which God freely leads man on the path of perfection to Him. Thus, love becomes the architect of our being, who secretly builds into it all other virtues.

It is love that perfects the human nature until it "*makes it appear in unity and identity with the divine nature through grace.*"²⁵ In the love of God, every human person finds perfection; or in other words, people cannot reach their perfection unless the unity of human nature is achieved. The love of God will therefore necessarily be related to the love of the neighbour. This perfect love will make man look like Christ, for he will be united by his nature created with all mankind, and he will reunite in his person what is created with what is uncreated, the human compound and the grace of God. Thus in love for one's neighbour will be the sign of the true love for God. St. Maximus says that the love of God and the love for the neighbour are the two dinars that the Saviour gave to the caretaker of the guest house to care for you. The virtue of love is the safest "way" to God, and "the one who has acquired the virtue of love has acquired God Himself, because God is love" (1 John 4:16), St. Maximus states.²⁶

So all the conditions necessary for the attainment of the last purpose, deification, are offered by God in grace through the work of virtues. But union with God is not the fruit of an organic and unconscious process; it is fulfilled in us, in love by the grace of the Holy Spirit and our freedom.

CONCLUSION

Every man is part of God, on the one hand, considering the pre-existing in God reason that he was created from; on the other hand, because if he moves according to this reason he will fully reach God. That is why reason has always the tendency to keep nature in the rationality that characterizes it, helping the nature in the practice of removing passions through virtues. By reason, man is called to the right judgment; he is called to the relationship of love that is realized in the rational and conscious union with God. This relationship of love, which is mutual, is the shortest way to God. Through the way of virtue,

²³Basile Tatakis, *Byzantine philosophy*, Romanian translation by Eduard Florin Tudor, Second Edition, Nemira, Bucharest, 2013, p. 123.

²⁴Saint Justin Popovich, p. 131.

²⁵ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG. 91, col.1402; rom. translation, p. 342.

²⁶ Idem, *Capita de charitate*, PG. 90, col. 1065CD and 1073A; rom. Translation, pp. 109, 113.

a stability of reason is achieved in the completion of the good, as an expression of soul experience and self-control. By means of virtue the soul strengthens and stabilizes itself, acquiring a firmer character in the choice of the good, and this stability is supported by reason. In this respect, Saint Maximus says: "*Virtue is the way of maintaining and actively achieving the reason of nature.*"²⁷

So, through virtue, the power of the Divine Reason is manifested, which has planted and maintains through them both the knowledge of the good and the movement toward it. As we could observe, virtues belong to the upper part of the soul, to the intellect, but they do not remain the virtues of the intellect (intellectual virtues as Aristotle called them) because they maintain and develop all this superior form of manifestation of the soul (contemplation, reason and will) in the body; the former equals the three theological virtues: faith, hope and love.

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²⁷Idem, *Ambigua*, PG. 91, col. 1106C; rom. Transl., p. 104.

*EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND RELIGION STUDIES

SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to explore strategies for inclusive education policy in Romania. To this were analyzed indicators on the coverage of the school-age population identified as a population with special educational needs and integrated into mainstream education. In line with inclusive education policies in Romania was performed and an analysis of strategies for achieving inclusion process of people with special educational needs in mainstream schools in Romania. Research methodology turned to the following research techniques: analysis of legal documents describing the policy of inclusion in mainstream education of children with special educational needs, secondary analysis of statistical data on the number of children with special educational needs integrated into mainstream education, analysis quality indicators specific integration into mainstream education of children with special educational needs. The findings reflected the following: there is political inclusion in mainstream schools for children with special educational needs and are provided strategies for attracting and keeping the mass education of this category of persons. Quality education for this category of persons is subject to fundamental operation of multidisciplinary teams at each school and adult education institutions on observance of the right to education for all.

Keywords: education; inclusion; inclusive school; equal opportunities

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education described in the context of considering the paradigm of *education for all*, characterized by: inclusive learning environment and quality education for all children, irrespective of: social status, minority, cultural and intellectual development performance. Statement from Salamanca¹ (1994) definition includes all children "all children, whether ,, children with disabilities, gifted children, homeless children, children from remote or belonging to nomadic groups, children belonging to linguistic minorities, ethnic or cultural children HIV or belonging to any other vulnerable groups ". Education in postmodern society highlights the need for achievement whenever an educational process

¹ UNESCO, Statement from Salamanca and the action for the education of persons with special needs adopted at the World Conference on "Education for people with special needs: access and quality", Salamanca, Spain, June 7 to 10, 1994

based on non-discrimination and equal opportunities, the uniqueness and dignity of every child to quality education for all. It is estimated that education quality in the context of inclusive education is analyzed from the perspective of educational resources exploitation to create learning opportunities for each student. The social systems identify structures that have different representations of special educational needs issues, which includes most often a derogatory record. In public space, identify: discriminatory views against the prospect of integration into mainstream education of children with special educational needs, extensive reviews wary opposite the perspective of integration and social inclusion. Moreover, the term, special educational needs "in the common sense, placing explanation about matters covered by this disability, defect or failure of a person. These children are identified and referred to children with disabilities, "phrase stigmatizing behaviors associated with the development of type stigmatization, marginalization and social exclusion. Examples of social space we gave and still gives us pictures or speeches by parents of children with disabilities severely affected by denial of their children emotionally by those who consider that they are children or adults, normal ". Within the society, special educational requirements overlap with education for children with disabilities to integrate and social functioning within the normal limits. Stigma and denial of such children is justified in the context of poor mentality of parents regarding the negative impact on the education of their own children, knowing about the problems faced by children with special needs. It is considered that in Romania there are 71 798 children with disabilities. Of these, 46 661 are situated in the segment of school age between 7-17 years. According to Center of Bucharest for Resources and Educational Assistance for the school year 2015-2016 in Romania were oriented mainstream schools a total of 350 children with special educational needs, and more than 1,200 children to special schools. Practitioners appreciate that their number is doubled that of children whose parents refuse undiagnosed or diagnosis².

Inclusive society strengthens its existence under a coordinated and related social dynamics at social subsystems. In sociology, the functionalist paradigm systemic and explains this complex process of existence and operation of inclusive society. (Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, Robert King Merton, Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown, Bronislaw Malinowski, Niklas Luhmann, Gerhard Lenski.)

1. INCLUSIVE SCHOOL, CONTEXT AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

„The concept of social inclusion "is a broad concept that supports the common sense explanation inclusion, insertion, acceptance, recognition and valorisation of the person or social group of which it forms part. In general, the explanation, social inclusion "is plastic assertions register a person subject integration and full recognition of the rights and liberties in concluding the social conditions on three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. Legislation in Romania, operating with the concept of inclusion which it defines as follows: „The process of social inclusion comprises measures and multidimensional actions in the areas of social protection, employment, housing, education, health, information communication, mobility, security, justice and culture, to combat social exclusion and to ensure active participation people from all economic, social, cultural and political society "³.

What is „ School for All? "What are the determinants of its work here?

Discourse about inclusive school concern throughout Europe and beyond. At international level there were numerous interventions by various organizations campaigning

² www.reninc.ro

³ According to art. 6 lit. c) from Law no. 292/2011 – The Law for social assistance

for children's rights and that allowed the signing of agreements on recognizing and supporting the rights of children with disabilities. In accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:⁴

„a child with physical or mental disabilities, must ensure a full and decent life in conditions that would ensure dignity, promote its autonomy and facilitate the child's active participation in the community”. In this framework emphasizes the importance of the right to special care for children with disabilities, the right professional advice given to them and those in charge of their upbringing and schooling. Support for and aspects of securing effective access to education, training, health care and rehabilitation to promote social integration and personal development of children. The document stresses the importance of considering the size of the right to education is Statement from Salamanca (2001)⁵.

„, which states that every child has the fundamental right to education and special educational needs arising from the presence of a disability or learning difficulties”. International classifications consider the following criteria for the classification of disability: somatic, physical, sensory, motor. In terms of learning difficulties speak: dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia. Statement from Salamanca emphasizes that all children should benefit from child-centered pedagogy and access of disabled children to a regular school system with inclusive orientation. It also assigns an important role in promoting early childhood development and readiness for school

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) reiterates the importance of compliance by Member States the principle of equal opportunities for this category of people further underlines the importance of recognizing access of education and hence the inclusive school. In 2010, Romania was drafted Law. 221 Convention for ratification.

“The participating states recognize the right of persons with disabilities to participate equally with others in cultural life [...] to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative potential, artistic and intellectual, not only for their own benefit, but also to enrich the entire society; [...] to ensure that laws protecting intellectual property rights do not constitute a barrier to unreasonable and discriminatory access for people with disabilities to cultural materials [...] to recognize and support their linguistic and cultural rights, including sign language and culture people with hearing [...] to participate, on an equal basis with others, to recreation, leisure and sports [...] children with disabilities have equal access with other children in terms of participation games, recreation and leisure, sports activities, including the activities taking place in the school system”⁶

According to the study conducted by the European Agency for Special Needs Education in the developmental and Eurydice⁷ on practices related to inclusive education in 30 European countries reveals that countries are promoting policies and inclusive practices, by providing services in inclusive schools such as Spain, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Cyprus; countries that are implementing different models of inclusive education and special such as Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Austria, Finland, Great Britain, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia; of developed countries where educational systems are different: special education and inclusive education.

⁴ Art. 23 (1) from International Convention for Childs Rights i

⁵Statement from Salamanca, 2001

⁶ Art. 30 from United Nations Convention for the rights of disabilities persons

⁷ Special Needs Education In Europe (2003), European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, and Eurydice, Brussels.

For this case, organizing the education system is governed by special laws⁸. Recent statistical data, according to the World Health Organization (2016), reveals that the world identified a number of 1 billion persons with disabilities (15% of the world's purse with some form of disability). Of these, half of them have no access to medical services. Of all people with disabilities, 100 million are children.

Regarding the interpretation of inclusive education perspective in national laws are different explanations. We present below an exhaustive interpretation. Thus, in Norway they have the right to special education students who do not or can not benefit sufficiently active teaching in mainstream education; they are entitled to special education. The structure of the courses offered must be achieved so as to benefit their appropriate relative to other students in relation to educational objectives realistic for them. Students receiving special education have the same total number of teaching hours as other pupils. Education experts established: the benefits of schooling in mainstream education, learning difficulties it has student and other special import conditions for teaching, student learning goals realistic; It also provides support for integration into mainstream education and identify appropriate. In the US, for a child is identified as a disabled person in the context of considering the level of educational performance were adversely affected, to be accessed special services. „To qualify for special education services, a student must demonstrate a disability in one of the 13 specific categories, including autism, developmental disabilities, specific learning disability, mental disorder, emotional and / or behavioral disability , speech and language disability, deaf-blind, visual impairment, hearing impairment, orthopedic disorders or physical health, other disorders (including attention deficit disorder), multiple disabilities and traumatic brain injury. "In England, children have special educational needs are considered children who have learning difficulties and need special education provision. It considers learning difficulty if: a) have a higher / significant difficulty to learn than most children of the same age or b) have a disability that prevents them from benefiting from the educational facilities provided by the school children of the same age the local education authority. A child has "special educational needs" if he has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational procedure for him. A child has a "learning difficulty" if it has difficulty significantly higher in learning than most children his age, he has a disability which either prevents him from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided the general age of the schools in the local education authority, or under compulsory school age, or if special educational provision was not made for him. Switzerland also advocates school for all schools.

Thus children and young people up to age 20 years, who live in Switzerland are entitled to special education services under the following conditions: previous compulsory education, if it can be that child development is limited or no risk of harm to future development and that the requirements of primary school children are hardly touched without additional support or during compulsory education, it has been established that development and education prospects are limited and need special educational support. In Sweden, there is a definition designed for expression, special educational needs". Thus, education is based on a "school for all" and focuses on access to education for all. This means that students who need special support or define not treated differently from other children and their rights are not specified separately. The school is required to reach all students' needs. Poland also gives us a framing and conceptualizing inclusive school. Thus, education for children with special needs refers to special needs children and youth with

⁸ Voicu, N., Baba, L. (coord). 2009. Report on the situation of inclusive education in Romania – 2007-2009, p. 10. Centrul Educația 2000+, Fundația de Abilitate Speranța.

developmental disabilities. The educational process requires a special organization of pedagogical work, working methods and equipment. This can take place in schools or special schools. Addresses: students with mild mental disabilities, students with moderate and severe mental disabilities, students with disabilities severe mental student's deaf students with deaf, blind or visually impaired, physically disabled, chronically ill, difficulties psychiatric with autism, with multiple disabilities with social and behavioral problems with speech and communication problems. Estonia is the country who appreciate the requirement in terms of educational or intellectual supradotării student performance compared to its biological age. Thus, students with special educational needs are students whose remarkable talent, learning difficulties or behavioral health problems, disability or long-term absence from studies creates the need to make changes or adjustments in the content of education, processes study or learning environment (study aids, classrooms, language communication, including alternative communication teachers and there are specially trained support staff.

2. METHOD

For the state of inclusive education in Romania, has conducted a case study that aimed to evaluate inclusive education policies in Romania in 2007-2017. They were designed following specific objectives: analysis of strategies of inclusive education policy; analysis of indicators on the coverage of the school-age population is identified as a population with special educational needs and integrated into mainstream education; analysis strategies for achieving process of school inclusion of people with special educational needs in schools in Romania.

Research methodology turned to the following research techniques: analysis of legal documents describing the policy of inclusion in mainstream education of children with special educational needs, secondary analysis of statistical data on the number of children with special educational needs integrated into mainstream education, analysis quality indicators specific integration into mainstream education of children with special educational needs.

3. FINDINGS

In Romania it adopted a series of measures and legislative packages to facilitate integration into mainstream education of children with special educational needs. In this context, it took into account the specific harmonization of domestic legislation with European and international framework (Jomtiem 1990 Declaration on Education for All, Standard Rules on Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities, Statement from Salamanca 1994 World Declaration on Education for All Charter of Fundamental European-2000 / C364 / 01 where in art. 21 and article 26 are specified aspects of non-discrimination and integration of people with disabilities Declaration E9 Statement "Education for All in 2000, adopted at the fourth summit of the first nine countries with the largest population "UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities in 2006 in national education according to law, according to OM 5573/2011, education for persons with special educational needs is realized in special and mainstream schools as forms of special education and special integrated preschool, primary, secondary, vocational, secondary and post for persons with special needs (deficiencies / disabilities / learning difficulties, impaired language and communication, social-affective and behavioral disorders).

Within public schools, the implementation of the educational work using specifically for each student considered student with special educational needs who designs a

personalized plan and multidisciplinary plurisectorială interent. Integration into mainstream education of children with special educational needs, according to current regulations, require resource centers and pedagogical assistance, grant from the assessments made of a certificate of school and professional orientation comprising: diagnosis / impairment, the degree of his / her.

Depending on this, children with special needs are oriented in mainstream education or in special education as follows: children with special needs integrated in mainstream education, mainstream education curriculum that follows; children with special needs integrated into special groups / classes organized in mainstream education; special needs children in special education; Special Needs children requiring hospitalization periods greater than 4 weeks are organized, as appropriate, group or class within the health unit where they are hospitalized; special needs children who, for medical reasons or because of a disability, are homebound, which is organized home schooling over a period of time.

To these and other measures are in place for granting various material benefits or financial support to keep people identified with special needs in the education system. As forms of support are identified: daily feed allowance and allowance for school supplies, bedding, clothing and footwear.

In Romania, according to statistics provided by National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption (ANPDCA) in June 2016, the situation of children with disabilities, certified, are as follows:

Table 1. The situation of children with disabilities in Romania according to the degree of disability

Total children with disabilities , including	71798
disabled children enrolled in grade slightly	1647
disabled children enrolled in grade medium	18910
children involved in serious disabilities	15001
children involved in very serious disabilities	36240

Source: ANPDCA, Romania, 2017

Most children identified with disabilities increased and serious. To these children interventions require special education, complex package of measures (medical, educational, social), implemented through institutions (special schools or homes hospital, recovery, specialized care centers). The other part lies in the segment of children with disabilities and mild (around 19 500 cases) and subject to interventions at specialized education in mainstream schools.

Table no 2. Children with disabilities by age

Disabilites category	Age category			
	0-2 year	6-13 years	7-13 years	14-17 years
disabled children enrolled in grade slightly	45	49	5	400

disabled children enrolled in grade medium	82	43	531	933	6	4064
children involved in serious disabilities	13	13	658	853	6	4353
children involved in very serious disabilities	18	14	629	667	6	4287
TOTAL	64	75	067	1000	2	7796
	50735					

Source: ANPDCA, Romania, 2017

The children that impose complex package of measures implemented, nurseries, kindergartens and mainstream schools are institutions that implement inclusive education programs. The fewer children are found in age group of 0-2 years to 7-13 years which requires supplementation specialists to intervene from an interdisciplinary perspective on issue of special educational needs.

4. DISCUSSION

It can be seen that the legal provisions mentioned attaches great importance to compliance the principle supported equal opportunities for all and equal access to education to all children. In this context, educational policies encourage school attendance by providing various training aids or financial benefits to all categories of the identified children with special educational needs. Politically we can say that there are efforts. From interviews with teachers dealing with children with special education, to find that beyond educational policy efforts have demarcated a series of actions of education of the masses on the principle of equal opportunities for all. There were situations where these children are special,, "are exposed to labeling processes, marginalization and social exclusion. In these situations, teachers have the obligation modeling behavior of others towards tolerance, equality, acceptance and valuing the person and to achieve educational process to meet the needs of all learners. The strategies adopted at group level socio-educational are multiple: from the physical concerning adaptation space class or other spaces used for learning in the education and teaching concerning aspects customizing curriculum modification and its adaptation to the capacities of each child for developing descriptors progress and school performance according to the specific special needs⁹. Educational activities are conducted under clear design the aims of education. Adapting curriculum be made taking into account: support pedagogical recommendations, individualized education plan, national curriculum and methodological guidelines on curricular adaptations and Assessment of Educational Progress in the context of inclusive education. Individualizing instruction is a student-centered teaching approach based on learning its peculiarities

For children with special educational needs to consider the size of differentiated education aimed at training processes of adaptation to the peculiarities of psycho-behavioral, emotional and intellectual means of one or more students. Pre educational process is linked to the clarification by the teacher on matters covered by special requirements. In this context it needs to collaborate with specialists in other sectors that are empowered to clarify all aspects covered by specific requirements (needs, risks, opportunities, results). These include, in particular by: supporting teachers, social workers, psychologists, specialists.

⁹ Anghel, G. A, 2017, Interventional partnerships in the Education of Children with Special Needs în Revista de Asistență Socială, nr. 1/2017, Editura Polirom.

CONCLUSIONS

These perspectives to explain the education for people with special educational needs, taking into account the principle of equal opportunities to education for all. Inclusive school is school education that develops the conditions for an educational process that uses resources didactic materials according to their potential of each student and conducive to academic success. Learning can not be ensured only under multisector considering an intervention model in which specialists from various sectors (itinerant teachers, social pedagogues, psychologists, social workers, doctors, counselors, therapists) to intervene simultaneously. Adopt a personalized service determined according to the needs of each learner can successfully contribute to the progress of each person.

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THE ROLE OF INTERACTIVE METHODS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY CHILDREN'S CREATIVITY

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ABSTRACT

Primary children's education requires from educators the use of a wide range of methods. The more creative the personality and methods of education of teachers, the more creative classes become. The present paper is a theoretical approach intended to emphasize the role of interactive teaching methods in the development of creative thinking of primary pupils. There is a theoretical part, presenting the inventory of the most efficient methods, a methodological part, with the specific aspects of each method when applied and an analytical part, encompassing the SWOT analysis of each, as well as obstacles that teachers may encounter when using them in class. The conclusions will envision the psychological and methodological implications of using such methods that develop the creativity of primary children. A special attention is paid to the experiential domains each method is applied mostly to and to the way primary teachers should develop their own creative style of teaching. Several directions of teaching research methodology shall be drawn in relation to this topic.

Keywords: primary teaching; education; creative thinking; creativity;

INTRODUCTION

The theoretical approach of this theme envisions the theories of creativity and creative thinking on the one hand and the inventory of interactive methods which help the former develop and blossom on the other hand.

Contemporary society is characterized by radical changes which take place not only in science, technique or culture but also inside human brain. It has already been proven that children think faster than their one hundred years ago fellows. The accelerated thinking comes along with performance and progress not only in science and technology but also in the creative thinking inside human brain.

If “*The last two decades have given greater importance to an education based on shaping and developing the students’ cognitive and functional action skills. (...) Today's society requires an education guiding learning to a pragmatic, valid storage of knowledge which necessary for the individual functioning in the social area*”¹. Along with the pragmatic

¹Alina Anghel, *Modern Teaching Assessment and Implications of Learning Motivation*. In Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala. June, 2017, Volume 9, Issue 19(1), 65-66

view, it is necessary for the education specialists to equally emphasize the creative side of the process. The efficiency of the learning process requires a creative teaching adapted to each student's needs and skills. The performer student of the future, regardless of how pragmatic the approach on knowledge may be has to go through a process infused by creativity. Every invention and every performance in any field of knowledge cannot but be preceded by a creativity process. And creativity, either we understand it in terms of process, product or trait of personality is nevertheless a work in progress. This paper is meant to discuss how interactive methods used in primary years help children develop their creativity in language and communication classes.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical background of this paper encompasses two theoretical approaches: the interactive methods and creativity. Romanian classifications of the interactive group methods and techniques proposed by the prominent personalities of the Romanian pedagogy translate the ones which have already been used and discovered in Europe. For the past ten years, Romanian methodologists have chosen the ones that group them according to their main didactic function².

1. Interactive group teaching-learning methods and techniques: reciprocal teaching as a learning method, the Mosaic method, Comprehensive learning, Waterfall, STAD- the Method of learning in small groups, The method of team contests, The method of swapping pairs, The Pyramid method, Dramatized learning, Heuristic conversation, Group debate and discussion, Group problematization, Didactic game, Case study, etc.

2. Interactive methods and techniques meant to consolidate and systematize the pupils' knowledge and to provide an alternative check-out/evaluation of their knowledge: cognitive/conceptual map, Matrixes, Cognitive chains, Causes and effects diagram, Cobweb, The Lotus Flower Technique, The RAI method, Lighted cards, Individual and/or group portfolio, Reflexive diary, Case study, Investigation etc.

3. Creativity-boosting problem solving methods and techniques: Brainstorming, Stellar explosion, The Method of the Thinking Hats, The Carousel, Multi-voting, Round Table, Group Interview, Philips 6/6, The 6/3/5 Technique, Creative controversy, The Frisco Method, Synectics, The Delphi Method etc.

4. Group research methods: group research topic/project, team experiment, group portfolio, etc.

We will focus (selectively) on some of the methods and techniques meant to develop creativity in language and communication classes.

As for creativity at primary children, we have followed the natural historical approach of it³:

a. Guilford J.P. (1950) who envision creativity along with the abilities and skills we encounter at most people; he was interested in the way the creative personality manifests through skills, attitudes and temperamental qualities.

b. Allport G.W. , who considers that creativity can't be limited to just some categories of personality instance: skills, attitudes and temperament qualities.

c. Gallton F. (1869) thinks that genius people are endowed with exceptional intellectual and mental skills.

² Oprea, C.-L.- *Strategii didactice interactive* (Interactive Didactic Strategies), E.D.P, 2008, p.256

³ Synthesis from the book entitled Creativity, Anoiko, 2011, downloaded from https://oiko.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/2011_wiki_anoiko_creativity1.pdf

d. Cattell J.M. (1903) studied the activity and life of one thousand personalities and reached the conclusion that they are defined by exceptional hereditary qualities.

e. Weisberg R. Considers that all creative personalities (where there is creation there is a genius too) have a certain number of common features amongs which are: knowledge interests, judgement intelligence, self-confidence, intuition and a form of self perception as a creative individual. He states that at present it is little known about the characteristics of a genius, the concept in itself being a myth. He brings forth the following arguments:

- a. The psychological traits may not causally relate to the creative activity
- b. Creativity does not manifest not even to the greatest artists or scientists , which indicates the fact that genius is not a constant trait;
- c. Genius is a characteristics that the society atributes to the work results of an individual.

As for the interpretations of the Romanian psychologists, almost all of them cover the directions envisioned by world wide specialists. Thus, Rădulescu – Motru talked about creation in terms of energetic personality and vocation; Ralea M. Considers originality much closer to feelings than to intellectual factors; Pavelcu V. Considers the creative personality as integrating specifically the motivations of the individual; Odobleja Ș. tried in the work named Consonant Psychology (1938) to operationalize the cognitive elements of discovery and invention in an operational sui-generis model of relation which possesses the tridimensional model of the intelligence issued by Guilford (1967) or the model of creative thinking belonging to Torrance (1974)⁴. Munteanu Anca in her work entitled „Incursion in creatology” offers information about creativity in all fields of knowledge. She states that being creative means seeing the same thing as everybody else but thinking of something different⁵. Roșca Al. emphasizes the complexity of the phenomenon and argues that it is impossible to reach a coomn ground when it comes to defining creativity since each authors places a different accent on a specific dimension.

He states that according to some authors „ creativity is the capacity to produce something new and valuable” and according to others it is a process leading to product⁶. According to Popescu – Niveanu P. (1987) „creativity involves a general personality setting towards something new, to a certain form of organization of the psychic process within the personality system”. He considers the creative personality the one characterised by the proper interaction between aptitudes and attitudes⁷. Boden Margaret A. (1992) considers creativity as being „performing new original combinations amongst old ideas”. The new combinations should have a certain value⁸.

One of the most valuable interpretation of creativity could be found in contemporary works belonging to W. Duff issued in XVIII century. The hypothesis of his theory is rooted in the analysis of genius minds like Platon, Shakespeare, Descartes, Bacon, Newton sau Berkeley.

W. Duff distinguished three faculties of the creative mind: imagination, judgement and taste ehich he considers to be the main components of genius. He states that imagination

⁴ Synthesis and translation from Gabriela Popescu, Psihologia creativității, Ed.Fundației România de Măine, București, 2007, p.11-123

⁵Anca Munteanu, Incursiune în creatologie,Timișoara: Augusta, 1994, pp. 309-314

⁶ Roșca, Al., Creativitatea generală și specifică. Ed. Academiei, București, 1981, p. 16

⁷ Gabriela Popescu, Psihologia creativității, Ed.Fundației România de Măine, București, 2007, p.7

⁸ Margaret A. Boden, The Creative Mind, Myths and mechanisms, second edition, Routlege, London and New York, 2004; downloaded <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/52f1/53075b22469fa82ecb35099b8810e95c31f6.pdf>

goes hand in hand with divergent thinking and judgement with convergent thinking. Taste is approached as an extrajudgement more of an esthetic nature, conferring elegance to our thoughts⁹. Teresa Amabile (1983) considers that making decisions involves the process of creativity many times. On the one hand, the creative solutions assures solving the problem with an unexpected efficiency and on the other hand they display an amazing elegance and simplicity¹⁰.

She states that creativity encompass the following three components:

1. qualification, the degree of specialization in the respective field.
2. Creative abilities include a cognitive and a perceptual one favourable for tacking a problem
3. Intrinsic motivation presuposes the preparation for an activity that seems fascinating and generates glee and satisfaction.

So, what is creativity, after all and how can we approach it, know it and stimulate it? The theories of famous researchers like Kubie, Piercon, Bejan, Piaget J., Richard, Muchielli R., Vîgotskii L. Or the ones mentioned above may be a possible answer.

If we were to conclude, creativity is the capacity to produce new products which are at the same time original and effective.

As for creativity structure, research done by Gollann (1963) envisions several approaches:

- a. Creativity as a personal characteristic;
- b. Creativity as a product;
- c. Creativity as a specific process¹¹.

Along with the development of pre-school learning, special attention has been paid to the development of creative tools and methods which are meant to stimulate children's abilities to learn. The process of developing a child's creativity follows almost the same structure, both focussing on the interdependence between the creative process, the creative product and the creative personality.

2. ARGUMENT OF THE PAPER

Our opinion states that even if not all children are creative, a good teacher should be a creative personality who is able to use creative methods of teaching. Teaching creatively and using creative methods is not one and the same thing.

But one compelling request for a teacher who wants to get creative students is to rely his teaching on the methods and techniques meant to develop creativity. Our paper today relates only to methods and techniques used in language and communication classes.

3. ARGUMENTS TO SUPPORT THE THESIS

One strong argument to support our thesis is rooted in the importance of creativity in language and communication classrooms. Why is creativity important in language classrooms? First of all, the very use of a language is a creative act: we transform thoughts into language that can be heard or seen. We are capable of producing sentences and even long texts that we have never heard or seen before. Secondly, children do not master the level of an adult when it comes to expressive language, so teachers have to often use creative

⁹ Encyclopedia of Creativity, vol. I, Academic Press, electronic edition, 1999, p. 316

¹⁰ Amabile, Teresa M.; Barsade, Sigal G; Mueller, Jennifer S; Staw, Barry M., "Affect and creativity at work," Administrative Science Quarterly, 2005, vol. 50, pp. 367-403.

¹¹ Gabriela Popescu, Psihologia creativității, Ed.Fundației România de Măine, București, 2007, p.14

methods for making up for lack of language in a communicative situation (e.g. miming, drawing, paraphrasing used for getting meaning across). Other relevant aspect refers to the fact that most children become more motivated, inspired or challenged if they can create something of value, if they feel that in some ways what they do and how they do reflects who they are. Derived from here is the consequence that creativity improves self-esteem as learners can look at their own solutions to problems and their own products and see what they are able to achieve.

Creative work in the language and communication classroom may lead to genuine communication and co-operation. Learners use the language to do the creative task, so they use it as a tool, in its original function. This prepares learners for using the language instrumentally outside the classroom.

Creative tasks enrich classroom work and encourage collaborative learning. The process of learning in itself becomes more enjoyable by tapping into individual talents, ideas and thoughts - both the learners' and the teacher's. Creative thinking is an important skill in real life. In order to think creatively one needs to be first encouraged and taught to do so. One needs to understand that creative thinking is part of our survival strategies and it is a force behind personal growth and the development of culture and society.

4. ARGUMENTS TO ARGUE THE THESIS

The theoretical arguments that could contradict the thesis of the paper may start with the very course of society development: more and more the emphasis is laid on developing performers and not complete personalities. The performer student of the future has got a more pragmatic approach on knowledge. He is encouraged by family or society culture to focus on one job that he may be good at and which may get him or her financial benefits. Rarely are the children encouraged to seek personal growth along with the other basic needs. Our children are taught to seek financial stability and only then they may be allowed to pursue their talents, which are permitted at first instance as hobbies. We haven't witnessed very often school reforms infused by creativity in Romania. We are still committed to getting performers rather than complete and fulfilled personalities. It is a paradox, because after studying the background education and personality history of all inventions and inventors researcher have come to the conclusion that every invention and every performance in any field of knowledge cannot but be proceeded by all stages of a creative process. And creativity, either we understand it in terms of process, product or trait of personality is nevertheless a work in progress.

4.1. Structure

While lecturing still tends to be the easiest form of instruction in Romanian schools (although education studies have shown that students absorb the least amount of information that way), things have been switched off a little when it comes to primary and preschool teaching. Along with the primary school reform started in 2008, an open-minded attitude has considerably helped teachers apply innovating new teaching methods. Although not all teachers correctly understood how to apply the new integrated curriculum, they have gradually strived to accept new ideas even if it looked like strange at the beginning.

Collaborative learning with technology

Collaborative learning is typically understood to be a situation in which two or more students work together to search for understanding or meaning, or to solve a problem. Students might work together to make meaning by creating an artefact or product. Collaborative learning is an important learning strategy for educators to teach and to use in

their classrooms. It improves student knowledge by combining strengths, sharing responsibilities and learning from one another, which brings together many opportunities for enriching knowledge.

As everyone knows, the end result of collaborative efforts is always immense. For the last ten years both in kindergartens and primary schools, Romanian teachers have collaborated and have introduced innovative teaching methods. Interactive teaching methods are an effective way to connect with a generation of students used to consistent stimulation and education. But since teachers have to be consistent also with the technological advances in teaching, we suggest Professor Kevin Yee's¹² advice for how teachers can make their lessons more interactive. He is the author of "Interactive Techniques," a collection of more than 100 teaching strategies—compiled from different sources—that aim to energize students and engage them in lessons.

Some of the techniques look and feel like they might have a different tone to them than your usual mannerisms in class. The most used techniques recommended by him are: Follow the Leader, Total Physical Response (TPR), One Word, Opposite Arguments, Historically Correct, Test Tournament, YouTube Video Quizzes, Electronic Role Playing. Students create their own blogs and write diary-style entries while role-playing as someone central to the content being discussed. Non-formal learning should not be an option but a compelling task of the teachers of the future.

In these learning experiences, students work together towards a common goal and, through the process, depend on each other for their experiences and knowledge.

4.2. Play and role-play

The tension within education about play being used as a vehicle for formal and informal learning is a ridiculous one, especially when you think about play as a biological drive. We should be asking ourselves what right we have in not allowing play to be a major part of children's learning experiences. Who do we think we are, suppressing another human being's natural way of engaging with the world?

Adults who tell children not to giggle, laugh, whisper, shuffle in their seats or stare out the window and dream, might as well gag and nail those children to the floor. They're doing just as much harm. Children need to act out what they read and sometimes become one with the characters of the stories. Role-play has been proven to be the most effective method of learning a new unit in language and communication classes. Adults who tell children what, when and how they are going to learn may be confronted with the consequence of stifling every interest or self-pursuit. Creativity emerges within minds which are not properly set for a specific task, spontaneity and freedom of expression should be mixed with play and play-role during communication and language classes.

4.3. Open questions

Open questions are often displayed in the classroom and related to the unit of inquiry. In discussion they are often used to discuss the unit of inquiry students were working on. The use of open and closed questions during a lesson may have provided participants with an insight into what individuals in their class knew and could have helped to activate individual's prior understanding and knowledge of a particular concept. Open questions leave room for individual expression, for uniqueness and divergent thinking.

4.4. Story telling and creative story retelling

¹² Siran Mukerji, Purnendu Tripathi, Cases on Tehnological Adaptability and Transnational Learning: Issues and Chanllenges, Information Science Reference, New York, 2010, p. 416

Stories create magic and a sense of wonder at the world. Stories teach children about life, about themselves and about others. Storytelling is a unique way for students to develop an understanding, respect and appreciation for other cultures as well as using their imagination to innovate and develop language and communication skills.

4.5. Creativity-boosting problem solving methods and techniques: Brainstorming, Stellar explosion, The Method of the Thinking Hats, The Carousel, Multi-voting, Round Table, Group Interview, Philips 6/6, The 6/3/5 Technique, Creative controversy, The Frisco Method, Synectics, The Delphi Method etc.

There is not enough space in this paper to describe each method or techniques and the way it should be applied for a particular unit. Each teacher should get familiarized first with the method and then adapt it to the age and individual particularities of each class and each student. Creativity in teaching means having a wide repertoire of routines and strategies which teachers can call upon, as well as being ready to depart from established procedures and to use one's own solutions. In general we find that novice teachers are much less likely to be creative than experienced teachers simply because they are familiar with fewer strategies and techniques. The danger is that once a teacher becomes comfortable in using a core set of techniques and strategies these become fixed. Another important step is to issue for each class a particular intervention programme for discovering, unlocking and developing the creative potential. Equally important is the teacher's ability to encourage children to solve problems creatively, without the fear of giving the wrong answer, to help them display their individuality, focusing not only on achieving operational objectives but also on the transfer of creative abilities along with the educational process.

Unfortunately, there isn't enough evidence that all primary teachers are concerned with the methods and techniques to stimulate creative skills and abilities of primary children. The ministry of Education or local inspectorates do not have yet an evaluation system to this concern. So it is up to each school and each teacher whether they chose to elaborate and implement an educational programme encompassing creativity development in particular except for those objectives included in the curriculum. Creativity development is still a sensitive educational issue at the practical level although the theories and methodology are very well known. We rarely find objectives related to creativity development in planning and development of extracurricular activities. Finally, serious studies related to the way in which extra school activities influence the creative capacity and children's motivation for studying the school subjects should be published.

5. DISMANTLING THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST

In arguing that investment in creative learning should be a priority and not an auxiliary task of Romanian school reform, it is important to keep in mind that young people are more than just a potential workforce, and should not be perceived only in the context of their situation in the labour market. Among future young people are potential philosophers, artists, writers, entrepreneurs, craftsmen and women – people who will create, who will constitute, who will continue Europe's culturally rich and unique traditions. The main message of European Commission has been about the need to improve and widen the recognition of non-formal learning, and not just in relation to employability¹³.

CONCLUSIONS

¹³ European Commission, Developing the creative and innovative potential of young people through non-formal learning in ways that are relevant to employability;

http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/news/2014/documents/report-creative-potential_en.pdf

Creativity constitutes thus a fundamental issue for the entire primary education system and not only. Its native and social premises should be known from early stages of life so that each educator should adopt the most efficient psycho-pedagogical means and methods for the act of learning both within schools and outside them.

The primary teacher is the one who needs to discover the creative talent and to nourish the proper learning environment to make the creative abilities of their children flourish. He needs to encourage the imagination, the fantasies and the creativity of his students. When the primary children's imagination goes through ebullience, the teacher shall leave the ideas flow and observe the children and their way of solving the problems, the way they ask and answer questions.

Nevertheless, a key requisite is for the teacher to be a creative personality himself or herself. We cannot breed creativity of our children unless we as educators create the proper setting: a proper creative and socio-emotional classroom setting, a proper creative didactic scenario emerging of new and original creative methods of learning and last but not least proper psychological and educational methods of knowing each pupils creative potential.

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THE DYNAMICS OF RELIGIOUS FAMILY LIFE FROM A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Religiosity, as a psychic dimension of human life, gradually forms, stage by stage, in connection with the general development of the being, at different stages of age. From a psychological point of view, one can speak of the existence of an innate religiosity, a religious potential that man has as ontologically given, but spiritual evolution and perfection is continuous throughout his life. Childhood, adolescence, maturity, old age are not only stages of the ontogenetic development of the human being, but they are also landmarks and thresholds in the formation of a religious dimension, in each of which having proof of the active presence of God in human existence. The child, with its specific innocence and purity, seeks God like he seeks his parents, the teenager calls him with all the power of the inner tumult, the adult refers to God as a good friend, to support and help in difficult moments, and the old man with the wisdom of the years hopes to be close to Him. The grounds of religious life are set inside the family, from parent's patterns of behavior reveal to the child how to behave, how to pray, how to create a relation with God.

Keywords: religious life; childhood; adolescence; maturity; old age;

INTRODUCTION

Throughout its existence, the human being constantly changes, its attitudes evolve, the judgments are transformed, the feelings vary, the personality is structured in a way that beliefs, conceptions and religious behaviors also know an upward path on the axis of time, from innocence and beauty specific to childhood to the wisdom and natural stability of old age. The religious life of a person resembles a sinuous journey, with ups and downs, falls and lifts, questions and answers, doubt and faith.

From the moment the children start to ask questions, search, they want to discover and get to know more and more of everything that surrounds them. Their curiosity is unstoppable when they want to find out about angels, God, eternal life or anything related to supernatural reality, all the more so since they can't perceive sensory this spiritual dimension. The evolution of the moral and religious life of children is achieved in relation to the psychological development, each age stage being characterized by a specific religiosity (Cuciuc, 2006, p. 33). The child is born with a religious potential in the soul (Anghelescu, 1939, p. 45), but this religiosity can become active and develop according to the family that may or may not be religious, to the education that is sometimes devoid of values and even the happenings through which it passes during life. Thus, some know God earlier, since childhood, others at some point in life, but there are also some who discover Him at the end of earthly life.

It is known that religious sentiment is innate, but the importance of the child's environment cannot be denied: in a religious family, the child will develop real religious feelings and attitudes, in a laic family, the religious sense of the child will fade, disappear.

1. RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDHOOD

During childhood, God is perceived in an anthropomorphic vision, like a parent, whom the child loves but fears. Even if he does not see it, the child believes that God exists, because his parents also believe, and because his thinking at this age has a magical character, it constitutes the premises of a strong belief. The prayer of the children is simple, lacking in distrust or doubt, is the purest prayer, most sincere and innocent, in simple words concealing thoughts and great desires springing from the heart. A child praying is certain that someone will hear his prayer. He does not believe he can be heard, but he knows, he has the confidence, the belief that the One to whom he addresses by prayer will answer him. At this age, prayer does not know the doubt, the child expects God to answer, like he knows his mother or father are fulfilling his requests. The child lives the religion by the fact that the family to which it belongs also lives in it; inspires the religious breath from the atmosphere of the parental home and is so influenced by the first impressions acquired in the family environment that these are generally decisive for their whole life (Bologa, 1930, p. 61).

Elementary school age (6-10 years) represents a step or a stage of transition from concrete thinking, intuitive-practical from the symbolic phase to complex operative thinking, logical operations, and then to a theoretical and social thinking (Buzalic, Buzalic, 2010, p. 222), and has as type of fundamental activity learning. If the child's first knowledge of God comes from the family, at this age he begins to learn in the institutionalized environment of the school. His psychic activity is experiencing extraordinary development, which favors both mental and moral-religious acquisition. After the age of 7, the child's religiosity begins to develop, the specific age-specific magical thinking is gradually replaced, and the fantastic retreats and remains merely an instrument of imaginary life. Religion begins to be alive, not just a rule of life, but life itself (Buzalic, Buzalic, 2010, p. 222). The child's prayer is more personal, an expression of one's own thoughts, accompanied by emotions and feelings. The child begins to understand the religious ceremonies he attends, thus laying the foundation for his religiosity.

2. ADOLESCENTS AND RELIGION

Then comes the adolescence (from the age of 14), a stage characterized by the great questions of life and great doubts that upsurge and fundamentally restores any vision of life; teenagers, with their skepticism, seek to understand as much as possible and to penetrate the spiritual reality as much as possible in order to define and organize their own self, individuality, feelings and feelings. The adolescent's need to understand may resemble the strong thirst felt on a hot summer day.

Adolescence is the age at which everything, the whole universe is viewed from a different perspective, old knowledge and ideas are reanalyzed and selected, now there is a true inner revolution, stimulated by the force of affections and feelings that until now were latent and bursting with all their might. That's why teenagers make decisions under the momentum of impulse and under the heat of feelings. This character of lack of stability and extreme criticism does not exclude the religious dimension of this age. Allport (1961, p. 125) talks about an identity crisis that occurs at this age when the adolescent seeks himself, tries to discover himself and to understand himself, to self-understand and to form his personal self; in this structuring process, they constantly oscillate, their attitude often has an extremist tendency, adolescents actually seek their limits, test their psychic forces, and only accept the

values and principles they have passed through the filter of their own personality and which correspond at that moment with their vision or conception of the world and life.

Also during this period in the axiological hierarchy of the teenager there are some changes, in the sense that the family is no longer the center or the point of gravity, this role belongs to the group of friends, that is why the values and principles promoted in the family are surpassed by the ones promoted in the group of belonging, parental patterns of behavior lose importance, in favor of those found in the group of friends. Teenagers often feel misunderstood by the family and seek to be in the group of peers, being brought together by the same needs (intellectual, emotional, cognitive etc.), therefore they tend to reject everything related to constraints, limits or behavioral norms, the freedom they speak is understood as the opposite of any border.

Being at the age when in terms of cognitive development important quantitative and qualitative changes occur when their thinking becomes an abstract one, adolescents seek to understand the divine mystery, which they do not always succeed, and there is now the risk of a loss of faith (Catalan, p. 151), or, on the contrary, may constitute the basic step in the formation of an adult belief; therefore, this is a crucial moment in the process of forming a true, authentic faith. That is why adolescents are often in a hurry to self-definition of atheists, often for internal psychic reasons (such as the desire to stand out, to "break patterns" or to shock), assuming a status on which they will come back later, after overcoming this age. Maurice Dubesse (1962, p. 114) argues that adolescence or youth is extremely important as a segment that makes the transition from the age of innocence, childhood to maturity, the stage in which spiritual mutations occur which contribute significantly to the orientation, commitment and preparation for life: now is the time when it is usually lost, gained or faith is being built. Around the age of 18-19 years appears a particular attraction towards religion, a tendency to approach the highest moral values, is the most important stage in the process of religious maturity, decisive in terms of future religion. Now is outlined the proper perception of God and of the religious cult (Buzalic, Buzalic, 2010, p. 227)

3. ADULTHOOD AND SPIRITUALITY

Maturity or adulthood brings rest, easement of feelings, of beliefs and attitudes, because this is the stage in which every human being discovers and accepts himself as he is, relates to himself, to others, in a different way than any other age, with responsibility and balance. But adulthood does not necessarily mean an adult religion or belief. Psychology considers that the adult is the individual who, by discovering to a certain point the resources of his own personality, is able to know his internal limits, possibilities, capacities and resources, and is able to orient them in a clear direction, to achieve a predetermined goal or target, acting consciously and rationally. The adult is or must be responsible for its existence and assume its decisions, acts or behaviors in any sphere of activity.

The relationship or bond of the adult, in general with God is within the bounds of these particularities, characterized by a responsible assumption of the status of believer or unbeliever, choice according to which specific behaviors or attitudes are adopted. The adult who believes himself to be believer in fact makes a sincere adherence to the plan of spiritual existence and relates himself, his life and work to this dimension, unlike the one who considers the divine reality to be outside the human existential plane, or even there is not at all. Some adults believe, but do not admit and confess this faith than maybe in times of struggle of life, when they experience real shocks or religious earthquakes (illnesses, sufferings, losses, etc.), others believe and practice the precepts of their faith by going to the

Church, praying they are doing good deeds, and others do not believe and do not want to accept or bring into their life religion. Every man is unique, so is how he relates to God and to life. Personal growth and religious growth create the feeling of fulfillment, bringing happiness and inner well-being, reflecting in relationships with others in society; a spiritually accomplished individual is positive, lives in a state of safety and self-reconciliation, first and foremost, but also with others, and becomes able to establish a clear purpose of his own life that makes sense of his existence. Religious maturity is characterized by a proper orientation towards religious values and by a normal perception of God, involves an interpenetration of reason and sentiment, harmonizing between the rational living of religious values and the correct perception of their subordinate obligations (Buzalic, Buzalic, 2010, p. 210). Also, religious maturity means as well a developed moral consciousness, capable of delimiting goodwill and influencing behavior towards the choice of personal and collective good.

Maturity or adult age is the period of maximum activity of the individual, burdened by responsibilities (family, service, social), events, experiences; to be able to cope with it, the adult usually seeks a routine, a way to relieve his existence, which is sometimes reflected in his relationship with God. Caught by the worries of the day, he often forgets to pray or do things because he needs it, not because he feels, so his faith enters a straight path without climbs, which, as St. Paul says, is actually a slip, a fall, because in faith, when you do not climb, you fall (I. Corinthians, 10, 12). At the same time, adults are responsible for what they convey to their children, the belief they have and manifest depends on the religious development of their children. It is known that in childhood, which is the stage with the greatest impact in the development of religious life, the pattern of behavior taken is that of the parents, the child being often the mirror of the family in which he lives. Thus, the adult has the difficult task of conveying and shaping the personality of the children in the lines of true spirituality.

4. OLD AGE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Old age is characterized by a special relationship with God, on another level, dominated by deep feelings and deep experiences of acceptance and dedication, resignation to life that has passed and hope in future life. There is a predisposition to meditating the Truth and the Transcendent, the attraction to the spiritual world, which corresponds to the instinct of the deity in the Freudian conception.

If in the past the old age was associated with wisdom, the experience of authentic life, today things are slightly different, due to the explosion of information, transformations in all plans, profound changes in the directions of thought and evolution, which leads to a devaluation and a loss of the true landmarks. The treasure of true faith has always been passed on to younger generations through the voice and personal example of the elders. The preservation of cultural and religious traditions is due to them, our grandparents who are the true pillars of Orthodox faith. They are the ones who teach grandchildren the first prayer or how to make the mark of the Holy Cross, why go to the Church and how to behave. In traditional Romanian society, grandparents have a significant role in forming the religious sense of the younger generation. On a personal mental plan, faith helps the elderly overcome difficult obstacles, such as the retirement threshold, inherent illnesses, the loss of a partner or even the near end of life. Faith brings in the soul of old acceptance, positive resignation, hope, a better moral and inner power, motivation to live and overcome weaknesses and sufferings, desire to unite with God, and understanding of death not as an end but as a pass to another world.

The dynamics of the religious life of the human being depends, apart from the stage development characteristic of the age stages, by several factors: the social, cultural, ethnic, educational environment, health, promoted intrafamilial values, unforeseen events and events, changes in the living environment and society as a whole, etc.

Family is the frame in which the child is born and on which all his life depends. Here he discovers the world and learns to love, to be loved, to form as a person, and the whole family is responsible for the connection that takes place between children and God. Psychologists who have researched this area claim that there is a spontaneous, inborn religion of the child, a religious potential that every being has since birth, but if the family environment is not fertile to spiritual growth, it will be lost as a religious person, regressing. On the religiosity of the family depends the formation of the child as a true believer, or as a skeptical and unbelieving person and a spiritual relationship.

The awakening of the existing religious sense as potentially latent to the human being at an early age is achieved if, during the first years of life, the child hears the name of God, and if in a Christian context he hears it pronounced as "Dad," will obviously understand it in relation to his experience. The God the child will imagine will undoubtedly have the characteristics of the father (or mother) (Catalan, 1997, p. 149), but will gradually come to truly reveal God. The child assimilates from their parents' behavior not just their ideas and beliefs, but especially the attitudes and religious feelings they directly observe: for example, if a child sees his parents praying, so does he. This places the premise of an intrinsic religious motivation, which is the foundation of true faith.

The religious experience in the child's life begins with the moment when he becomes aware of his subjective experiences, because the experience relates to the inner life of the individual. For preschool children, religious experience is dependent on others, especially family, as the first socializing and training instance, in which they come into contact with the religious universe. Through imitation, the child takes on the models seen in the family, and the tendency of any family is to convey faith or lack of faith to children.

The family represents the fundamental framework with a major role in the religious life of the individual, at least for the first part of his / her childhood (up to 7 years, the age at which he / she goes to school). All the religion of the child depends on the religiosity of the family environment. As is the faith of the fathers, so is the faith of the children; by the way this faith lives and manifests itself in the family environment, so lives and manifests its faith and child. The child's religion is the mirroring of the family's religiosity. Nothing can alter the religious life of the child if the family is permeated by the religious spirit. L. Bologa (1930, p. 18) appreciates that the family has the possibility to influence and at the same time determine the way of religious life through the following three means:

- through the family atmosphere;
- through religious practices or customs in the family;
- through systematic or occasional religious education in the family.

Religious atmosphere influences the development of religious life, the child often identifies this atmosphere with the moral atmosphere. To be good, to be right, not to speak bad, etc., means to be religious (Bologa, 1930, p. 19). In the family, the child learns how to worship, how to say a prayer, although there are also families at the opposite pole, where religious indifference or even anti-religion is specific.

Through his research, L. Bologa (1930, p. 19) shows that, with respect to the importance of the family atmosphere in the development of the child's religiosity, 96, 58% of the subjects in whose families there was a religious atmosphere, 93.16% subjects showed a

developed religiosity, only 3.43% remaining indifferent to the positive influence of the family atmosphere. Of the 98, 41% of the subjects in whose families the religious practices were fulfilled, 91, 58% were positively influenced, and 6, 86% remained indifferent. Ordinary religious practices in the family are closely related to religious education. The family urges the child to fulfill religious practices, highlighting their importance, for example, the child is urged to say prayer in the evening, for the "guardian angel to defend him overnight". Thus, the number of those left indifferent to religious education is reduced by 7, 52% of those involved in the research. By comparing the results, we can deduce that in the family, for the religious formation of the child, the most important role has the religious atmosphere, followed by religious practices and, in the third place, religious education.

CONCLUSIONS

A. Godin (1963, p. 9) argues that the God of the Fathers is the God of the children, referring to the fact that the parents are responsible and obliged to facilitate the contact of the children with everything belonging to the religious sphere, the family having the function of transmitting the inheritance religious and his faith. Gradually, the God of his parents becomes his God, the child who prays because so does his mother, believes in God because he sees the strength of the faith of the parents, the power of the example being for children, in general, more important than a thousand words. Imitation is the basis for learning at young ages, so children assimilate the behaviors and attitudes they see to family members or significant people in their lives.

Thus, primordial relationships with father and mother determine, beyond any explicit teaching, subsequent attitudes towards God, the family cell will be the matrix of religious conduct or antireligious reactions (Catalan, 1997, p. 149). In conclusion, we can state that religion is imprinted in the human being, it is an ontological given and it manifests in each age stage differently depending on the psychic development and on the general evolution of the individual, the educational context and the living environment, with outbursts, shocks and returns or with definitive losses. Religion is a reality, a dimension of life, and we each choose how to relate to it and how to make God a living part of us.

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PARENETIC PRINCIPLES IN THE HOMILETIC WORK OF THE METROPOLITAN BISHOP FIRMILIAN MARIN

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ABSTRACT

The history of Romanian homiletics knows figures of enlightened hierarchs and scholars, fully aware of the importance of preaching and educating the faithful, homilists who contributed through their sermons to the perpetuation and preservation of the Orthodox faith. A figure of diligent hierarch and zealous preacher, with a significant contribution to the development of Romanian homiletic literature in the second half of the 20th century, was Metropolitan Firmilian Marin of Oltenia, whose life and works provide an exemplary pastoral paradigm, worthy of our attention and deep gratitude. This paper aims to present and investigate the homiletic activity conducted by Metropolitan Firmilian, who holds a prominent place among the great hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Romanian nation: a worthy servant of Christ, a founder of holy churches and places of worship, a great scholar, a supporter of culture and arts and a father of the suffering and needy people. We also aim to provide a model to contemporary preachers, animated by missionary zeal, according to the example set by the diligent hierarch of Oltenia in his times and historical, social, economic and political circumstances. To make his homiletic creation more accessible, we do not merely provide a bio-bibliography and an overview of his sermons, but we also undertake a critical examination of his speeches, in order to present the genres employed, the homiletic technique, the style, originality and coherence of language, with examples that are highly useful to today's preachers.

Keywords: Metropolitan Firmilian Marin; pastoral addresses; themes; stylistic devices; homiletic genres;

1. PRELIMINARY FACTS

The sermons delivered in the Romanian Orthodox Church of the 20th century reflect the cultural, social, economic and political realities of our nation to a greater extent than those before them. The preaching activity was cultivated to a greater degree in Transylvania, mostly due to the vicinity of the Protestant Church where, as it is known, liturgical simplifications allowed the sermon to take a central position; there was actually a missionary competition going on and it produced well-prepared sermons delivered in the church and published in the time's magazines as well as published in volumes of sermons. However, it is an undeniable fact that in all the other provinces there were equally hard-working preachers who structured their discourses to pursue mainly the religious and moral purpose while also turning their attention to the realities of everyday life. From this perspective, the sermon in the 20th century Romanian Orthodox Church knows three stages: from the beginnings to the installation of the communist regime (1945); the actual communism period

(1945-1989) and the period in which freedom of speech was regained and fully exercised: 1990-2000. It is a well-known fact, yet ignored by the opponents of righteous faith, that during the communist regime, the Romanian altar was not abandoned, as the leaders of the time would have wanted. Preaching was still going on, at all times, and sometimes under very harsh circumstances¹. The Church was forced to manifest itself particularly as a cult or by celebrating liturgies in worship places or the Christians' homes, without being able to carry out any organized preaching of the word of God and without the right to defend Christian faith against the attacks, disparagements and lies promoted in the fundamental books of the atheist propaganda. For this reason, we cannot speak of any organized and efficient preaching, because, whenever such type of preaching was initiated, action was immediately taken to stop it. Thus, the communist oppression left deep marks in the preaching activity of the Church. Aside from the social and material deprivations, this was the sector in which the clergy received the most powerful blows.

The great preachers who exercised a powerful influence on the crowds were arrested; prominent intellectuals in all fields of activity were cruelly persecuted. The method of intimidation was applied quite overtly on the crowds in towns and villages: during a sermon, a man dressed casually, in civilian clothes would place himself so that he would be clearly noticed by the priest and, taking out a notebook and a pencil from his pocket, he would make notes as if he were interested in learning and retaining something². Formally, the sermon was not prohibited, but its complete annihilation was actually envisaged. However, the Romanian Orthodox Church, through its survival strategy, did not neglect its teaching role, in spite of these threats, being the only institution that managed to save the nation from a spiritual catastrophe. Thus, the discourses focused solely on the theological aspect, avoiding the comments regarding the social, economic and political situation.

Therefore, the history of the Romanian sermon includes enlightened figures of bishops and erudite priests who, aware of the importance of the clerical preaching activity and the enlightenment of the Christians, contributed through their homiletic writings to the preservation of the heritage of Orthodox faith. A diligent hierarch and preacher, who contributed to the development of the Romanian homiletic literature during the late 20th century was the Metropolitan Firmilian Marin of Oltenia, whose life and work, forming a harmonious pastoral paradigm, is worthy of our attention and gratitude. This study aims to present and examine the homiletic activity of Metropolitan Firmilian, who holds a prominent place among the great hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the Romanian nation, a worthy man in the service of Christ, a founder of places of worship and churches, a scholar, supporter of culture and arts and a father for those afflicted by suffering and poverty; at the same time, we aim to offer a paradigm for a contemporary preaching animated by missionary zeal, as that of the diligent hierarch of Oltenia in the historical, social, economic and political circumstances of those times.

To make his homiletic work more accessible we will address this presentation not only by browsing through the collection of his homilies, but also by attempting to undertake a critical analysis of the discourses subject to our examination, so that we can derive a clear picture of the genres used, of the homiletic technique, of the style, originality and coherence of the language, with examples that will prove particularly useful to today's preachers.

¹ Pr. prof. dr. Vasile Gordon, *Introducere în Omiletică (Introduction to Homiletics)*, Publishing House of the University of Bucharest, Bucharest, 2001, p. 119

² Metrop. Bishop Bartolomeu Anania, "Cuvânt înainte" ("Foreword") to Lect. dr. Ioan Toader, *Metode noi în practica omiletică (New methods in the homiletic practice)*, Arhidiecezana, Cluj, 1997, p. 4

1. How the work of Metropolitan Firmilian is perceived by the specialized literature

Metropolitan Firmilian stood out due to his erudition and oratorical prowess. The priests and Christians who had the opportunity to listen to him, still remember his scholarly knowledge, the beauty of his sermons and the love conveyed by them. We too, can verify today that this is true, just by reading his sermons and pastoral letters. Referring to the homiletic contribution of the Metropolitan Bishop Firmilian, we cannot overlook the books, studies and articles that relate to this fact. As mentioned before, Bishop Firmilian preached the word not only from the altar, but also in written form, most of his sermons being published in *Albina* and *Cuvântul* newspapers. A person who noted the beauty of these writings belonging to the Oltenian hierarch was the Metropolitan Bartolomeu Anania, who, in the foreword of the sermon volume entitled *Merinde pentru suflet (Food for the soul)* states the following: “In my opinion these pages by Firmilian should have been collected in a volume and made available to the readers not only for their literary beauty but also for their topicality. The lights and shadows of the Romanian society from those times still endure today. This makes it all the more necessary to bring back among us the eye that perceives them and the quill that awakens our conscience”³.

The interest in the spirit and work of the Metropolitan increased especially among the professors of theology who, fascinated by his personality, produced several studies for those interested in finding out more about the exemplary activity of the hierarch. In this respect we mention the study by Prof. Adrian Ivan, Ph.D., published in a volume dedicated to the Metropolitans Firmilian Marin and Nestor Vornicescu. It depicts the hierarch not only as one who preached the word but also as one who lived it: “the writing of Metropolitan Bishop Firmilian is straightforward and uncompromising, seemingly derived from the thinking of those great people who had lived in the desert. The ability of a shepherd of the souls is noticeable when he succeeds in correcting those who had wronged others not by sword or bloodshed, nor by reprimand or humiliation which could cause the listeners to become defensive, but by love born from the understanding of the souls of his spiritual children. Like a true father, he would heed the spiritual needs of the simple people, especially of those who came forward after having shown carelessness towards the spiritual matters, wherein lies the cause for losing one’s way”⁴.

As one who showed particular interest in the activity of Metropolitan Firmilian, rev. prof. Sebastian Chilea describes the hierarch as a prominent servant of the altar: “The way in which the High Hierarch celebrated the holy liturgy – peaceful, calm, serene, detached from his surroundings, with his face enlightened by some happy thought, as if he were hearing a call from afar, from a place where there are signs of miracles above any reasoning, proves that this solar peacefulness comes after all storms have calmed down. When his Holiness appears for the liturgy, everybody knows who he is: extremely attentive, kind, showing such warm politeness under which he carefully conceals his authority. But as soon as the preparations for the holy liturgy begin, everything changes, he moves as if standing still, fascinated by a vision. He is silent. He accepts no error or omission and is immediately

³ Mitrop. Bartolomeu Anania, ”Prefață” (”Foreword”), in Firmilian Marin, *Merinde pentru suflet (Food for the soul)*, Publishing House of the Metropolitan Bishopric of Oltenia, Craiova, 2004, p. 9

⁴ Pr. lect. dr. Adrian Ivan, ”Considerații omiletice asupra vieții și activității mitropoliților Firmilian Marin și Nestor Vornicescu” (”Homiletic considerations on the life and activity of the metropolitan bishops Firmilian Marin and Nestor Vornicescu”), in the volume *Teologie și slujire pastorală în viața și opera mitropoliților Firmilian Marin și Nestor Vornicescu (Theology and pastoral service in the life and work of metropolitan bishops Firmilian Marin and Nestor Vornicescu)*, Publishing House of the Metropolitan Bishopric of Oltenia /Craiova, Editura Cetatea de Scaun/Târgoviște, 2014, p. 178

moved when a servant has performed an inspired liturgical act, with talent and artfulness. When slowly putting on his liturgical attire he seems a peaceful traveler getting ready for a significant journey. A journey that is unlike the others, and in which he becomes engrossed. When he stands alone in the middle of the church, before entering the altar, at that very moment shadows barely perceptible fall on his face. It seems as if a great burden is left upon his shoulders, the burden of the Church in the world, a terrible responsibility like that of the pilot of a spaceship setting off on a daunting and bold spiritual expedition, closely watched by those around”⁵.

In addition, Priest M. Neamțu extracts from the hierarch’s speeches teachings and advice that are useful to any Christian. He is described as a preacher who understood the needs and suffering of people and advocated through word and deed for their solutions. With the diversity of the topics addressed in his sermons, the Metropolitan acquires the role of a spiritual confessor who attempts to fulfill the needs of the Christians he shepherds: “The personality as dutiful preacher of His Eminence Firmilian, who, like a burning candle, cast his light upon the Christians through his discourses, is confirmed by his work as a social apostle, an arduous and tireless patriot and a fighter for the nation’s ideal of a better life, embracing, in his preaching, all the vital issues of the times, such as: peace, disarmament, work for the benefit of the community, well-being and progress, culture, the problems of mother and child, congresses, conferences on peace and cohabitation, and many more. There was no issue of crucial importance, either internally or internationally, on which His Eminence did not take position and speak out His mind”⁶. Moreover, rev. M. Neamțu in his study also presented the spiritual origins of the word preached by Bishop Firmilian, among which we mention love, unshaken faith, prayer etc.

From the considerations presented by those who studied the life and work of Metropolitan Firmilian, we understand that the voice of this great Church hierarch was heard in the past and continued to be heard at present. The desire to bring his speeches to attention once more, generates in us the belief that our enterprise will reveal in their contents the values that today are proudly proclaimed.

2. The Structure of his speeches.

For a discourse to be successful, the preacher needs to be aware that the beautiful and compelling sermons of the great preachers were not produced accidentally, but rather, they are the result of an exceptional effort made in the theological, cultural, pastoral and spiritual realms. While some gifts may be innate, such as physical beauty, the quality of being a skilled speaker entails huge efforts over a significant number of years. The famous Latin orator Cicero is so right in this respect when he says: “Poeta nascitur, orator fit”⁷, words that concisely express the fact that the gift of oratory is not inborn, but it is cultivated⁸. The words of Father Dumitru Belu, the most prolific author of Romanian homiletic studies are extremely convincing in this respect: “*it is well-known that a sermon has the value of the*

⁵ Pr. dr. Sebastian Chilea, “Apostolatul liturgic al Î.P.S. Firmilian” (“Liturgical Apostolate of His Eminence Firmilian”), in *Mitropolia Olteniei* 5-8 (1970), p. 362

⁶ Pr. M. Neamțu, “Activitatea de propovăduitor a Î.P.S. Mitropolit Firmilian” (“The preaching activity of His Eminence Firmilian”), in *Mitropolia Olteniei* 5-8 (1970), p. 377

⁷ *Dicționar de proverbe și cugetări latine (Dictionary of Latin proverbs and sayings)*, Albatros Publishing House, Bucharest, 1976, p.165

⁸ Pr. prof. dr. Vasile Gordon, “Poeta nascitur, orator fit. Vocația omiletică a Mitropolitului Antonie Plămădeală” (“Homiletic Calling of the Metropolitan Bishop Antonie Plamadeala”), in *Studii Teologice* 4 (2005), p. 44

painstaking labor you put into its making”⁹. The sermon is a dialogue, not a monologue, and so its success depends greatly on the life and education of the preacher, being the fruit of an incessant effort to improve oneself¹⁰. If the man who has innate qualities for eloquence needs to study permanently in order to cultivate this gift¹¹, then even more so a regular preacher needs to read much, reflect much, using the Holy Scripture as the text that is to be discussed and explained as a departure point, in brief he must prepare thoroughly in order to put together the words of teaching. Referring to this preparation, the Homiletic treatises distinguish among two main stages in the preparation and compiling of a sermon: *distant or general* and *proximal or special*. When speaking about proximal preparation, it is essential to point out the fact that the ideas which we have chosen and which we shall develop in the contents of our sermon cannot be presented just anyhow, arbitrarily, but rather by following a pre-established *plan*. Order is required in all fields of activity and therefore in preaching too. The priest must also work according to a plan. He has the obligation to plan his preaching activity over a longer period of time and devise a precise plan for each of his speeches. The main parts of a plan are: **the title** (or the “motto”), **the addressing formula**, **the introduction**, **the actual text** and the closing.

Referring to the advantages of using a plan, we would like to highlight the following: eliminating the risk of incongruous ideas, which aids the preacher to follow the intended direction; it leads to a proper selection of the material, gathered as result of the research work; it indicates the order of the ideas to be developed; it offers the speaker a feeling of security; it efficiently helps in memorizing and freely delivering the speech, making it possible for the preacher to acquire an overall perspective throughout the entire sermon, and to develop the ideas in the order indicated by their intrinsic, logical connection¹². By referring to the importance of preaching according to a plan, we do not mean that in any speech we must announce each point, each idea, they will merely be suggested, with pauses lasting just a few seconds, accompanied, most of the times by the reiteration of the addressing formula¹³. Further on we shall explain how these requisites were observed in the work of Metropolitan Firmilian.

In terms of the *structure* of his speeches, Firmilian proved to be a subtle oratorical character. He uses almost every opportunity to say a few words that turn into discourses of a person keen on special scholarly preoccupations. All his pastoral letters use, by way of introduction, the following formula: „Firmilian, by God’s mercy, Archbishop of Craiova and Metropolitan Bishop of Oltenia, to our beloved clergy, monastic order and to our Christian righteous believers in this God-protected Archbishopric, may the peace and grace of the Resurrected Lord be upon you, and from our humble self, fatherly blessings”. Before the addressing formula, which takes on several variations, some speeches are preceded by a *motto*. This is usually selected from the Bible, either the Old Testament or more frequently from the New Testament, depending on the topic addressed by the contents. As a greeting formula, he uses the traditional “Christ is Risen!”, but not in all pastoral letters. Each time he engages the audience and the reader by using *addressing formulas* according to the event on which he is called to speak. They are expressed in warm, paternal tones: “My beloved sons

⁹ Pr. prof. dr. Dumitru Belu, *Curs de Omiletică (A course in Homiletics)*, dactil., f.a., Sibiu, p.159

¹⁰ Pr. dr. Nicușor Beldiman, *Slujirea omiletică a mitropolitului Firmilian Marin (Homiletic Ministry of the Metropolitan Bishop Firmilian Marin)*, Publishing House of the University of Bucharest, 2017, p. 29

¹¹ Pr. asist. drd. Vasile Crețu, ”Comunicarea în predică” (“Communication in sermons”), in *Ortodoxia* 3-4 (2004), p. 196

¹² Pr. asist. drd. Vasile Crețu, ”Comunicarea în predică” (“Communication in sermons”), p. 152

¹³ Pr. prof. dr. Vasile Gordon, *Introducere (Introduction)*, p. 289

of my soul”, “Beloved Christians”, “You righteous Christian believers”, “My beloved spiritual sons”, “Oh man, brother of mine”, “Brother of mine and fellow man” etc., proving that there is a strong spiritual bond between the shepherd and the Christians. They are then found in all the explanations and urges contained in the speeches, revealing the love he puts in his efforts to enlighten those he shepherds. Moreover: the joys and misfortunes of his spiritual sons are felt by the author who reacts with empathy for and together with them, such empathy being his ability to recognize and share the feelings experienced by another person.

The Introduction is brief in all discourses and is meant to create the atmosphere of the event the author refers to. These are genuine literary works¹⁴ that touch and overwhelm the listener: “In the icons of the Eastern Church and in the hidden chamber of the Christian soul, the Lord’s Nativity has remained forever live and fresh, like a water spring from the land of our redemption. We know the all-pure story from the Gospel, made up of simple words and warmth of speech, as is the truth and as the clear shining of sunlight. The spirit of innocence pervades the story and gently brings us the sweetness of peace, when we listen to it or read it in privacy. We descend back to the world of our infancy, where God’s footsteps are heard and we listen to mother’s crystal clear voice. There we encounter the heaven of our imagination, our wonderland, where anything was possible. We meet the Divine Infant, similar to us in body and shape. In the chants and hymns of the Church’s great singers, the Lord’s Nativity is like a chalice full of precious myrrh, which scented the contents of the discourse with the perfume of the chosen words, with the elevation of our reasoning, with the talent of rhyming, with the adornments of our speech and with deep feelings. It bore fruit: verses, hymns, and it is a driving force. It has commanded praises and unequalled glorification”¹⁵.

At other times Firmilian is capable of generating in the audience the ability to visualize countless images and 2,000-year old events, still so real before our eyes: “We celebrate today the Nativity of our Savior Jesus Christ. The torrent of worries freezes for a few moments. We await near the altars and in our homes. We renew our thoughts and feelings. The light of joy engulfs us like the gentle dusk. We become kinder, friendlier. Our inner warmth is released of awkwardness. Our eyes are livelier, and our face features are softened. It is like a transformation that astounds us, like innocence we keep going back to. The miracle of transformation derives from the mystery of this celebration. God’s face reveals itself more clearly within us. His Son clothes himself in our flesh. The ascent of our soul’s redemption begins. It lays the foundation of our salvation. It fills us with grace and truth. It becomes a model and an example. It changes the sorrow of death into a chant of victory; our fall into glory; eternal penitence, for eternal happiness”¹⁶. Or: “It is the celebration of God’s descent into history. It is the beginning of His Son’s work to raise our nation from death to life. This work began with His Birth from a Pure Virgin. It began in the humblest way possible: in a stable, on a layer of hay. It began in the most subdued way: a godly baby born in a cave”¹⁷.

¹⁴ Pr. conf. dr. Miron Erdei, *Opera omiletică a episcopului Roman Ciorogariu (Homiletic Work of the Bishop Roman Ciorogariu)*, Publishing House of the University of Oradea, 2012, p. 84

¹⁵ Mitrop. Firmilian Marin, *Pastorală la Nașterea Domnului (Pastoral Letter on the Occasion of the Lord’s Birth)*, Craiova, 1966, p. 3

¹⁶ Mitrop. Firmilian Marin, *Pastorală la Nașterea Domnului ((Pastoral Letter on the Occasion of the Lord’s Birth)*, Craiova, 1952, p. 3

¹⁷ Mitrop. Firmilian Marin, *Pastorală la Nașterea Domnului (Pastoral Letter on the Occasion of the Lord’s Birth)*, Craiova, 1955, p. 3

In the *body of the sermon* we find an amazing rationale governing the demonstration of the dogmatic and moral truth. There is a deep psychological analysis and a rigorous hierarchical classification of the arguments supporting the truth. As a general rule, the author starts from the known to the unknown elements, from the material to the abstract, and succeeds wonderfully in illustrating the abstract truths with examples from people's ordinary life. The Scripture texts are explained with quotations. A truth of faith is demonstrated through and corroborated with another truth of faith. The metropolitan bishop skillfully uses the technique or method of association, the discourse thus becoming a conversation between a parent and his children: "We then lost everything, having left in us only the unextinguished sparkle of our soul. We remained however with the precious promise of salvation, through the loving mercy of the Father and the humble obedience of the Son, according to the unwavering plan of the "eternal mystery". This is where the righteous people of old times drew their hope, this is where the confirmation of the prophets sprung from. The full redemptive work of Christ – the Messiah revealed itself to them in the mirror of faith and from them we too learned the signs of recognition. We especially think about those related to his Nativity. It is through them that we learned, for example, about: the Savior's people, the Birth from the Virgin, the time and circumstances of the Birth, His Holy Name, the magi's worship, the slaughter of the innocents. These prophets, enlightened by the Spirit, read as if from a book about the Savior's life. Thus, they rejoiced, knowing that he was a great prophet, like Moses, a high priest as Melchizedek and a glorified emperor in David's Zion. But they also saw His suffering and they were frightened. However, they found comfort in the hope and awaited for Him with unwavering faith, as in a long wake. Let us not forget, however, the difference between the solace of those of the old and our own. They rejoiced having only the benevolent promise and the signs; we have the Son's Incarnation and all fulfillments. They had the expectation, we – the glorification of angels and the evangelical grace. As in the ancient times, we find comfort in the same hope for the kindness and love of God-The Father. We hope that the Son will intercede for us, He Who, taking on a Human Body, restored to the human being not only the light of God's image within us, but also our likeness to Him, the possibility of sharing God's love and eternal life, knowing from Him that <<God did not send His Son into the world to punish the world, but to save it through Him >> (John 3, 17). We had dug the unfathomable abyss of sin; Jesus laid at our feet the bridge of forgiveness. We drowned ourselves in the depths of disobedience towards God, and of slaughter; He lifted us into the light of discipleship. We had made ourselves into slaves, subjecting ourselves to lust; when <<the time came >>, He made us <<sons and heirs through God's grace >> (Galatians 4, 4) ”¹⁸.

The themes are varied, as were the aspects approached by the Metropolitan Firmilian. Thus, we find topics referring to *anthropology, resurrection, God's love for people, the preservation of the Orthodox faith*, and also subjects through which the worthy hierarch guides the *religious and moral life* of the Christians, by referring to life lived by abiding by the Savior's commandments and giving up sins, as well as habits that are morally and socially harmful. Taking into consideration the contents, we identify the main aspects present: *the dogmatic and missionary, the social and moral and the pastoral*.

As for the **source of the sermons**, the author uses as primary source the Holy Scripture, without neglecting the Holy Fathers, and sometimes we find illustrative

¹⁸ Mitrop. Firmilian Marin, "Pastorală la Sfintele Sărbători ale Nașterii Domnului" ("Pastoral Letter on the Occasion of the Sacred Holidays of the Lord's Birth"), in *Mitropolia Olteniei (The Metropolitan Bishopric of Oltenia)* nr. 11-12(1968), p. 882

digressions. Benefitting from his rich knowledge in biblical and exegetic theology, the metropolitan father imbued his pastorals with rich biblical references. The Scripture texts used are well selected and organically integrated in the body of the discourse, increasing in a lively and natural manner their substance and doctrine value. In the second part of the text we notice certain aspects that preachers from the communist period were forced, in a way, to include, namely references to the so-called social, economic, political issues, etc. representing priorities of those sad times. It is a well-known fact that between 1948-1989 all speeches presented in manuscript for printing were first censored by the Department of Cults and only when they met all the requirements did they obtain permission to be published in the theological journals.

However, the value of his pastoral letters is not diminished, being well developed, thoroughly researched theologically and especially biblically and patristically, lacking any apologetic character, addressing strictly theological topics. Generally, the author used an intelligent, encrypted language, the subtlety of which often escaped the poor intelligence of the omnipresent political police, but did not elude the clever understanding or good sense of the average Christian. The pastoral letters of Metropolitan Firmilian are remarkable particularly because of their concision. The text at times has only a few pages: but there is nothing there that does not serve a purpose, the word is employed carefully, the teaching evinces such integrity that was difficult to maintain in the circumstances of the atheist communist propaganda, conveyed through an extraordinary subtlety of the message¹⁹.

The ending comprises, most of the times, the author's exhortation that the teachings presented remain deeply imprinted in the souls and minds of the Christians and materialize in their everyday life: "Following Christ's example, who helped us make peace with God, we owe to him to live in understanding and perfect brotherly love with each other, supporting one another and bearing the burden of one another, as Paul, the Apostle of the nations said. A heart that is at peace with itself and brotherly mutual aid engenders not only love for the homeland, but also and especially love for our fellow people, one of the most persistent evangelical commandments and the one out of which great Paul made a glorifying hymn. The liberation of man and the righteous renewal of his spirit are the impulse to run towards the Kingdom of light, to be kind, to love one's fellow men and being. It means life's victory over death"²⁰. Insofar as the volume *Merinde pentru suflet (Food for the soul)* is concerned, we have before us, in fact, a book that can be used as a model in writing sermons, providing material for delivering a speech, including the author's reflections grouped around a title that constitutes the central idea of these meditations. In this volume the author commits himself to explaining the sacred truths – perceiving the fact that most Christians are not fully aware of their meanings – and fulfills his task enthusiastically and diligently, as a seeder would sow and heartily await the seeds to bear fruit.

These meditations usually have an *introduction* announcing the topic developed further on in the *body of the text*, by resorting to stories, argumentations or illustrative digressions, followed by explaining the relevance of the topic for the needs of the audience, then *ending* with exhortations and moral advice. The references to the Holy Scripture are quite numerous, so are the paragraphs from the Holy Fathers, intended to support an idea presented by the author and strengthening his statements.

¹⁹ Pr. lect. dr. Adrian Ivan, "Considerații omiletice" ("Homiletic Considerations"), p. 182

²⁰ Mitrop. Firmilian Marin, "Pastorală Învierea Domnului" ("Pastoral Letter on the Occasion of The Resurrection of the Lord"), in *Mitropolia Olteniei (Metropolitan Bishopric of Oltenia)* 3-4(1965), p. 274-275

With regard to the style used, the Metropolitan Bishop proves himself to be an excellent master of the art of illustration, managing to avoid useless abstractions and guiding himself at all times according to the principle of Paul who says: “Yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue” (I Corinthians 14, 19).

Recognizing the value of a constructive example instead of the countless abstract teachings, the author selects the illustrations with care, from varied fields, including the *Bible* and the *Lives of Saints*, lay history, people’s everyday life. The parenetic side of the discourses of Metropolitan Firmilian is artfully highlighted by the use of the parable. In this sense, the parable brings a lot of light in the parenetic discourse thus rescuing it from a moralizing linearity. With Metropolitan Firmilian, we find more. Here the parable is closer to actual events than to the imaginary ones, and for this reason the great hierarch does not seek the ultimate conclusion, putting aside the epic significance, not even formulating it, but rather leaving it open in the audience’s mind, whom he invites to reflect, to participate. The effect is that it allows the audience to interfere, to act, to protect the fair judgment and teaching of the Church. Thus, the parable also has an ironical undertone, there being a wise irony, in the writings and speeches of Metropolitan Firmilian²¹. In this respect, the following example is illustrative: “We had returned from the memorial of a neighbor. Noodles with geese, rice and pork. In addition some cheese pie. Food like the one you find in the countryside, abundant, so that people get up from the table satisfied. Wine and brandy at will. And at the end, white pretzels, baked in the oven. While talking with my folk, I was wondering: - Where did Lache get all that money to spend on this dinner? On a regular day, he can barely make ends meet. And now, food and drinks in quantities that would surpass the possibilities of a rich farmer. – He gets it by stealing, my father said. He sleeps well. Then, after night falls, he sets off through people’s gardens looking for plums, hay, corn or beans, or wood from the village forest. So he is not one in need. On the contrary. He’s got more than he can use. – Oh, goodness! Can this be possible? Theft and almsgiving go together? – Well, son, an old woman assures me. They might not go together. But at least he is commemorating his mother. For this, God will forgive him”²². The style of the speeches included in the volume mentioned above is a simple one, with sentences that are not very long, with stories about the lives of saints, with quotes from the Holy Parents, having special impact on the audience because of the warmth and truth with which the lives and deeds of the saints are presented. The author describes in detail the life, the actions, the ordeals suffered for Christ, the humbleness and inner force that the mentioned saints proved throughout their earthly lives, so that they may later receive crowns of glory in the heaven, and especially the miracles worked by the saints with the help of God.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this study we intended to accomplish a synthesis of the work of this significant scholar and servant of the Romanian Orthodox Church, presenting both testimonies referring to his missionary and pastoral activity as well as comments on his rich contribution to the development of the homiletic genres, whether we are speaking about pastoral letters, theme sermons, panegyrics or pareneses. At the same time, the study aims to demonstrate, with examples and commentaries on these aspects, the original contribution of the Metropolitan Firmilian to the development of the homiletic literature, and for this reason he shall be

²¹ Pr. lect. dr. Adrian Ivan, “Considerații omiletice” (“Homiletic considerations”), p. 180

²² Mitrop. Firmilian Marin, *Merinde (Food)*, p. 45

remembered as a brilliant author in this genre. It is a vision that cannot be mistaken, a vision on the manner in which all these types of speeches are built, so that they convey not only rich ideas and edifying teachings, but also noble and redeeming feelings and emotions. Far from having exhausted the modalities of highlighting the value of the work of Metropolitan Bishop Firmilian, this work allows for other types of approaches to this abundant homiletic material, for example from the perspective of the frequency of certain topics in respect of others, or the structuring strategies of the discourses that differ from one stage to the other, depending on the daily reality. These aspects, as well as a possible and more thorough comparative research, with reference to several authors of homiletic literature may constitute various perspectives for future approaches of the matters that can be found in the work of the Metropolitan Firmilian, educated scholar and preacher.

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THE CATECHISM OF DESTRUCTION: SERGEI NECHAEV AND THE SPIRIT OF NIHILISM

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ABSTRACT

*In this article our aim is to attempt a philosophical interpretation of the phenomenon of political nihilism the way the latter is developed in the life and thought of the Russian anarchist Sergei Nechaev. Taking a deeper look at his pamphlet *Catechism of a Revolutionary* and aided by the profound analysis of the anarchist's thought made by Fyodor Dostoevsky, we will try to show how nihilism may break every possible bond between the individual and the society opening, thus, the path for the possible appearance of more Nechaevs and Nechaevists in the modern world.*

Keywords: nihilism; Nechaev; destruction; Dostoevsky;

INTRODUCION

Our aim in this paper is to take a closer look, from a philosophical angle, to the thought of the Russian radical anarchist Sergei Nechaev- especially, to his work *Catechism of the Revolutionary*- in order to better understand what political nihilism is and how it is still able to mobilize groups or find supporters in various actors of the ideological spectrum.

In the first part we will embark upon a brief presentation of Nechaev's life so as to become better acquainted with the political/social situation of his era as well as to trace back to the origin and the unfolding of his thought and political activism. In the second part emphasis will be laid on an interpretation of various paragraphs of his *Catechism* with the goal of sketching a "philosophical profile" of his thought and ideology, characterized by a deep and sincere disdain of the society, its tradition and all the rules/customs that make it function. We will also see how Nechaev- due to this almost obsessive references to destruction- is paving the way for a "transcendent" possession of the revolutionary by the higher idea of destruction, with all the ontic and ontological consequences this entails for the human being when willingly submitted to this transcendence.

Finally, in the last part, we will endeavour to bring forth, through a text of Fyodor Dostoevsky, a more personal account of who Nechaev, and each Nechaev is; what makes the emergence of his thought possible and how this thought may provoke the emergence of different Nechaevs and Nechaevists, with all eventual consequences implied in our social, political and ideological sphere(s).

1. AS A WOLF AMONG THE SHEEP: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SERGEI NECHAEV

When thinking about nihilism- specifically its possible materialization in the political/ social sphere- many of us would probably turn our thought towards the era of Russian nihilism, when the politically expressed nihilism reached its apogee with the

assassination of Tsar Alexander 2nd on the 13th of March 1881 by Ignacy Hryniewiecki, a young member of the radical anarchist group “Narodnaya Volya (People’s Will)”. This long-sought assassination, if we take into account the amount of assassination attempts against the Tsar (April 1886 by Dmitry Vladimirovich Karakozov, April 1867 by Antoni Berezowski and the bloody attempt under the dining room of Tsar’s Winter Palace, in February 1880, during which dozens of people got killed and many more injured by Stephan Khalthurin, also member of “People’s Will”). This bloody and turbulent political situation had already found its prophet in the person of Sergei Nechaev, a Russian anarchist whose work *Catechism of a Revolutionary* has shaped the way that nihilism was to be understood. From that moment on, the book was converted into a dark legacy whose content is being brought back to our mind, each time we notice slaughtering perpetrated in the name of a political idea or value by radical groups inspiring to demolish the *status quo* of the society via the use of violent ways. Sergei Nechaev, born in Ivanovo, Russia, in 1847, was raised by parents of lower economy class. He went to Moscow at the age of 18 to work for the historian Mikhail Pogodin and a year later came to St. Petersburg to attend lectures at the St. Petersburg University. During 1868-69 he participated in student revolutionary movement(s) in the university and, finally, in March 1869, he moved to Geneva, having first spread false rumours of his arrest in St. Petersburg, with a view to making up his own myth of a revolutionary figure. In Geneva he met with the undoubted banner of the anarchist movement, Mikhail Bakunin, who seems to have got very fond of him¹ and used to call him “Boy”. Bakunin was full of enthusiasm about the ideologically ardent Sergei and he helped him out with everything that the latter would need in order to enable him to propagate his ideas and materialize his vision. It was during the spring of this same year that Nechaev wrote his *Catechism for a Revolutionary* carving, thus, his name on the stone of nihilism’s history and political existence.

Having met and befriended Bakunin, Nechaev went back to Moscow. He founded a small radical revolutionary group called “Narodnaya Rasprava (People’s Reprisal)” while trying to organize the society for the so called “Revolution” of his *Catechism*. To that effect he recruited some young students, mostly from the faculty of agriculture of the university of St. Petersburg and set in motion his plan of creating cellular radical, revolutionary groups, unknown one to another so as to avoid being detected or betrayed by other members. One of the characteristics of Nechaev’s group was the required blind obedience to the leader, namely, to him. An element that led to the assassination of Ivan Ivanovich Ivanov, a member of “People’s Reprisal” who, at the cost of his own life, questioned the strategy and the tactics of Nechaev. Sergei, with other members of the group, on 21 November 1869, suspecting Ivanov of giving information to the police, shot him through the head and threw his corpse to a lake. The body, though, was soon found by the police and Nechaev, in order to avoid raising more suspicions and getting arrested, opted for his going back to Switzerland.

He found there his comrade Bakunin, living then in Locarno. Bakunin put confidence in the latter’s account of the events; namely that he had not killed Ivanov and that the Tsar was hunting him down for political reasons. Ready to assist his comrade in this difficult situation, Bakunin made a public defence of Nechaev in a pamphlet he published under the title “The Bears of Berne and the Bear of Petersburg”² trying to explain the inhuman fate that Nechaev would face in the hands of the Tsarist police in case he was finally arrested. However, Nechaev, firm in his callous stance of not having feelings and sentiments but simply goals, not only did he manage to economically exploit Bakunin leaving him in a very hard economic situation, but, also, stole some letters of Bakunin’s correspondence which

would compromise him in the eyes of the authorities. The total breach in their relationship, though, came when the Russian journalist, revolutionary and member of the General Council of the First International, German Lopatin, went to Switzerland and made known that the reason of Nechaev's being there was that he had actually killed Ivanov and that the proof of it were the scars on the finger of Nechaev, caused by his victim's vain to defend himself.³

Nechaev, left with no other allies, apart from his personal convictions and goals, travelled for a while to Paris and Zurich where was arrested, on 14 August 1872, and sent to Russia being accused of having killed Ivanov. In Russia he was found guilty and sentenced to 20 years "katorga"-hard labour- in a high-security cell of Peter-Paul Fortress. The cells, however, of that unbreachable fortress did not manage to bend Nechaev's "nihilistic crusade". He succeeded in taking his guards by his side and they also started calling him "eagle".⁴ As further proof of his charismatic ability to convince and inspire, even his enemies, Nechaev contrived to "recruit" in his bloody quest 69 guards and almost attained to set in March a jail break.⁵ According to the historian Paul Avrich he convinced his guards to read the journal of the illegal "People's Will" organization.⁶ He was able to be in communication with them, and with their central committee, through correspondence; he was similarly informed of the assassination plan of Tsar Alexander 2nd, a plan which, as we have already seen, was successfully executed in March 1882. Finally, Nechaev died of scurvy in his cell at the end of 1882, at the age of 35 having left the legacy not only of his deeds, but, mainly, of his work *Catechism of a Revolutionary*; a work which has borne importantly upon inspiring⁷ nihilist/terrorist groups such as "The People's Will", German terrorists in the epoch of divided Germany and many different individuals with prominent position- among them, Eldridge Cleaver, the member of the "Black Panthers".

Nechaev's explosive personality has captured the interest of many different thinkers since then, and even the attention of Fyodor Dostoevsky who in his novel *Demons* worked out the fictional character Pyotr Stepanovich Verkhovensky of Nechaev. Dostoevsky, though, made a very insightful interpretation of Nechaev's idiomorphic figure, and, probably, of every Nechaev in the world, in his writing "One of Today's Falsehoods"- as we will see in the last part of our paper. Nechaev's reputation is still strong nowadays, the famous political theorist and historian Roger Griffin claiming that the extreme right parties' violent terrorist acting during the Years of Lead in Italy did occur in the "tradition of Nechaev".⁸ The Red Brigades and the Black Panthers, as noted before, seem to have been influenced by Nechaev's *Catechism*, his ideas and his passion for nihilism, proving, thus, to be indeed no less strong than his deeds and his political activism. For this reason, the next part of our work will be dedicated to a presentation of the core ideas of his *Catechism* accompanied by a philosophical reflection on their potentiality for nihilistic thinking and acting.

2. NECHAEV'S CATECHISM: THE LEGACY OF NIHILISM

In his *Catechism of a Revolutionary*,⁹ in the first part concerning the "Duties of the Revolutionist to himself", Nechaev argues:

1. The revolutionist is a person doomed [*obrechennyi*, in older usage signifying also "consecrated"]. He has no personal interests, no business affairs, no emotions, no attachments, no property, and no name. Everything in him is wholly absorbed in the single thought and the single passion for revolution.
2. The revolutionist knows that in the very depths of his being, not only in words but also in deeds, he has broken all the bonds which tie him to the civil order [*grazhdanskim poriadkom*] and the civilized world with all its laws, moralities, and customs, and with all its generally

accepted conventions. He is their implacable enemy, and if he continues to live with them it is only in order to destroy them more speedily.

3. The revolutionist despises all doctrines and refuses to accept the mundane sciences, leaving them for future generations. He knows only one science: the science of destruction. For this reason, but only for this reason, he will study mechanics, physics, chemistry, and perhaps medicine. But all day and all night he studies the vital science of human beings, their characteristics and circumstances, at every possible level of social existence. The object is perpetually the same: the surest and quickest way of destroying the whole filthy order.

4. The revolutionist despises public opinion. He despises and hates the existing social morality in all its manifestations. For him, morality is everything which contributes to the triumph of the revolution. Anything that stands in its way is immoral and criminal.

What we can see in the first four passages is the creation of a new kind of human being, a “revolutionary” human(?) being whose goal is the revolution and his tool the destruction. This new kind of being is a kind of a “lone wolf”, separated from the world, with no personal interests, no emotions, and *no name*, whose only reason for living is the passion for the revolution. Of course, having no feelings, but feeling passionate about the revolution could seem a bit contradictory. Nonetheless, everything, if we are to make sense of this pamphlet, has to be seen in the perspective of a new being which does not even want to have a name; a being which has been totally absorbed by his idea of the revolution, and, most importantly, by his lust for destruction. Having no name and desiring no name is the absolute surrender of a personality to a cause. The cause has become the person and this taking over has been welcomed by the person surrendering his own personal being to something that is supposed to be more than him and even desiring becoming the person’s only passion, goal and purpose. This is why the word doomed appears in the dark horizon of Nechaev. The revolutionary is doomed, meaning that his will has become the will of the dark idea that has sentenced him into this struggle. The idea is in full possession of the man. The doom of the person is the broad horizon of the idea springing forth from his own giving up his personality. What blossoms is not a free choice but a decision which ties the person and his future to something that once decided will define his life from that moment on. The doom of the person is the being brought forth of the destruction of the world. The expression of the absolute uncanniness in a world where the only possible abode is the destruction of everything that the rest could characterize as abode and homely. Life becomes a strict duty where the only possible way towards the ontic realization of the idea, is the revolution through the destruction; a new society through the burning down of everything that constitutes a society as we know it, namely the laws, our morality and moral values, our customs and our relationship with the rest of the people. All those elements, however, are the core of what makes our society a society and their destruction in the name of revolution would require a society born out of scratch; taken out of the traditions that formed the older society, more generally, isolated from every possible interaction with all those elements that could actually make of a society a matrix of actions, interactions and social/political syntheses. Burning everything to ground so as to build something new would make sense if there was still some ground to build upon. Nechaev’s approach seems to be getting lost(?) in the vortex of destruction; a destruction which denying the glorification of its own name takes occasionally the name of revolution.

Thus, the ideas of morality and values are not becoming subjective, but, on the contrary, they reach the point of becoming pure objects and tools whose only utility lies in their use for the accomplishment of the destruction and the revolution. Morality, thus, is what helps the revolution and the destruction of the “filthy order”, at least from Nechaev’s point of view. There is indeed a cruel sincerity in the thought of the Russian nihilist who

does not try to hide his true intention behind ideas and values which would later be used in such a way as to justify the means. On the extreme opposite, it seems that the only idea materialized in the work of Nechaev is the destruction as a goal in itself; a concept which seems to be dominating his *Catechism* and his worldview in general. Anything standing against the revolutionary is criminal and immoral. Who defines, though, what a crime is if the laws and justice as well are despised and emptied of their moral content? Why does Nechaev even use the word immoral and moral if it is devoid of content? It seems that Nechaev, in his effort to ruin every possible idea of transcendence or even of the impact and influence of tradition, is just getting entangled in a much more dangerous one; a transcendence which takes the form of pure destruction disguised in different clothes according to the occasion. There is no need for morality because the world of Nechaev is quite simple and realistic. On the one side Nechaev and his society (even though poor Ivanov would have much to object to) and on the other all that oppose him. This schema gets much clearer in the fifth paragraph of the first part of the *Catechism* with Nechaev writing:

5. The revolutionist is a person *doomed*¹⁰ *obrechennyi* [see first line]. He is merciless toward the state and toward the whole formal social structure of educated society [*soslovno-obrazovannogo obshchestva*]; and he can expect no mercy from them. Between him and them there exists, declared or concealed, a relentless and irreconcilable war to the death. He must accustom himself to torture.

The whole social structure with its institutions and people is bound to be destroyed. No mercy will be shown to the revolutionaries and no mercy will the revolutionaries show. Not only destruction but the torture as well is something that the revolutionary has to be accustomed to. The society, as seen through the eyes of Nechaev, is the pure incarnation of the absolute enemy; an enemy deprived of his own human essence- a deprivation that the revolutionary is willingly engaged into-. Since the revolutionary decided to sacrifice his own personality and name for the sake of the destruction he can only assume that the consequence of this sacrifice is not going to be purely personal, but, on the contrary, the whole society will pay the consequences of it due to the fact that the revolutionary's feeling uncanny in the society led him to the rejection of his own personality and letting be "possessed" by the idea of destruction and of its official cloak, the revolution. Seen in another way, the nihilist revolutionary is directing his rage against the ground from which the society blossomed, forgetting that what he is and what he has become is a fruit of the same ground that gave rise to the so much despised society. Nechaev, through his idea of absolute isolation, seems willing to deny the fact that he is also the product of relationship and interaction in the society. No matter how much he despises and hates the society he does not want to accept that what he became was greatly due to a society that opened the ground for his nihilist coming forth- with the bright exception of the robber bands he considers, as we will later see, the only genuine revolutionists in Russia. Burning down the ground that gave rise to the society will not also burn his having come forth from the same ground. This is probably the reason why Nechaev avoids transforming the conflict and destruction of the society into a personal matter; an endless passionate quest against a society that has betrayed him. His having become doomed by the idea of destruction helps him distantiate himself from his society and from his own beliefs and ideas concerning the society. No sentiments could eventuate inside the revolutionary because that would put obstacles in the actualization of the destruction in the world. The destruction of the society cannot be Nechaev's destruction because that would not make it a cause and an idea but a personal vendetta; the destruction has to be impersonal, cruel and without sentiments.

6. Tyrannical toward himself, he must be tyrannical toward others. All the gentle and enervating sentiments of kinship, love, friendship, gratitude, and even honor, must be suppressed in him and give place to the cold and single-minded passion for revolution. For him, there exists only one pleasure, one consolation, one reward, one satisfaction -- the success of the revolution. Night and day he must have but one thought, one aim -- merciless destruction. Striving cold-bloodedly and indefatigably toward this end, he must be prepared to destroy himself and to destroy with his own hands everything that stands in the path of the revolution.

7. The nature of the true revolutionist excludes all sentimentality, romanticism, infatuation, and exaltation. All private hatred and revenge must also be excluded. Revolutionary passion, practiced at every moment of the day until it becomes a habit, is to be employed with cold calculation. At all times, and in all places, the revolutionist must obey not his personal impulses, but only those which serve the cause of the revolution.

The ardent desire for destruction, as we see, has to be accompanied by a cold calculation since what matters most is the destruction of the society, the destruction of every obstacle that stands in the way of the revolutionary. It is noteworthy to point out that in *Catechism* the sentiments are considered distractions for the revolutionary since all that matters is the quick destruction of everything that stands in his way. We could assume that this also came from the personal experience of Nechaev who put his “friend” Bakunin, much more than once, in a perilous situation. This also goes against the modern conception of solidarity in the anarchist movements where the support of the members plays a crucial role. Nonetheless, for Nechaev everything that is not significant for the revolution loses its value. It is a bit frightening, though, to imagine a society which has blossomed through a valueless and devoid of any sentiment revolution; a “cold-blooded” revolution done through a “cold passion” and organized via a “cold calculation”. Nechaev in his effort to avoid making his revolution personal he totally surrendered himself to the idea of destruction, surrendering, though, at the same time, all that would make the revolution humane. The sentiments, the joy, the pleasure and the warmth of love and companionship have all become the oil for the endless slaughtering machine of destruction. All the sacrifices made seem to have had success taking into account that Nechaev managed to inspire a much more effective than him terrorist organization (“People’s Will”) and if we consider that we are still speaking about him regardless of his not so successful political and social activism. The hatred, the destruction and the fury that the *Catechism* unleashed managed to bring nihilism seriously into the political sphere enabling the fury of destruction to dress itself with the costume of the revolutionary answer. Many terrorists have effectively used destruction in order to promote their plans, very few, though, apart from Nechaev, succeeded in making of destruction a value in itself; an idea worth killing and dying for no matter the consequences and the obstacles. Nechaev, thus, is not to be limited to an example of what happens when a human being goes astray; on the contrary, he is the best example of what happens when the human being seriously considers himself as limitless and boundless pure potentiality, even if this potentiality actualizes itself in sheer and pure destruction.

Having seen the core element of destruction in the *Catechism* and the possession of the person by it through the latter’s surrendering his own personality and name, we could now try to understand which the goal of the revolution is and which its outcome in the society will be, especially if we recall the pure hatred expressed by Nechaev against every moral value, institution and the society as a whole. In the last part of his *Catechism* Nechaev titled “The Attitude of the Society¹¹ towards the People” we read that:

22. The Society has no aim other than the complete liberation and happiness of the *narod* -- i.e., of the people who live by manual labor. Convinced that their emancipation and the achievement of this happiness can only come about as a result of an all-destroying popular revolt, the Society

will use all its resources and energy toward increasing and intensifying the evils and miseries of the people until at last their patience is exhausted and they are driven to a general uprising.

The first thing that strikes us in this passage is that the only aim of the Society is the liberation and the happiness of the people. So far society has been despised, attacked and worthy of destruction; the people, however, must be happy and totally free. Their freedom and happiness, though, will be the result of the intensification and the increase of their evils, miseries and sufferings till they finally decide to rebel and merge into an uprising against the source of their sufferings which is the dominant political and economic status quo which gives the revolutionary Society no other choice than to torture and increase the misery of the people so that the latter could blame the State for their misfortune. This strategy, nonetheless, makes quite blurry the difference between the suffering caused by the State and the revolutionary Society since the latter works as an accelerator of the oppression of the former in order to bring the people to their knees. Under the aim of the happiness of the people we see a not so subtle bridge of despair and suffering which is not freely decided by the people. The Society, having decided that the people must be free and happy, uses them as its experiments to test and break their limits so as to turn them against the State. Death, despair and manipulation are required for this so-called happiness of the people helping us understand that destruction takes its toll on the well-being and the patience of the people. In addition, proclaiming that a secret Society which has banned every feeling and sentiment from its ranks will manage to create happiness in a society struck by anger, despair and suffering, also causes some really important ontological issues concerning happiness; the latter is limited to a different degree of suffering and despair and, probably a more serious methodological one, namely that the revolution as we will now see again, requires a destruction of the tradition, values, institutions and classes of the society, letting, thus, the people in a groundless situation where the only example of happiness will be presented by a group that has banned happiness from its ranks with the aim of destroying everything so that the people can be happy. Hence, in paragraph 23, we read:

23. By a revolution, the society [*tovarishchestvo*] does not mean an orderly revolt according to the classic western model -- a revolt which always stops short of attacking the rights of property and the traditional social systems of so-called civilization and morality. Until now, such a revolution has always limited itself to the overthrow of one political form in order to replace it by another, thereby attempting to bring about a so-called revolutionary state. The only form of revolution beneficial to the people is one which destroys the entire State to the roots and exterminates all the state traditions, institutions, and classes [*klassy*] in Russia.

As we can understand, the revolution of Nechaev is pure havoc. The civilization, morality, tradition and the whole State have to be eradicated so that the people may benefit from this downfall. The question, however, remains who the founder of this new society will be. This is a question of limited significance for Nechaev, since his role, and his organization's role, is a different one:

24. With this end in view, the Society therefore refuses to impose any new organization from above. Any future organization will doubtless work its way through the movement and life of the people; but this is a matter for future generations to decide. Our task is terrible, total, universal, and merciless destruction.

According to Nechaev there is no doubt that an organization in the future will find its way to create another kind of society in the times to come. This is not a concern for him since his task is a different one: total, universal and merciless destruction. There is no emphasizing on the hope of better future, of a better society or of a solidary society in the model proposed by Prince Kropotkin in his *Mutual Aid*. The lack of any further reference to the new society is closely tied to the fact that Nechaev is a prophet of destruction, not of

peace and founding. Merciless destruction and eradication of all the institutions and traditions characterize his thought, not the well-being of a future society. His thought is endlessly driven by the vortex of destruction and mayhem; a vortex, though, that has managed to keep his thought alive and effective even centuries after his death. Peace and cohesion belong to the future; the present is destruction and endless hunting down of the enemy. The enemy, however, has become an abstract entity since there is no place where he cannot be found: he is in the tradition, in the institutions, in the State, in the laws and in the moral behaviour. How can you ever stop a war when the war is raged against everything surrounding us?

25. Therefore, in drawing closer to the people, we must above all make common cause with those elements of the masses which, since the foundation of the state of Muscovy, have never ceased to protest, not only in words but in deeds, against everything directly or indirectly connected with the state: against nobility, against bureaucracy [*chinovnichestva*], against priests, against the merchant gild, and against the parasitic kulak [rich peasant]. We must unite with the world of adventurous robber bands, the only genuine revolutionists in Russia.

In this passage we see that the relation with the people has to be one of getting closer, so as to achieve the goal of the destruction of all. No empathy is expressed for their suffering-how could it be if Nechaev's goal was to multiply their suffering- only the will to stand close to those who have always protested and attacked the State and everything connected with the latter: the nobility, the bureaucracy, the priests and the rich people. Solidarity is understood in terms of the maximisation of the utility. This lack of sympathy is explicitly expressed in the paragraph 13 of the *Catechism*, ("The Relations of the Revolutionist within [his revolutionary] Society"), when Nechaev says:

13. The revolutionist enters the world of the state, of the privileged classes [*soslovnyi...mir*], of the so-called civilization, and he lives in this world only for the purpose of bringing about its speedy and total destruction. He is not a revolutionist if he has any sympathy for this world. He should not hesitate to destroy any position, any place, or any man in this world. He must hate everyone and everything in it with an equal hatred. All the worse for him if he has any relations with parents, friends, or lovers; he is no longer a revolutionist if he is swayed by these relationships.

Rarely have we seen such a direct attack against the idea of the world and everything that it represents. No sympathy, no feelings just the will of nothingness and an endless lust for nihilism. The possession of Nechaev by the idea of destruction is so clear and explicit that there can be no question why his ideas have still survived and are still inspiring radicals. The pamphlet *Catechism* is a compass for the obscure transcendental possession by the idea of destruction. A constant burning into ashes of the whole society for the sake of destruction, since the future generations will have to think of the way to found a new society. The human being of Nechaev has its reason of being in the not-being of everything that is supposedly enchaining him, even if this is the whole world. Nechaev's human being has only one purpose, one value and one task,

26. To weld this world into one single unconquerable and all-destructive force -- this is our organization [*organizatsiia*], our conspiracy, our task.

3. INSIDE THE SOUL OF A "DEMON": DOSTOEVSKY AND THE SPIRIT OF NECHAEVISM

Having seen some core elements of Nechaev's philosophy and its sincere and profound relationship with the idea of destruction, a question that could easily arise is the following one: what makes someone become a hardcore and absolute nihilist such as Nechaev? One of the possible answers was given in the following comment published in the journal *Russian World*¹² after the publishing of Dostoevsky's book *Demons*:

...we think that the Nechaev case ought to convince us that students in Russia do not get mixed up in such lunacy. An idiotic fanatic such as Nechaev could find proselytes only among the idle and underdeveloped and not among young people involved in studies.

From the above extract we can deduce that Nechaev was a lunatic, idiotic fanatic who could find supporters only among the “idle and underdeveloped”, and not among people with studies. That was the main idea of the presented text; an idea/defence of people, who unlike Dostoevsky, tried to analyse everything from a superficial point of view so as to avoid cutting deep into the dark potentiality of each human being. History, though, decades later, would prove to them that excellent studies and delicate taste in classical music is not incompatible with slaughter and fanaticism, not even with concentration camps. Choosing the easy way to interpret and understand what Nechaev is, creating an image of a perverse and distorted version of our Not-I, was not, however, the proper way to analyse Nechaev, as the survival and the influence of his ideas in later generations has already proven. There was something more than idiocy and fanaticism in that young man who managed to recruit 69 guards while imprisoned. Dostoevsky’s approach was much more profound since he saw something more in Nechaev as this comes out from the following extensive passage written as an answer¹³ to the *Russian World*’s publication:

Please, gentlemen (I am speaking in general and not only to the writer from The Russian World), on the basis of your "denial of the fact" you assert that the Nechaevs absolutely must be idiots, "idiotic fanatics." Is that really so? Is that just? In the present instance I set Nechaev aside and say "Nechaevs," in the plural. Yes, among the Nechaevs there can be creatures who are very shadowy, very dismal and misshapen, with a thirst for intrigue and power of most complex origins, with a passionate and pathologically premature urge to express their personalities, but why must they be "idiots?" On the contrary, even the genuine monsters among them may be very well developed, extremely clever, and even educated people. Or do you think that knowledge, a course of training, a few facts picked up in school (or even in university) form the soul of a youth so thoroughly that with the receipt of his diploma he at once acquires an unfailling talisman that once and for all enables him to recognize the truth and avoid temptations, passions, and vices? And so, by your way of thinking, all these youths who complete their studies at once become something like a multitude of little popes with the power of infallibility. And why do you suppose that the Nechaevs must absolutely be fanatics? Very often they are simply scoundrels. "I am a scoundrel, not a socialist," says one Nechaev. True, he says that in my novel *The Devils*, but I assure you that he could have said it in real life. These scoundrels are very crafty and have thoroughly studied the magnanimous aspect of the human soul-and most often the soul of youth-so as to be able to play on it as on a musical instrument.

Dostoevsky in this diachronic critique against the bureaucratic and calculative spirit of his, and ours as well, era brings down one by one the over simplistic characterizations set against Nechaev. Idiocy and fanaticism are not *sine qua non* conditions for our understanding of Nechaev and each Nechaev. What grasps our attention, among other things, is the interpretation of Nechaev(s) as a human being “with a passionate and pathologically premature urge to express their personalities”. In one sentence Dostoevsky brings to a collapse the whole effort of Nechaev to be seen as an impersonal actor of destruction and a bloody seeker of revolution; an actor who has willingly sacrificed his name, his feelings and his sympathy for the world on the altar of destruction and of a bloody cleansing. Right behind this idea of a destruction we discern a person who has dedicated his all being into depersonalizing himself for the sake of something greater than him, not realizing, though, that what he managed to bring forth was not a transcendental value of the destruction or/and revolution, but his own *personal* actualizing of his potentiality as the most destructive and bloodthirsty version of himself. The itinerary of the idea was not upside down, as a preparation for the possession of a higher idea, but rather downside up; a bloody ascension of a person who wanted to become something more than himself, the incarnation of

destruction, even if that meant the violent ripping apart of everything that made him human and a person.

Summarizing the above said, the Russian thinker, as we see in the above passage, sets upon the dismantling of both characterizations of idiocy and fanaticism. Nechaev, far from being an idiot is someone who could easily be extremely clever, given that intelligence is not only to be proved by the diploma and the official-bureaucratic-recognition of it; a diploma which once acquired separates the “few” from the uneducated masses which would later become the new Nechaevs. Nor is Nechaev, and every Nechaev, necessarily a fanatic or a lunatic absorbed by his ideas and incapable of seeing anything outside his ideological and philosophical vision. As Dostoevsky says, Nechaev could be just a “scoundrel” with the ability, though, of manipulating young people’s souls finding each moment the correct radical and violent tune. Simpler said, Nechaev did not have to be a living prophet in order to be recognized as such afterwards. It would not be an exaggeration if to say that Nechaev’s deeds fall short compared to the nihilist dimension his thought had opened for future generations. What Nechaev had truly in his mind we will never know-even though we can be quite certain that till the last moment he was quite committed to his worldview, considering what he managed to do at jail and if we give validity to the rumours that he denied the help of “People’s Will” to organize his escape because he did not want to distract them from their main goal of killing the Tsar – but what we can definitely see is that he did exercise his influence on both his contemporary (“People’s Will”) and future generations of radical terrorists and nihilists. Knowing whether he truly was a fanatic or not, of course it is important for a philosopher or probably a psychologist, but it is not the only premise that conditions the thinking and actions that took place paying honour to his thought. Dostoevsky was able to see that the “domino of ideas” is a strange game where each part can be brought down for different reasons, keeping up, nonetheless, with the flowing of the thought of Nechaev and little does it matter how each one interpreted it. Once the seed of the idea of nihilism has been planted, then, different ideas may start flourishing, all different aspects of the same nihilistic seed.

The fact that the followers of Nechaev, as well, should not be simplistically characterized as idiotic fanatics or just “loafers” and marginalized people is highlighted by Dostoevsky’s giving an account of a very personal experience¹⁴ that had brought him close to death:

And do you really think that the proselytes whom some such Nechaev could gather in Russia must absolutely consist only of loafers? I don't believe that; not all of them would be. I myself am an old "Nechaevist"; I also stood on the scaffold condemned to death, and I assure you that I stood in the company of educated people. Almost that whole company had graduated from the highest institutions of learning. Some of them, later on, when everything had passed, distinguished themselves by making remarkable contributions to specialized fields. No, gentlemen, the Nechaevists do not always come only from idlers who have never studied anything.....

Finally, one interesting issue that arises here is the difference between being a Nechaev and being a Nechaevist; namely, between being the one who sets the bloody example and the one who follows it having idolized the martyr/prophet who dedicated his life to the cause, the latter becoming, very often, much bloodier and fiercer than the former in his struggle to live up to the glorified ideological heritage he has become part of. Following Nechaev makes someone not another Nechaev but a disciple of him; someone who could adapt what Nechaev thought to the context in which he lives in so as to maximize the utility of the means needed for the destruction of the “filthy order”. Nechaev’s *Catechism* is written in such a way that avoids its being limited to specific social/political context. It has

the apocalyptic tone of a constant call to arms for the forging of a better society; a society, nonetheless, whose foundation lies on a future generation which will “doubtlessly” find the way to make everyone happy. What makes this approach dangerous, though, is that the revolutionary takes the shape of a martyr doomed to find and destroy so that the next generation may be freed of all those factors which have to be destroyed. Destruction is sanctified in the fire of the “revolution”; a revolution that serves in an excellent way the thirst of destruction since the latter is not seen as a senseless nihilating ouroboros activity, but it postulates a brighter future which can only be achieved through the absolute darkness of political nihilism. These elements of martyrdom and “self-sacrifice”, the image of a revolutionary getting his hands dirty for a future “better good” should be seriously considered when dealing with radical groups; a piece of advice that Dostoevsky gave us in the clearest way;¹⁵

But let that be; I was a member of the Petrashevsky Circle, then. How do you know that the members of that circle could not have become Nechaevists, i.e. , set off on Nechaev's path, in the event that things had taken such a turn? Of course, one couldn't even have imagined that at the time: how could things have ever taken such a turn? Times then were completely different. But let me say one thing about myself alone: a Nechaev I probably could never have become, but a Nechaevist-well, of that I can't be sure; perhaps I could have become one . . . in the days of my youth.

CONCLUSIONS

Having reached the conclusion of this paper, we would like to stress one point concerning how Nechaev could be interpreted and which his significance is for our understanding the human being in general. Schelling in his brilliant and deep-reaching *Freedom Essay* explains the struggle taking place inside the human being between the “Ground” and the “Existence”, the urging and the understanding. We are caught between our desire to become one with the universal order, with the revelation of Logos in our lives, while, at the same moment, we do not want to surrender our personality, our self and our will to something which is not a pure I. When acting evil, hence, we act in such a way as to make the universal submit to our own will, to our own way of understanding and acting in the world. The “pathological urge to express the personality”, as Dostoevsky very accurately commented, is our will to be the centre of the universe, even if that means the burning down of all that is not considered ours. Nechaev is nothing more than this extreme potentiality of the human being getting actualized. His ardent hatred for the society and its rules, his obsession with the destruction and with the necessity of creating a new being which little has to do with the human as being we know it, are all different violent and radical expressions of the same core; namely, our belief that we can and should be the centre of the universe. Nechaev is the case of an I which has willingly surrendered itself to the idea of destruction so as to hide from the others- and even from himself- that the whole process of being possessed by destruction is not a sacrifice of the I, but, on the contrary, its fullest glorification expressed in the (f)act of the absolute refusal of a world that the supposedly sacrificed I did not tolerate not to have it as its own. It seems that even in the act of the dehumanization of the self by the idea of destruction- so that a new being may finally emerge- the impersonal revolutionary, the power that still holds control of the whole dehumanizing process is the humane desperate search of a human who seeks to find an abode in the world, even if this abode is scorched earth and misanthropy.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ For more information about the life of Nechaev and his relation with Bakunin, see: Paul Avrigh. *Bakunin and Nechaev*. London: Freedom Press. 1974 and the introduction and preliminary notes of the Spanish tradition of Nechaev's *Catechism of a Revolutionary*: Sergéi Nechayev. *El Catecismo Revolucionario*. Madrid: La Felguera. 2014
- ² For an English translation of the pamphlet see: Mikhail Bakunin. "The Bears of Berne and the Bear of Saint-Petersburg" (Trans. by Shawn Wilbur). *The Libertarian Labyrinth*. 31 March 2014. Retrieved from: <https://www.libertarian-labyrinth.org/bakunin-library/the-bears-of-berne-and-the-bear-of-saint-petersburg-1870/>
- ³ Paul Avrigh. *Anarchist portraits*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1990. p.44
- ⁴ Ibid. p.49
- ⁵ Anatol Rapoport. *The Origins of Violence: Approaches to the Study of Conflict*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. 1995. p. 186
- ⁶ Paul Avrigh. *Anarchist portraits*. p.49
- ⁷ For more information concerning the possible influence of Nechaev on various international terrorist groups see the first chapter "Organizing Revolution: The Russian Terrorists" in Steven Marks. *How Russia Shaped the Modern World: From Art to Anti-Semitism, Ballet to Bolshevism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2004
- ⁸ Roger Griffin. *Terrorist's Creed*. Basingstoke: United Kingdom. 2012. p.49
- ⁹ The translation that we will be using, with slight alterations, is the one provided online by the University of Oregon (the translation can be found here: <http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/Nqv.catechism.thm.htm>) and it has been verified by comparison with the Spanish translation of the work: Sergéi Nechayev. *El Catecismo Revolucionario*. Madrid: La Felguera. 2014
- ¹⁰ The word does not appear in the fragment. It has been put here for reasons of clarification.
- ¹¹ The Society in the title is to be understood as the revolutionary society formed by the revolutionary so as to achieve his goals.
- ¹² Fyodor Dostoevsky. *A Writer's Diary- Volume 1*. (Trans. By Kenneth Lantz). Illinois: Northwestern University Press. 1993. p. 279
- ¹³ Ibid. p.283
- ¹⁴ Ibid. p.284
- ¹⁵ Ibid.

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- [4] Paul Avrigh. *Bakunin and Nechaev*. London: Freedom Press. 1974
- [5] Paul Avrigh. *Anarchist portraits*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1990. p.44
- [6] Roger Griffin. *Terrorist's Creed*. Basingstoke: United Kingdom. 2012. p.49
- [7] Sergei Nechaev. *Catechism of a Revolutionist*. (Trans. by University of Oregon-Online Edition). University of Oregon. Retrieved from: <http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/Nqv.catechism.thm.htm>¹⁵
- [8] Sergéi Nechayev. *El Catecismo Revolucionario*. Madrid: La Felguera. 2014
- [9] Steven Marks. *How Russia Shaped the Modern World: From Art to Anti-Semitism, Ballet to Bolshevism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2004

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