

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS CAROLINAE
THEOLOGICA **2019**
Vol. 9, No. 2

THEME

Discernment and the Christian Life

The Book of Isaiah

CHARLES UNIVERSITY
KAROLINUM PRESS

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www.theologica.cz

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ISSN 1804-5588 (Print)

ISSN 2336-3398 (Online)

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INTRODUCTION

Discernment and the Christian Life

The first part of this issue of the *Acta Universitatis Carolinae Theologica* is dedicated to the theme of discernment. The articles are part of the project ‘Theological Anthropology in Ecumenical Perspective’ (Charles University Research Centre No. 204052), and their first drafts were presented at a conference ‘How Discernment between Good and Evil Shapes the Dynamics of the Human Journey’ held in the Monastery of Bose in May 2019, and organised in cooperation with the Monastery. They come mainly from the younger generation of theologians from different Christian traditions, Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox. Before we introduce their specific contributions, let us briefly outline why the theme of discernment is so important in the life of Christians.

The essential human condition of being placed before a choice is expressed both in the Greek myth of Hercules at the crossroads and in the Bible. This situation implies a twofold condition: objectively, a real difference between choosing good and choosing evil; subjectively, the freedom of choice. If the objective condition is overwhelming, personal freedom vanishes, and individuals are doomed to follow either the good or the evil path. If individual freedom is the ultimate criterion, boundaries between evil and good are blurred, and freedom itself is but another name for the arbitrariness of power. What keeps the balance between ethical values and personal responsibility?

In the Christian tradition both in the East and the West, ‘discernment’ is the name of this process that we might call the art of choice, which safeguards both the transcendence of Good and the ultimate

freedom of the human person. This discernment relies upon the responsibility of every person, believer, or agnostic. Human life itself imposes the choice among different attitudes, behaviours and actions, in order to be responsible for one's own existence and to live with awareness and responsibility. Discerning – from the Latin *dis* (between) and *cernere* (see clearly, distinguish) – is therefore an operation that calls for the consciousness of every human being. It determines his/her very identity.

In the Holy Scripture, God reveals to Israel his constitutive being before an option: 'I have placed you before life and death, blessing and curse.' God's commandment is always for life: 'Therefore choose life, that you may live ... loving the Lord, your God, obeying his voice and keeping you united with him' (Deuteronomy 30:15–16.19–20). You have to choose. Discernment is precisely this art of choice, to discern the present time, the *kairós* in which God works and speaks, the time of decision. There is a subject of discernment: it is the person and his or her freedom. The choice takes place in that secret place that the Bible calls the human heart, which is the conscience.

Throughout the centuries, the great Christian teachers and spiritual masters have taught the ways of discerning 'thoughts' (*loghismoi* in Greek, *cogitationes* in Latin), that distract the mind from seeking God and render it a prisoner of a deceptive image of oneself. Discernment is the personal and liberating operation that permits every person to recognise their unique vocation.

If discernment in itself concerns the person and their conscience, nevertheless it bears a collective dimension, which cuts across the social, cultural, political, and historical spheres. In the Christian tradition, discernment is above all 'ecclesial'. Every Christian community and every local Church are invited to be shaped by the Spirit of Christ (cf. Acts 2:1–11) and to discern the signs of the times, conforming renewal and fidelity to the 'deposit of faith'. Times of crisis have aroused, and still today should arouse, discernment (*didkrisis*). But the New Testament speaks clearly also of an object of discernment: the Christ himself. If in the Gospel the Lord asks to discern, to recognise the time (*kairós*) of his presence (cf. Luke 12:56–57), Paul will ask to discern the body of the Lord in the community that celebrates the Eucharist (1 Corinthians 11:28).

This ecclesial discernment, which gave shape to the decisions of the ecumenical councils, must always be exercised again today, when the

Churches are committed to the path of recovering unity: it is necessary to discern together the truth, in theological dialogue, to recognise the common baptismal faith in Christ, overcoming the divisions created in history by linguistic, cultural, and political misunderstandings.

This art of choice becomes urgent today for the whole society, in an age of great change not only for faith, but also for ethics, culture, and the political life (we all live in the *polis*); an age of great uncertainties that often paralyses human choices, making men and women spectators of a life that does not belong to them; a life characterised by a complexity that they do not know how to master. This art of choice must therefore be rediscovered, practiced, and compared in different cultural worlds, with a view to a humanisation that contrasts all superficiality and disengagement: the un-politics and disengagement are always a prelude to barbarism.

Each of us is called to discern, sift, try, question, compare, and then choose and take a path, even at the risk of making mistakes: ethical awareness is an essential requirement of daily action and when it is not exercised, it is *humanitas* that is threatened. Of course, there are criteria for discernment: on the one hand, we need to build our own interiority, so that life is not exposed to instincts alone, but open to authentic freedom, always conditioned yet real; on the other hand, we need to set out in search of the common good, the good of the other, reading and interpreting history and its signs. For the Christian, among the various criteria, the primacy belongs to the word of God contained in the Holy Scriptures. But let us not forget that the Word of God and the Holy Spirit that accompanies it, according to the Catholic tradition, are never absent in the heart, in the conscience of every human being, Christian or not, religious or not religious. So, the question that accompanies each of us is: 'What have you done with your freedom?'

The articles collected in this issue approach the question from both the personal and communal side. They are focussed round two main sub-themes: how participation in the liturgical life helps to cultivate theological, moral, and spiritual discernment; and what other sources of practice and wisdom Christians of different traditions draw on, as they seek to live Christ-like lives and thus to make the right choices in the light of the Holy Spirit.

The emphasis on practice is deliberate, as in it we can see what beliefs and convictions really have authority for people. 'Words are deeds,'

says Ludwig Wittgenstein.¹ This could be seen as a paraphrase of the ancient axiom, *lex orandi, lex credendi* (the rule of faith [is] the law of belief), or in its longer form, *lex orandi legem credendi constituit* (the law of praying establishes the law of believing).² Liturgical life presents precisely that form of practice, which informs belief, and as part of that informs also discernment. The first two articles consider how this happens.

Tabita Landová brings into conversation the theologies of Karl Barth and Walter Brueggemann and current liturgical and ritual scholarship. She reverses the position that ethical stances inform our moral actions and explores what we can learn about our actions as we participate in liturgy. Liturgy, according to her, teaches us to see the world through the perspective of the Kingdom of God. But the problem is that this is not always the case. In her text, she shows that this problem is also an advantage, as it protects us from false certainties. It requires a mutual relationship in which liturgical prayer forms and informs ethical convictions and moral practice, but also a critique going the other way round, when liturgy constructs or petrifies false worlds marked by unholy power interests. Landová points out that doubt can then have a constructive role, as it can be a starting point of discernment. The role of humility, she argues, does not consist in our blindness to injustice or to conflicts, but rather in awareness of the necessary partiality of each of our perspectives, something she sees liturgically expressed in the prayer for the Holy Spirit, on whom ultimately our life, our faith, and our sound discernment depends.

Michaela Vlčková places the discernment between good and evil outside of liturgy and of ritual, while exploring what she calls the ‘anoetic’ side of rituals, which is the dimension outside of intellect, which deeply engages the body. Complementing current ritual and liturgical studies with insights from patristic and medieval theology, she appreciates the stability of rituals, traditionally based, and doctrinally anchored. They are to provide certainty. And the nature of that certainty is important. Vlčková sees it as a kind of matrix, in which physical activity has a cosmological meaning, one which invites and cultivates religious

¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 53e. Elsewhere he emphasises that it is dangerous to isolate and contemplate concepts – ‘because the language game in which they are to be applied is missing’. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* 96 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958).

² See Prosper of Aquitaine, *De vocatione omnium gentium*, 1.12: PL 51, 664C.

experience and gives meaning to the theological content. Christian liturgy consists in such practices, which make participation in God possible. On the other hand, she argues, it is necessary that people bring to that participation their life in a reflected manner, that they come as discerning people, inhabiting discerning communities. Without that, the outer forms of certainties supporting the ‘anoetic’ dimension of rituals would fossilise, and in effect, the ritual tradition would be emptied of its inner content.

The next article is composed as a conversation between three theologians: Kateřina Kočandrle Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušnieriková. They reflect on the problem of the fragmentation of discernment, on discernment and divine redemption, on the problem of the relationship with the origin of evil, and finally on the two factors relativising individual judgment, that of a community and that of eschatology. Drawing on Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant sources does not necessarily follow the confessional affiliation of the speakers, but rather the flow of life they are immersed in. Out of that, the authors reflect on what they find helpful in their own traditions. The reader will encounter underlying differences related to the possibilities of the divine-human cooperation, to what is the aim for which people were created, to the differentiation between evil and sin, to the extent and the form by which human sin keeps harming people and the world in which we live, or to the understanding of grace, mercy and goodness. Like in the previous articles, the complex theological debate returns with reflection to the practical starting points regarding how to live with God a fruitful, true and good life.

Finally, the article of Viorel Coman provides a response to the three previous authors. He places the search for the gift and the wisdom of discernment into a contemporary context of new waves of secularism, populism, and doing away with the truth. Commenting on the form of a dialogue, he points out that together with the search for what discernment means in practice, a kind of meta-practical level inevitably comes in as well, as we reflect on the nature of the practices and traditions of wisdom, and their theological, moral, and spiritual dimensions. At the same time, he emphasises that already the method of a free exchange of opinions and experiences brings together the personal and the communal nature of the discussed subject. Coman thus illustrates why listening to the other, trying not to transpose his or her position to what is common in my own, is a necessary quality for

any genuine common discernment and, indeed, for any healthy personal relationships. Moreover, as he points out, hearing others is vital for what he calls ‘the twin-fidelities’ of discernment: faithfulness to the tradition and faithfulness to the present life, and thus to innovation and newness. Coman then compares the dialogical approach of Kočandrle Bauer, Štěch, and Kušnieriková to the concept of ‘open sobornicity’ as developed by Fr Dumitru Stăniloae. Mutual exchange of gifts, when it comes to discernment, Coman argues, involves also a re-reading of the past, and learning from the instances of false discernment.

The articles in this issue do not and cannot exhaust such a complex topic as discernment, but hopefully, they provide the readers with windows into the current debate, and provoke further reflection and further conversations.

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and Ivana Noble, Prague*

doi: 10.14712/23563598.2020.1

The Book of Isaiah

In the second part of the issue, there are published three texts, which were presented at the international biblical conference on the Book of the prophet Isaiah entitled 'The Evangelical Prophet Isaiah Prophesied' (Prorok evangelický Isaiáš prorokoval) on December 7, 2018, at the Catholic Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague. The conference report is included in this issue.

The prominent discovery of a scroll with a complete text of Isaiah in the mid-20th century in Qumran significantly contributed to the study and interpretation of this Old Testament book. In his study on Isa. 7:17, Libor Marek shows how the Qumran community read biblical texts. They were far from any conservative approach. Together with the careful attention to the text in its exact wording, they applied the prophetic word to their situation. In this case, they used the ambiguous functions of the text, i.e. the punishment and the promise of salvation, and reworked its statement by omitting conflicting elements and re-contextualizing it into the present circumstances of the community. This approach to the Scripture is demonstrated in two quotations of Isa. 7:17 in the Damascus Document (or: Cairo Document = CD). In both cases, a negative interpretation of the Isaiah's statement is applied. The first passage in CD VII warns the present members of the community against the negative example of those who left the historical community. At the same time, however, the positive aspect of the prophecy that promises the faithful members of the community to escape to the northern country is also used (CD VII, 13). The second passage in CD XIII contains the legislation governing community life. The author of the Qumran text finds the common elements of his community with the text of Isaiah. Those who follow these instructions may have hope. On the contrary, those who reject them are expelled from the country and are deprived of any hope of change. This context confirms the negative aspect of Isaiah's statement.

The prophet Isaiah is one of the most frequently cited Old Testament books in the New Testament writings. New Testament researchers do not ignore this fact. Mireia Ryšková studies the reception and interpretation of Isaiah's quotations in Paul's greatest letter addressed to Rome. Paul selects quotes from all Isaiah's book; his preference for the Second Isaiah, as some believe, cannot be confirmed. The Judaism of Paul's time not only quoted Scriptures with literary accuracy but also made

use of the dynamic power of God's Word. Biblical words are understood as divine 'inspiration'. This power of the Spirit works in the interpreter and through him God speaks to His contemporaries. For example, the trial of Isaiah's unfaithful Israel is applied by Paul to his Jewish contemporaries who have not received the gospel. At the same time, the Apostle shares Isaiah's eschatological vision of Israel's salvation, which is the hope for him that this people of God will eventually be saved. Finally, it is typical of Paul that he interprets the old prophecy christologically and demonstrates how their soteriological promise is fulfilled in Jesus and his Paschal mystery.

In addition to literal quotations and their resulting interpretation, so-called allusions of the Old Testament texts are also studied in the contemporary New Testament research. These illustrate how deeply the writers of the New Testament texts were rooted in their religious culture and biblical tradition. Július Pavelčík applies this methodological approach to the Letter of James demonstrating thereby that direct quotations from the Pentateuch and the wisdom literature do not exhaust the author's dealing with biblical texts. A careful comparative study of the Septuagint vocabulary, the close context of Isaiah's statements and their characteristic themes on the one hand, and the analysis of the text of the Epistle of James on the other indicates that prophetic literature, and especially Isaiah's book, should be seen as an indispensable hermeneutic framework for interpreting this and perhaps even other Catholic epistles.

The three studies are only a tiny fraction of the vast research of the book of the prophet, who is in the Christian environment sometimes called the 'Evangelist of the Old Testament'. The results of this research have demonstrated that the message of the prophet Isaiah is not present among us only in his preserved written text, but he lived throughout many past generations of interpreters and – as we believe – he still does.

Jaroslav Brož

doi: 10.14712/23363398.2020.2

THEME

Discernment and the Christian Life

LITURGY AND THE DISCERNING WORLDVIEW: ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITURGY AND ETHICS*

TABITA LANDOVÁ

ABSTRACT

What is the relation between ethical discernment and liturgy? Do Christian rituals provide enough space for ethical thinking? What is the nature of the certainty that discernment in ritual is correct? This study explores these questions in the context of the recent debate on the relationship between liturgy and ethics. It proceeds in five steps. Firstly, it briefly outlines the question of the foundation of Christian ethics with the help of the theology of Karl Barth. Secondly, it presents the joint task of ethics and liturgy, which teach us to see the world *sub specie Christi*. Thirdly, following Gordon Lathrop, it treats the problem of ritual constructing false worldviews: the hierarchical distortion, the distortion of the closed circle, and spiritual consumerism. In the next part, it explores how different ritual strategies open the space for actual ethical thinking in liturgy. The last part focuses on the role of biblical narrative, images, and symbols that represent the crucial source of the discerning worldview. The concluding reflection returns to the opening questions arguing that our discernment must be always aware of its particularity and perspective. The unbroken certainty of seeing can only be placed on the eschatological horizon.

Key words

Liturgy; Ritual; Ethics; Discernment; Worldview; Liturgics; Bible; Consumerism; Hierarchism; Certainty

DOI: 10.14712/23363398.2020.3

* This study was supported by the programme University Research Centre of Charles University No. 204052. It is an expanded version of the paper ‘The Nature of Certainty in Ritual Discernment Between Good and Evil’, presented at the conference ‘How Discernment between Good and Evil Shapes the Dynamics of the Human Journey’ in Bose (Italy), 23rd May, 2019.

The discernment between good and evil is a process that shapes the dynamics of human life. Since childhood, we have learned to discern what is good and bad and we practice our ethical stances more or less successfully in our moral actions. Christian rituals are of cardinal importance for both ethical thinking and moral conduct. They are considered to be the means of transmitting ethical norms and values. They form and influence ethical thinking, as well as motivate moral conduct.

The relationship between liturgy and ethics has been the subject of many contributions since the end of 1970s from ethicists and liturgists across the confessions. The debate was initiated by the edition of the thematic issue of *The Journal of Religious Ethics*. The American Methodist ethicist Ramsay pointed to the principal equality of *lex orandi*, *lex credendi*, and *lex bene operandi*.¹ Another American Methodist liturgist Don E. Saliers stressed the conceptual interconnection between the celebration of God and sanctification of a man in liturgy.² Several years later, the French Catholic liturgical theologian Louis-Marie Chauvet focused his attention on the close interconnection between liturgy and ethics. He approaches the ritual as the performance of the good: 'Ritual's regular repetition has an initiatory effect of the greatest importance. [...] it implants the values of the group into the body of each member.'³ The American Lutheran liturgical theologian Frank Senn also deals with the formative function of Christian rituals. According to him, rituals not only have to do with what a community does before God, but also with what the members of a community do in interactions with one another. The Christian ritual is 'a pattern of behaviour that expresses and forms a way of life consistent with the community's beliefs and values'.⁴ In the area of Catholic theology,⁵ as well as in the context

¹ Paul Ramsey, 'Liturgy and Ethics,' *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 7, no. 2 (1979): 139–171.

² Don E. Saliers, 'Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings,' *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 7, no. 2 (1979): 173–189.

³ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1995), 340.

⁴ Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy. Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 5.

⁵ See e.g. Martin Stuflesser and Stephan Winter, *Ahne nach, was du vollziehst ...? Positionsbestimmungen zum Verhältnis von Liturgie und Ethik* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2009).

of other Christian traditions⁶ such as Anglicanism, Lutheranism, Reformed and even Orthodox churches, we find an enormous number of publications dealing with the topic of the relationship between liturgy and Christian life, as well as social and political justice, poverty, racism, violence, ecology, etc.⁷

The relationship between liturgy and ethics should not only be explored unidirectionally. The liturgy is not merely a source of inspiration for ethics. Christian rituals involve ethical judgements, so that we can say with conviction that liturgy *is* ethics.⁸ *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics* is based on this assumption. Its editors, the American theologian Stanley Hauerwas and the Anglican priest Samuel Wells, introduce Christian ethics through analysis of the liturgy.⁹ Writers from Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Mennonite, or Evangelical traditions approach particular themes such as penitence, punishment, rehearsing identity, practicing character, justice and liberation, poverty, hunger, and service. This is seen through the eyes of the liturgy by such acts as reconciliation, reading the Scriptures, interceding, sharing communion, and washing feet. Liturgy is considered to be an act of discipleship that forms the moral life.¹⁰

However, we can go even further and deal with the liturgy as an object of ethical critique. We can ask about the ethical relevance of Christian rituals. Does the formative impact of liturgy always tend toward a correct direction? Does it always guide toward a discernment between good and evil, as well as a discerning worldview? What is the nature of this certainty that discernment in ritual is correct? In this contribution, I will deal with the relationship between liturgy and ethics in both directions indicated. At the same time, it is necessary to

⁶ See e.g. Dorothea Haspelmath-Finatti, ed., *Called to Worship, Freed to Respond. Internationale Beiträge zum Zusammenspiel von Gottesdienst und Ethik* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher-Verlagshaus, 2019).

⁷ See the extensive surveys of bibliography in: Mark Searle, 'The Liturgy and Social Ethics. An Annotated Bibliography,' *Studia Liturgica* 21, no. 2 (1991): 220–235. D. Brent Laytham and David D. Bjorlin, 'Worship and Ethics: A Selected Bibliography,' *Studia Liturgica* 43 (2013): 169–188.

⁸ See David L. Stubbs, 'Liturgy and Ethics, or Liturgy is Ethics,' *Reformed Review* 57, no. 3 (2004): 1–12 [online resource].

⁹ Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, 2nd ed (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publ., 2011). See also Bernd Wannewetsch, *Gottesdienst als Lebensform – Ethik für Christenbürger* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln: Kohlhammer, 1997).

¹⁰ Pieter See Vos, *Liturgy and Ethics. New Contributions from Reformed Perspectives* (Boston: Brill, 2017), 2.

take into account that the ethical reflection should be discerned from moral action. According to the German theologian Dietmar Mieth, ‘the ethics reflects the acting in respect to the distinguishing between good and evil as well as correct and incorrect’.¹¹ Therefore I try to keep the differentiation between the level of theory and level of practice and focus on the first one.¹² In fact, the level of motivations does not guarantee that the action will be good and well-reasoned. In practice we can act badly despite our best motives and intentions. However, the correspondence of ethical theory with moral practice is a desired goal of ethics.

I proceed in five steps. Firstly, I briefly outline the question of the foundation of liturgical ethics with the help of the theology of Karl Barth. Then, I present the joint task of ethics and liturgy to teach us to see the world from the perspective of the kingdom of God. Thirdly, I deal critically with the construction of distorted worldviews in liturgy that we find across the church denominations. In the fourth part, I explore the interconnection between the ritual form and discernment, that is, how ritual strategies influence the conserving and renewing aspects of liturgy. In the fifth part, I focus on the crucial role of the biblical narrative, the images and symbols that frame our discerning worldview. In conclusion, I return to the opening question and argue that our discernment must always be aware of its substantial particularity and perspective.

1. New Adam – the Embodiment of Normativity and Freedom

The topic of this study is the relationship of liturgy to the formation of ethical judgement. However, before dealing with it, we must not neglect the question of what the foundation and the crucial norm of Christian ethics is. What is the starting point for discernment between good and evil in the context of Christian faith? I would like to sketch two biblical images that Karl Barth uses in this context. The first concerns the fall and the second concerns Christ as the new Adam.

¹¹ Dietmar Mieth, ‘Liturgie und Ethik. Der symboltheoretische Ansatz der Liturgiewissenschaft und der experientielle Ansatz der Theologischen Ethik im Gespräch,’ *Theologische Quartalschrift* 189, no. 2 (2009): 94–105, 94.

¹² The absence of the distinction between the form of moral acting (*Handlungsform*) and the form of ethical thinking (*Urteilsform*) is a problem which Mieth finds out by Bernd Wannewetsch (Mieth, ‘Liturgie und Ethik,’ 95).

Since its beginnings, the creation is good (cf. Gen 1), but the desire to become equal to God disturbs the good relationships in it. ‘For man is not content simply to be the answer to this [the ethical – T. L.] question by the grace of God. He wants to be like God. He wants to know of himself (as God does) what is good and evil. He therefore wants to give this answer himself and of himself.’¹⁵ The story of the fall does not only concern the human desire to distinguish between good and evil according to the norms given by God. There is far more at stake. A human being wants governance over ethical norms and values, to play the role of the norm-maker. According to Barth, ethics (or the multifarious ethical system, the attempted human answers to the ethical question) is thus, in the long-term perspective, the result of the fall. The first task of the Christian ethics is simply to point to the covenant that God established with humankind. Obedience to that covenant is the human good. The main content of Christian ethics is to describe the sanctified human life: in other words, to describe the shape of the kingdom of God.¹⁴

The second biblical image that should be mentioned in this context is the image of Jesus and his way of life. It is just this image what gives us an answer to the question of can we really get to know the content of God’s covenant with people. As Karl Barth says, ‘he is the answer to the ethical question put by God’s grace’.¹⁵ Christians see a new Adam in Jesus, who truly embodied God’s image in his own life. He did not take the role of lawmaker, but lived as a human being submitting to God’s will. This is how he embodied genuine humanity and, at the same time, the nature of God’s acting. His story reveals God as someone who gives up his power in order to get closer to man and empower him to live in reconciled and loving relationships. His journey leading from the cross to the resurrection offers us perspective for the discernment between good and evil in our lives, the perspective of the kingdom of God, and thus becomes a pattern for our thoughts and actions. Christian ethics is not confronted with a set of rules but, as Barth suggests, with ‘the reality fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. This person as such is not only

¹⁵ Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik, II.2: Die Lehre von Gott* (Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G., 1942), 575. Quoted according to the English translation: *Church Dogmatics II.2* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957), 517.

¹⁴ David L. Stubbs, ‘Liturgy and Ethics, or Liturgy is Ethics,’ *Reformed Review* 57, no. 3 (2004): 1–12, 1–2. Online resource.

¹⁵ Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik II.2*, 575. (*Church Dogmatics*, 517.)

the ground and content but also the form of the divine claim. And it is in this person and only in Him that the identity of authority and freedom is accomplished.¹⁶ Jesus embodied freedom and the normativity for what is demanded of us.

2. Liturgy Teaches us to See the World through the Perspective of the Kingdom of God

Before we can judge and before we can act, we must learn to *see*. In his influential theory of the formation of moral judgement the German ethician, Heinz-Eduard Tödt, puts seeing in the first place in the chain of the six major aspects of this process.¹⁷ Seeing is the starting point and one of the main tasks of Christian ethics. In a similar way, the American ethician Stanley Hauerwas claims, ‘ethics is first a way of seeing before it is a matter of doing. The ethical task is not to tell you what is right or wrong but rather to train you to see. That explains why, in the church, a great deal of time and energy are spent in the act of worship: In worship, we are busy looking in the right direction.’¹⁸

In this regard, the task of ethics and liturgy is the same. In liturgy we learn to see the world in the perspective of the kingdom of God, so that liturgy is – metaphorically – ‘a window of the Kingdom’.¹⁹ Many theologians dealing with the relationship between liturgy and ethics share such an opinion. The South-African theologian, Bethel Müller, who elaborates on the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer proclaims that ‘Christian worship is one of these specific locations where the faithful are trained to see, to look in the right direction, to see the world *sub specie Christi*’.²⁰

The essential difference between liturgy and ethics is that liturgy does not only comprise the level of reflection, but the level of action as well. It does not only concern our thinking and speaking but also our physical actions that become transparent for the patterns of the kingdom of God. Moreover, the liturgy – first of all the baptism, the Lord’s

¹⁶ Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik II.2*, 674. (Church Dogmatics, 606.)

¹⁷ Heinz Eduard Tödt, ‘Versuch einer ethischen Theorie sittlicher Urteilsfindung,’ *Zeitschrift für Evangelische Ethik*, 21 (1977): 81–93. Later many reprints.

¹⁸ Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident aliens* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 95.

¹⁹ See Stubbs, ‘Liturgy and Ethics, or Liturgy is Ethics,’ 2.

²⁰ Bethel A. Müller, ‘Worship and Ethics: The Role of Worship and Ethics on the Road Towards Reconciliation,’ *Verbum et Ecclesia* 27, no. 2 (2006): 641–663, 645.

Prayer and Eucharist – is not only the witness of God’s kingdom, but becomes its anticipation, due to the activity of God’s Spirit, ‘a foretaste of participation in the heavenly liturgy’.²¹ Liturgy – as God’s service to a man and as human service to God – is not only a matter of our mind, but it is a symbolic and ritual action.²² It narrates and anamnes-tically celebrates God’s story with our world, invites us into it, opens the approach to it, writes the story further. It gives us an opportunity to live in this story with reflection and physically as well. ‘The liturgy is the embodiment of the patterns of the kingdom of God in summary fashion.’²³

However, let us go back to the connection between liturgy and seeing. Christian rituals, as the American liturgical theologian Gordon Lathrop points out, belong to rituals expressing and constructing a specific worldview.²⁴ We only have to notice what and who we pray for in our liturgies, what we confess as a sin, how and with whom we are allowed to share food in the Eucharist, how our solidarity with poor is expressed, how the space is arranged in which we celebrate the liturgy. All these liturgical practices comprise a certain worldview and this worldview influences both the seeing and ethical judgement of the participants in liturgy.

As an example, I would use the baptismal liturgy. Theologically, we understand baptism as an act in which the person is removed from the power of evil in the world, submitting himself or herself to the power of Christ.²⁵ Such a meaning is verbally expressed in the baptismal liturgy in the act of the renunciation of evil and holding on to Christ, as well as physically through symbolic actions such as immersion and surfacing (or the pouring of water), dressing in baptismal vestment, handing over the baptismal candle, etc. Then it is possible to claim that baptism is ‘a constant criticism of all politics, a constant hole in our political, religious and cosmological systems, calling those systems away from absolutizing tendencies’.²⁶ Baptism enables us to see the place where we stay as beloved by God and connected to all other

²¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 8.

²² See Tabita Landová and Michaela Vlčková, ‘Ritual Imagination in Contemporary Catholicism and Protestantism,’ *Communio viatorum* 60 (2018): 97–112.

²³ Stubbs, ‘Liturgy and Ethics, or Liturgy is Ethics,’ 5.

²⁴ Gordon Lathrop, *Holy Ground. A Liturgical Cosmology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 13.

²⁵ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 111.

²⁶ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 17.

places, as well as to see the oppressive structures that truly surround us. Baptism points out that these structures are not eternal; their decisive power was broken in Christ, therefore they should be challenged and changed.

The principal framework of Christian rituals is the biblical narrative, the story of God's covenant with his creation and his people, which culminates in the story of Jesus Christ. The worldview implied in rituals is thus essentially influenced by the interpretation of biblical tradition. If the biblical narrative, images and symbols are fairly interpreted in the assembly, they have a subversive function. As Bill W. Kellerman claims, 'liturgy signifies and celebrates the end of one world and the beginning of another. In that sense faithful worship is inherently subversive.'²⁷ In a similar way the American Old Testament scholar, Walter Brueggemann, points out how biblical stories and images provoke 'a counter-imagination of the world' so that we see the world differently from the perspective of other worldviews that are publicly spread around the globe by the world powers, social structures or individuals.²⁸

Brueggemann's approach also influenced some Czech theologians, especially the Prague practical theologian Pavel Filipi in the area of homiletics.²⁹ However, what he claims about the task of preaching can be similarly said about the liturgy as a whole. Gordon Lathrop points out that the narrative used in the assembly serves as 'an antinarrative' to our cultural narratives and leads to 'a new openness to the holy Ground'.³⁰ Thus the world constructed in rituals invites us to come in, experience our relationships differently and return to everyday life having been transformed in one's views. Precisely this disruption of stereotyped perspectives and the opening of new insights in ritual helps us to the deeper discernment between good and evil, to the hope for change and the strengthening of one's responsibility for our conduct in the world.

In this connection, it is necessary to emphasise that Christian liturgy is not only a personal event, but also a communal event that involves

²⁷ Bill W. Kellerman, *Seasons of Faith and Conscience: Kairos, Confession, Liturgy* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991).

²⁸ See Walter Brueggemann, *Text Under Negotiation: The Bible and Postmodern Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 20. Czech translation: *Bible a postmoderní představitost: Písmo jako scénář života*, trans. Sláma (Praha: Vyšehrad, 2016).

²⁹ See Pavel Filipi, *Pozvání k naději. Kapitoly z homiletické exegeze* (Praha: Kalich, 2009).

³⁰ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 17.

a spatial as well as social understanding of things.⁵¹ Christian rituals are enacted at a certain place, in some local community, they relate to its situation. At the same time, they reconnect local communities with one another and with the rest of the world. Now, the discerning view that takes place in Christian rituals is not confined to personal and local matters. The horizons opened in rituals must go beyond the interests of individuals and local communities. As Brueggemann stresses, ‘the practice of Christian interpretation in preaching and liturgy is contextual, local and pluralistic’.⁵² This is a great hermeneutical challenge for all those preparing specific liturgies.

Another aspect important to the formation of the ethical judgement is experience. Experience – no matter whether aesthetic, moral, or religious – arises from pre-reflexive forms (perception, event, encounter etc.) and requires retrospective commemoration, narration, presentation, and reflection. In the moral experience, we may distinguish three types of experiences: that of contrast, as well as the experience of orientation and motivation. Dietmar Mieth, in his contribution on liturgy and ethics, emphasised that sense for justice (*sollen*) is often provoked precisely when we experience the contrast (*Kontrasterfahrung*), e.g. the injustice that aroused moral outrage.⁵³ Sharing the experience of contrast is also a frequent way how biblical authors attempt to express what God’s justice means, as well as the necessity of social justice, such as in prophetic books revealing the injustice (Amos, Hosea) or in Jesus’s blessings (Matt 5,6).

3. Constructing Distorted Worldviews in Liturgy

Liturgy proposes a worldview from the perspective of the kingdom of God. However, is this always the fact? Does liturgy always operate in an open, but critical conversation with other worldviews? The experiences of many Christians from different times and different places in our world show us that this is not always the case. We said that the worldview constructed in liturgy is essentially determined through the interpretation of biblical texts. In this connection one must take into account that there are also other powerful influences at play: specific historical situations,

⁵¹ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 101.

⁵² Brueggemann, *Text Under Negotiation*, 9.

⁵³ Mieth, ‘Liturgie und Ethik,’ 97–98. He adopted the term *Kontrasterfahrung* already in 1970s from Edward Schillebeeckx.

culture, current church, as well as social and political structures. People create rituals, no matter whether unique or gradually formed in the long chain of tradition and, performing them, insert their own worldviews into them. This can even be affected, along with the influences mentioned above, by the distorted interpretation of Scripture.

That is the reason Lathrop speaks of the ‘ritual constructing false worlds’,⁵⁴ concerning the danger that liturgy can in some circumstances express a worldview, that does not correspond to the perspective of the Kingdom. Our liturgy can serve to celebrate our unchanged identities and worldviews, such as when we acclaim the human being as the crown of creation and knowingly ignore the human destruction of the environment and its cruelty to animals, etc.⁵⁵ Among examples of these ‘false worlds’ mentioned by Lathrop are hierarchical distortion and that of the ‘closed circle’.⁵⁶

In the Catholic tradition, the idea of the hierarchical shape of liturgy is well known and also adopted by the constitution of Vatican Council II *Sacrosanctum Concilium* in the context of liturgy.⁵⁷ In practice, the hierarchical approach finds expression in those liturgical elements that underline the role and power of clerics (e.g. the presider place in the shape of a throne, the entering procession reminiscent of the entrance of monarch, etc.). Although all these elements can be explained from their traditional and anthropological positions, Lathrop calls them into question from the perspective of the Gospel. He points out that the hierarchical ordering into ranks and orders corresponds to the Platonic idea of the emanation of being, knowledge, and light flowing from the single, divine centre through the great chain of heavenly hierarchy, to be thinly manifested in the physical world. The hierarchy reflects a certain cosmology, and when this conceptualisation is present in liturgy, it is in tension with the patterns of the kingdom of God to which Jesus points: ‘But whoever would be great among you must be your servant’ (Mark 10,43).⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 179.

⁵⁵ Jennifer E. Brown, ‘Can Christian Worship Influence Attitudes and Behaviour Toward Animals?’ *Journal of Animal Ethics* 9, no. 1 (2019): 47–65.

⁵⁶ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 182–192.

⁵⁷ See *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 26: ‘Liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church; they manifest it and have effects upon it; but they concern the individual members of the Church in different ways, according to their differing rank, office, and actual participation.’

⁵⁸ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 184.

According to Lathrop, we must get over the Neoplatonic rationalisation of the idea of hierarchy, initiated by Pseudo-Dionysius in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, as well as from the perspective of the Gospel radically reconceive the positions of power, what is above and below: ‘Every one of us – bishop and priest included – do not first of all participate in the liturgy “according to our order”. We first of all participate, hands out as beggars with all beggars, for the sake of once again encountering mercy, once again coming to faith. Bishops should not be kings.’³⁹ In this connection, one must welcome all events that enable such a rethinking to become reality.

Recently, the present Pope Francis brought the servant dimension of the authority to attention when he practiced the ritual of washing feet on Green Thursday in an unconventional way (in more detail see below). This ritual also initiated Czech Catholic theologians to similar reflection. František Kunetka from Olomouc reacts to the pope’s ritual by stating that ‘we often behave as supervisors of grace, and not as its instruments. But the church is not a customs, it is a fatherly house.’⁴⁰ The pope’s adaptation of the ritual testifies to his understanding, that ‘in the church, the only one acceptable authority is the authority of service’.⁴¹

Another problem we meet for example in some Protestant churches is the celebration of liturgy in a closed community, whose view concentrates only on itself and its inner problems. Shared ritual, which strengthens mutual relationships, can easily draw a line around the community, even when it does not intend such a line. In the case of a closed circle, the Christian ritual loses its social and cosmological dimension. However, similar to Jesus who ate with traitors, the unclean and sinners, it is necessary to open the Christian ritual to the contradictions of our contemporary world. Otherwise, we will construct a worldview of our closed projections in liturgy with no room for ruptures and contradictions in the world, as well as no room for ‘the hole in the heavens above God’s holy Ground’.⁴²

There are also other distorted worldviews in Christian rituals, particularly spiritual consumerism. After Jean Baudrillard analysed the

³⁹ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 187.

⁴⁰ František Kunetka, ‘Obřad umývání nohou v liturgii Zeleného čtvrtku: Anamnésis nebo mimésis?’ *Studia theologica* 20, no. 2 (2018): 67–107, 104–105.

⁴¹ Kunetka, ‘Obřad umývání nohou v liturgii Zeleného čtvrtku,’ 89–90.

⁴² Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 192.

structures and functioning of the consumer society,⁴⁵ the topic also became a frequent issue of discussion among theologians and liturgists. Vincent J. Miller in his *Consuming Religion* (2005) convincingly points out that the processes of commodification take place not only in the area of culture, but also in the area of religion, since consumerism does not identify with excessive behaviour. Rather, it is an all pervasive worldview, that influences the forming of our personalities in what motivates us, how we relate to others, including culture and religion. Neither Christians and churches nor their individual and collective identities are beyond its influence.

A world constructed in liturgy dominated by consumerism often draws from the current individualism, in which you (sg.) and I are the centre of the universe. Intercessions, sermons, sacramental actions, and other aspects of liturgical life focus only on the hopes and dreams of individuals.⁴⁴ This tendency is especially apparent in the United States, where churches devote a great deal of their attention and energy to what aspects of religion can satisfy the religious needs and wishes of individuals, how effective they are, and what combinations are the most attractive.⁴⁵ This approach is forthcoming to a culture that appreciates immediate gratification and constantly provokes individuals to explore whether what they have or are is sufficient, and what *products* may help them transform to some better version.⁴⁶ The result is that worshippers approach the liturgical assembly as a commodity, there to serve their needs. Therefore, many theologians seek sources for alternative scenarios.⁴⁷

4. Conserving and Renewing Aspects of Liturgy

In the current ritual studies, rituals are considered to be instruments that support stability and continuity with the past as well as those initiating the process of change. Therefore one must distinguish

⁴⁵ Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structure* (London: SAGE Publications, 1998).

⁴⁴ Lathrop, *Holy Ground*, 14.

⁴⁵ Benjamin Durheim, 'Converting Consumerism: A Liturgical-Ethical Application of Critical Realism,' *Religions* 10, no. 5 (2019): 338, doi: 10.3390/rel10050338.

⁴⁶ Timothy Brunk, 'Consumerism and the Liturgical Act of Worship,' *Horizons* 38 (2011): 54–74, 57–67.

⁴⁷ William T. Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination: Rediscovering the Liturgy as a Political Act in an Age of Global Consumerism* (London: T & T Clark, 2002), 8.

the conserving and renewing aspects of liturgy.⁴⁸ The problem emerges when one of them is pushed aside. The above-named examples of hierarchical distortion and distortion of the closed circle show that, in these cases, the second aspect is often missing. What can be helpful so that the Christian rituals also have this renewing dimension? Is it somehow interconnected with the current ritual form, with the ‘ritual strategies’? I will show that there is a certain connection between ritual strategies and the conserving or renewing aspects of liturgy. Some ritual strategies are more appropriate for the stabilisation and keeping the *status quo*, some more fitting for the initiation of change in moral thinking.

Let us begin with an explanation of the terms ritual and ritual strategy. Ritual is a certain sort of human activity we find in all cultures, and which is the issue of explorations by scientists from various scientific fields. However, there is very little agreement among them about what ritual *is* and which characteristics are its intrinsic qualities. Some doubt that they even *exist*. Most often we encounter the claim that ritual is an action characterised through its formality, invariance and repetition. Roy Rappaport takes the term ‘ritual’ to denote ‘the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers’.⁴⁹

Catherine Bell, the American religious studies scholar, introduces an original approach when she defines ritual as a certain type of practice. Following the analysis of practice by Pierre Bourdieu, she concludes that ritual practice is always situational, strategic, embedded in a misrecognition of what it is in fact doing and able to reproduce or reconfigure a vision of the order of power in the world.⁵⁰ In other words, it always occurs in some specific context, is guided by practical or instrumental logic, and either supports the current worldview or changes it. The intrinsic feature of ritualisation is the fact that it uses various strategies for the intentional differentiation from other ways of acting within a certain culture.⁵¹ As an example we might mention the Eucharist, the eating and drinking, which intentionally differs through its formalisation from common eating and drinking at home.

⁴⁸ Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 8.

⁴⁹ Roy Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005), 24.

⁵⁰ Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual Theory; Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 81.

⁵¹ Bell, *Ritual Theory; Ritual Practice*, 90.

The concept of ritual as a strategic practice has important consequences. It points out that formality, invariance and repetition are not the intrinsic qualities of ritual, albeit they represent a frequent strategy of ritualisation. Strategies leading to the differentiation of the ritual action from another can sometimes be just the opposite. The informal and unique acting can intentionally be used by a group that intends to differentiate its action from another. Thus ritualisation can comprise the repetition of the old tradition as well as intentional radical innovations and improvisation.⁵²

Bell explains it with the example of the Catholic mass:

The formal activities of gathering for a Catholic mass distinguish this ‘meal’ from daily eating activities, but the informality of a mass celebrated in a private home with a folk guitar and kitchen utensils is meant to set up another contrast (the spontaneous authentic celebration versus the formal and inauthentic mass) which the informal service expects to dominate. It is only necessary that the cultural context include some consensus concerning the opposition and relative values of personal sincerity and intimate participation vis-a-vis routinised and impersonal participation.⁵³

Strategies of ritualisation are culturally specific.

What is the impact of using various ritual strategies such as formality and repetition or informality and uniqueness upon the ethical dimension of Christian rituals? The reflected experiences with liturgical practice in different churches show us that the traditional strategies of ritualisation – formality, invariance, and repetition – provide us only minimal space for actual and contextual expressions of a worldview. Those rituals working with less formal ritual strategies can be more sensitive to their situational context. Therefore, the liturgy should comprise not only the invariant and repeating liturgical elements (*ordinaria*), whose function is indisputable, as well as sufficient space for those changeable elements (*propria*), which enable reaction to the situational context, and as the case may be, space for improvisation. Interestingly, in the recently published *Book of Common Worship* of

⁵² Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 91.

⁵³ Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 92.

the Presbyterian Church in the USA (2018), we can even find some directions toward an improvised Eucharistic prayer.⁵⁴

The largest space for the verbal expression of a discerning worldview is provided by the sermon. This is an occasion to connect biblical stories and images in order to see the actual local situation in broader contexts. The sermon has a liturgical quality; it does not stand as something separate outside the liturgy. As Frank Senn pointed out, ‘it is itself a liturgical act whose purpose is to connect our stories with the stories of the people of God down through the ages, so that their faith or unbelief becomes our faith or illuminates our unbeliefs’.⁵⁵ Another opportunity are the intercessions, which enable worshippers to specifically express the experience of contrast (of injustice, poverty etc.). Add the newly formulated confession of sins, which enhances by language the actual understanding of sin and guilt. However, the use of all these liturgical elements for the deepening of our discerning worldview requires critical theological thought and, first of all, the ability to deal creatively with biblical stories, images, and symbols that help us see the situation from the perspective of Gospel.

5. Biblical Stories, Images, and Symbols as a Source of the Discerning Worldview

However, ritual strategies do not guarantee that the worldview proposed in ritual will correspond to the highest norm of liturgical ethics that we spoke about at the beginning of this study. It is possible that the traditional, highly formalised liturgy will fulfil this task better than the informal liturgy with guitar and improvised prayers. But it is also possible that it will be quite the other way around. What is the reason?

The significance and ethical impact of Christian rituals primarily depends upon their inner connection to the content of the biblical message. The essential element is their faithfulness to the Gospel. What is performed in Christian rituals is something what has the capacity to change our worldview as well as our life, but especially due to God’s

⁵⁴ *Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018). Moreover, this liturgical book now includes chapters dealing with both the social and cosmological dimension of the Christian existence. Here, we find chapters such as: ‘Mission in the World,’ ‘Creation and Ecology,’ ‘Justice and Reconciliation,’ and ‘Inter-religious Events.’

⁵⁵ Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 15.

activity. The liturgy should be conceived as an action in the power of the Holy Spirit. Our ritual can be helpful to that, but in some cases can also prevent it. Therefore it is necessary to establish an open liturgical critique, based on the biblical theology.⁵⁶

The Protestant theologian Karl Barth claimed in his famous *Church Dogmatics* that whereas the modernity moves from its notions of the possible to the real, theology must move from what is real to what is possible.⁵⁷ The theologian starting with the reality of God's revelation trusts that what God intends is indeed possible and tries to understand it (*credo ut intelligam*). To understand the possibilities God opens to our life, we need both the Bible and our imagination. That means the ability to work with Bible in a creative way, so that it becomes the 'glasses' helping us to see clearly. Also the Catholic theologian Chauvet conceives the Bible as one of the tripod of Christian identity – next to the liturgy and ethics. The interpretation of Scripture, the celebration of sacraments and the ethical engagement are three inseparable areas where the symbolic mediating of God's holiness occurs, initiated by the Holy Spirit.⁵⁸

However, shaping one's worldview in the perspective of Gospel is a slow process. According to Walter Brueggemann, people change neither due to doctrinal, cognitive argument, nor to the moral appeals. What they long for, is not new dogma, or new morals, but a new world, new self and new future: 'People in fact change by the offer of new models, images and pictures of how the pieces of life fit together – models, images and pictures that characteristically have the particularity of narrative to carry them.'⁵⁹

In this process, the crucial role belongs to both memory and vision, to remembering the past and imagining the future, both bound in a creative way to the biblical stories and images. Thus the imaginative view of the past, inspired by the biblical image of creation, results in a new and grateful vision of the present. And in a similar way, the imaginative view of the future gives us hope in present, inspired by the biblical

⁵⁶ See Tabita Landová, 'Liturgia semper reformanda. Teologické a antropologické výzvy pro evangelickou liturgiku,' *Teologická reflexe* 25, no. 1 (2019): 41–58.

⁵⁷ Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik, I.2: Die Lehre von Gottes Wort: Prolegomena zur kirchlichen Dogmatik* (Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G., 1945), §13, 1–49. Engl. translation: *Church Dogmatics. Volume 1, The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), § 13, 1–44).

⁵⁸ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 174–176.

⁵⁹ See Brueggemann, *Text Under Negotiation*, 24.

visions of salvation, harmony, fulfilment and wholeness.⁶⁰ In both cases, imagination helps us to draw, imagine, conceive and live the world in another way than it appears when we observe it through our common and prevalent lenses. This imaginative view of past and future helps to change our present.

The resulting task for shaping Christian rituals is to support the prophetic imagination. That means the alternative visions of our life, our mutual relationships, and the social and political relations in the world. This utopian imagination, which is especially supported by the books of the prophets, Jesus's Sermon on the Mount or the Book of Revelation, helps us to see new possibilities. It shows, as Chauvet emphasises, that conversion and renewal are always possible, and thus helps us to struggle 'against the inevitable temptation to fall asleep in the security of a sacrificial functioning'.⁶¹ Only with help of the prophetic imagination can the churches and their liturgies become a space where the thinking and acting are actually changed.

The exemplary case of how the true interpretation of Jesus words and practice can initiate changes in liturgy and transform the implied worldview, is the already mentioned ritual of washing feet in the liturgy of Green Thursday, as was practiced by Pope Francis in past years. Prior, as Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, he also washed the feet of women, albeit the rubrics in *Missale Romanum* prescribed, that the washing should be done to *virii selecti*. As a pope, Francis continued this practice and celebrated the ritual with the prisoners in the Roman prison for juveniles in 2013, where he also washed the feet of two women, one of them a Moslem. In 2016, Francis even washed the feet of the refugees in Castelnuovo di Porto near to Rome. Precisely in that year, the pope's adaptation of the ritual was liturgically and juridically anchored in the decree *In Missa in Cena Domini*. Here, the instruction *virii selecti* used in *Missale Romanum* from 2008 was replaced by the term *selecti* or *designati* from the people of God. The structure of this chosen group was further specified: there can be 'men and women, young and old, healthy and ill, clerics, initiated people, lay-people'.⁶²

From today's view, it is possible to say that the intention to show the true sense of this ritual was successful. The ritual speaks to people as

⁶⁰ Ibid., 29–56.

⁶¹ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 355.

⁶² Quoted according to Kunetka, 'Obřad umývání nohou v liturgii Zeleného čtvrtku,' 77–78.

a token of the serving church and serving authority, which offers its service to all without difference.⁶⁵ The pope's approach is assessed as an 'evidence of creative dealing with the tradition, which is something living – especially in the area of liturgy, something that develops; that when it does not prove itself, perishes. Faithfulness always presupposes development, deepening, change.'⁶⁴

The impact of this ritual change is not limited only to the discourse within the church, but also concerns the public.⁶⁵ Changes of (social) structures in liturgy can – though slowly and unpredictably – help protect liturgical-ethical engagement against the displays of consumerism, injustice, race and religious xenophobia, the negative attitude to refugees, etc.⁶⁶ Therefore, the aspects of Christian rituals concerning the roles deserve special attention. Who prepares the communion table? Who distributes the bread and wine? Children helping prepare the communion table, lay-people helping to distribute are all comprehensible symbolic expressions of the idea of human equality in front of God's presence.

Conclusion

What is the nature of certainty that our discernment between good and evil as enacted in ritual is correct? Can we even gain an absolute certainty? I attempted to show that Christian rituals have an essential role in forming Christian identity, as well for their ethical orientation in the world. Without doubt, Christian rituals provide the continuity for the journey of God's people. They ensure a corporeal assurance of God's mercy and forgiveness, help to orient believers in certain lived situations as they learn to see the world, including its ambiguities, in the perspective of God's promise. However, none of these 'certainties' guarantee that the moral discernment in ritual is always correct. The unshakeable certainty of ethical discernment in liturgy is neither

⁶⁵ However, the standing of women in the Roman Catholic Church remains unequal to the standing of men. See Michaela Neulinger and Anni Findl-Ludescher, 'Lex Orandi – Lex Vivendi? Reflections on the Interaction between Gender Justice and Liturgy after Vatican II,' *Review of Ecumenical Studies Sibiu* 9, no. 2 (2017), 231–257.

⁶⁴ Kunetka, 'Obřad umývání nohou v liturgii Zeleného čtvrtku,' 98.

⁶⁵ See Mózes Nóda, 'Religion, Liturgy and Ethics, at the Intersection Between Theory and Practice: The Revolution of Pope Francis,' *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 16, no. 46 (2017), 17–35.

⁶⁶ Durheim, 'Converting Consumerism,' 13.

warranted by its ritual (changing or unchanging) form, nor by its relation to church doctrine or its roots in biblical tradition.

Christians must always be aware that their understanding depends upon their particular perspective among diverse perspectives. As Brueggemann emphasises, ‘we voice a claim that rings true in our context, that applies authoritatively to our lived life. But it is a claim that is made in a pluralism where it has no formal privilege.’⁶⁷ Therefore, critical thinking guides us to the confession that our knowledge and judgement is always incomplete. Quoting the words of the apostle Paul, ‘for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known’ (1 Cor 13,12; ESV). At the same time, faith invites us to hope on an absolute, non-perspectival seeing – at the end of the time. Thus the nature of certainty in the ethical discernment can only be conceived as a certainty of faith which is grounded in the living passing on of the biblical tradition, in its faithful and contextual interpretation.

Faith is substantially interwoven with doubt, whose role is predominantly positive because it motivates us to the precision of our judgements. This coping with doubts and the consciousness of our limits leads to humility. Humility should be a stable aspect of every Christian ritual – as the basic attitude of all its performers and participants, and liturgically enacted in the prayers for the gift of Holy Spirit and the ability to hear and see.

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⁶⁷ Brueggemann, *Text Under Negotiation*, 9.

THE NATURE OF CERTAINTY IN RITUAL

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ABSTRACT

Liturgy is a privileged type of action: it is the actualisation of the Easter mystery, God's salvation of His people, and the thanksgiving and praise of the Christian community. At the same time, liturgy must be seen as human behaviour and very specific – ritual behaviour. This study focuses on the concept of liturgy as a ritual which allows the exploration of the anthropological, physical, and performative part of liturgical action. This article demonstrates the basic elements in which the nature of this certainty is based in ritual (certainty based on the body, on traditionalism, on the form and on the doctrine).

Key words

Liturgy; Ritual; Certainty; Ritual studies

DOI: 10.14712/23563598.2020.4

Rituals are of anoetical nature. Rituals do not aim to communicate a special message in a conscious, rational way. 'Religious rituals aim to immerse the whole of person in the world of that mysterious absolute, God,'¹ writes Anton Usher. The adjective anoetic means outside-the-intellect, rituals go side by side with meaning. Rituals do not have connections with thinking; rather they have a connection to the non-conscious parts of human beings – the motions, intuition, instinct, and the spiritual human being.

¹ Anton Usher, *Replenishing ritual: Rediscovering the place of rituals in Western Christian Liturgy* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press, 1992), 14 nn.

Christian rites are essentially rituals. This fact cannot be overlooked although we are aware of their specific nature that is given primarily by the fact that we do not consider individual Christians or rather an assembled communion to act in rituals, but also, and above all, God acting through Christ in the Holy Spirit. Liturgy is a privileged type of action: it is the actualisation of the Easter mystery, God's salvation of His people, and the thanksgiving and praise of the Christian community. At the same time, liturgy must be seen as human behaviour and very specific – ritual behaviour. In this study, we rely on the findings of ritual studies (and authors who approach their concept of ritual), which have been accepted by liturgists in recent years as useful and relevant also for the study of liturgical rites.

The concept of liturgy as a ritual allows the exploration of the anthropological, physical, and performative part of liturgical action. We do not want to diminish the importance of theological content and the liturgical-theological meaning of Christian rites; however, we also try to acknowledge their specific ritual character. Ritual is not based primarily on cognitive processes; it is not only a matter of interpretation and transmission of coded messages, meanings. Rituals are not even a place of moral, ethical distinction.

Rituals are not, in their essence, places to be faced with a dilemma of discernment between good and evil and to make crucial decisions. Rituals are usually given in advance. They are beaten paths, corridors channelling our actions, with predetermined content, regulated river beds, preventing meanders and dead ends. However, in some rituals, we express and confirm important discernments and decisions, especially those that are connected with privileged moments of our lives, with important life landmarks. The most typical are ceremonies of baptism, marriage, confirmation, consecration (commissioning in evangelical churches).

In the Catholic Liturgy of the Easter Vigil, believers renew their baptismal promises every year with those who are baptised, they renounce the spirit of evil and all his works, and express their faith in the Trinity. In every Lord's Prayer, which is a common element of worship across churches, they pray: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

In Christian rituals, we confirm everyday attitudes in the daily leaning towards good, which is the way of life of a Christian. This affirmation and strengthening is not just based on our will, rationality, and

moral feeling. Rituals reinforce certainty of our attitudes and leaning towards good in their own specific way, which makes the ritual a ritual. Rituals are based on the human need for certainty – this is one of the ‘textbook’ definitions of ritual. Rituals provide certainty. In the following lines, we demonstrate the basic elements in which the nature of this certainty is based in ritual.

1. Certainty Based on the Body

Ritual is a physical activity. It means embodiment not just in terms of expressing certain content through symbolic actions, in the form of a text that could be decoded. Some anthropologists, based on the research of archaic cultures, incline to the opinion that rituals probably evolved from purely physical activities, which do not have to be based on myths, as is often assumed. The ritual dynamics emanates from the body itself as an authentic source of the ritual process.²

The pre-modern Church placed the human body at the centre of reflection of Christian life, identity and faith. This emphasis on embodiment is also expressed in the liturgical and ritual practices of the early and medieval Church. A wide range of demands for strengthening pious life (fasting, sexual abstinence, vigils) affected the body in perceptible ways.³ The best example is undoubtedly the rite of Christian initiation, where the bodily experience was the basis of ontological transformation, as Margaret Miles writes: ‘The aim of religious practices was thus not to “act out” previously held ideas or beliefs, but to realise – to make real – a personal body, the strong experience, that together with the religious community’s interpretation of that experience, produced a counter-cultural self.’⁴

Acts performed during the preparation and during sacramental ceremonies are often referred to in terms of physical changes and in metaphors reflecting physical activity. Ambrose describes the ceremony of prebaptismal anointing so that the catechumen has to be oiled as an athlete of Christ for the earthly struggle with evil. Cyril of Jerusalem⁵

² Cf. Gerard Lukken, *Rituals in Abundance. Critical Reflections on the Place, Form and Identity of Christian Ritual in Our Culture* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 52.

³ Cf. David Torvell, *Losing the Sacred. Ritual, Modernity and Liturgical Reform* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 48–49.

⁴ Marget Miles, *Carnal Knowing* (Tunbridge Wells: Burns and Oates, 1992), 24.

⁵ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, I, 4.

explains that physical inversion by 180 degrees that makes the catechumen before baptism express the turning away from evil (the west symbolises Satan, evil) and conversion to good (the east symbolises resurrection and Christ himself). Discernment between good and evil and leaning to good were demonstrated and realised in a physical activity and cosmological categories (west, east, night, day, light, darkness).

Talal Asad, who dealt with rituals of monastic communities of the Middle Ages, shows that ritual in Benedict's rule assumed 'thinking' through the skin and 'speaking' with all human senses. The purpose of a ritual is to teach the body how to develop spiritual power in a material way. Ritual competence is a physical competence; it is a summary of embodied abilities, and not only just a mediator of symbolic meanings. Asad likens the skills to a pianist whose skilled hands are exercised to learn to play a song.⁶ Physical ritual practices can be seen as the precondition of religious experience. The decision to enter the communication with God follows the functions of the body. The experience rooted in bodily actions and perception helps to make that in ritual *metaphysical realities* touch the person on a different level than just rationally accepted and expressed truths.

2. Certainty Based on Traditionalism

The essential characteristics of most rituals are that they are transferred, passed down from generation to generation. Now their old origin often belonged to the properties guaranteeing their effectiveness. Rituals are important elements of cultural memory and content formula to solve some situations. We can give an example of transition rituals that surrounded transitional life situations in all cultures. As an example, we can mention the rites of a passage that surrounded transitional life situations in all cultures. They were sure and reliable ways taken from ancestors regarding how to handle the critical moments of human life, when one goes through the imaginary land of no one, through a dangerous zone between two worlds (a teenager is no longer a child, but he is not yet an adult). By carrying out these rituals, it was clearly expressed that the person had passed through this uncertain

⁶ Talal Asad, 'Toward a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual,' in *Genealogy of Religion, Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (London: The Johns University Press, 1995), 62–63.

stage and reached a new status. These rituals also interpreted these life changes, and expressed and confirmed important decisions and newly chosen directions at the crossroads of human life.

The basis of sincerity anchored in ritual traditionalism does not lie in a rational interpretation of ritual components. The certainty of the participants is more strongly based on non-rational, intuitive foundations. Chauvet mentions symbolic behaviour, such as Sunday church-going, that provides values and norms in society, and *is all the more powerful for being less conscious*.⁷ As the psychological and social motivations of Sunday practice become conscious, their effectiveness is destroyed. This effectiveness is based on ‘self-evident, natural’ bases built from early childhood that are not usually reflected upon. ‘For the Christians of Europe as for the Bororos of Amazon or the Azandes of Ethiopia, the ritual symbols had no more justification than a “we don’t know why, but it’s always been done this way”.’⁸

3. Certainty Based on the Form

Experts agree that the sincerity of a ritual lies beyond their control and possibility to shape it. The purpose of our action is given by tradition, lying in the past, beyond our reach. The course of the ritual is prescribed; the ritual has a predetermined form, which is not determined by the performers.⁹ By repetition and routine, the possibilities of participation in the ritual are deepened; the participants do not have to focus on the individual acts but on the inner content.

Besides repetition, essential in terms of form is also the hieratic character of ritual. The ritual always represents a kind of rupture, a boundary to be overcome – in the sense of disruption, stepping out of everyday life. Catherine Bell describes ritualisation as a practice connected to certain situations in which one of the basic strategies is to distinguish the sacred from the profane / the extraordinary from the ordinary.¹⁰ This distinction is usually given by a special (or sacred) space, by time,

⁷ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament. A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1995), 333.

⁸ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 335.

⁹ See Roy A. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005), 24.

¹⁰ Cf. Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 74.

when the ritual takes place (feasts, boundary moments during the day, and so on). This differentiation forms an essential part of ritualisation, as we see in the evolution of liturgical rites in the Middle Ages. Liturgical vestments differ from ordinary clothes, liturgical vessels no longer resemble commonly used dishes, and also the hosts are fundamentally different from ordinary bread. And the same, it is true of the liturgical language. In the liturgy of the Middle Ages, when the rites due to Latin and other barriers become ungraspable to believers, the form of a ritual prevailed over the content. Content in the large-scale escapes simple believers and less educated priests. On the other hand, making the content of the liturgy approachable in the context of the Second Vatican Council reform led to weakening of the power of ritual action. The mechanisms and functions of the ritual have been revealed, thereby its effect weakened.¹¹

4. Certainty Based on the Doctrine

A ritual usually has a narrative basis. Eliade described how ritual emerges from mythical narration; it is an imitation of events that set the world and its order.¹² During rituals, myths are narrated and mythological events are remembered and actualised. Thanks to myths, rituals gain their sense, meaning, and their binding character. The memory of the events of salvation, of God's saving deeds done for the benefit of God's people is the foundation of many feasts, and we can say it is the foundation of Jewish and Christian liturgy. Many Jewish and Christian liturgical prayers have an anamnestic-epicletical structure. In the anamnestic part, God's saving deeds in history are recalled and listed, and in the epicletical part, there follows a prayer to God in the Holy Spirit also to work in this way at that moment in the lives of the Christians participating in the liturgy.

Belief in God's help is based on biblical narratives about God's action in the history of salvation. Belief in the effects of liturgical ceremony comes from the New Testament's messages about Jesus' life and his actions. In Christian rituals, we often meet with *Institutio narratives*,¹⁵ telling about the constituting of liturgical events that have become the

¹¹ Srov. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 335.

¹² Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Posvátné a profánní* (Praha: Česká křesťanská akademie, 1994; OIKOYMENH, 2006).

¹⁵ Lukken, *Rituals in Abundance*, 92.

foundations of sacramental and other ceremonies. They can take place in different parts and elements of a ritual – in biblical readings, prayers, and liturgical acts. Typical are the words of institution in the middle of the Eucharistic Prayer. In the blessing of the water before baptism, there is a reference to Jesus' order that the disciples should baptise. In the wedding ceremony and blessing prayer over the bridegroom and bride, there is the narration about the creation of man as a man and a woman and about their unity and other references about marriage in the New Testament. In the development of the liturgical rites of the Reformation churches, their anchorage in Scripture has become an important criterion for understanding the sacraments.

In the Catholic tradition since the Middle Ages, the emphasis has been on the doctrine of grace that the sacraments contain and mediate. In the language of scholastic theology, the sacraments operate *ex opere operato*, having objective efficacy because Christ himself acts in them. The certainty in the ritual, its effectiveness in the life of the believer is thus also given rationally, by faith, by doctrine, whether based on biblical or scholastic theology; and it is not based only on narrative basis of ritual. In Jewish and later in Christian tradition, ritual regulations played an important role. Jesus is critical of the Pharisees, who regarded ritual laws of being of higher importance than moral behaviour. 'I ask you: What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath? To help or to harm? To save a man's life or destroy it?' (Lk 6, 9).

Early Christianity does not identify itself with the cult concept of liturgy. In the Middle Ages, however, a system of ritual prohibitions and orders was being developed which, in many ways, may remind us of the Old Testament regulations. Christianity also introduced statements regarding ritual purity: the 'tariff system' of penitence provided precise instructions how to undo any offenses against these orders.

Sunday attendance at worship became an obligation; the IV. Lateran Council set the duty to receive the Eucharist at least once a year and the like. Also, the Church has developed a system of ritual instructions and commands, the observance of which should ensure the proper life of a Christian.

Conclusion

Certainty in rituals, anchored in corporeality, traditionalism, form and doctrine, can be a reinforcement but also a trap. In rituals, especially in rites of passage, accompanying transitional life situations, one touches the mysteries of human life. The goal of Christian rituals is to 'immerse the whole man in the divine mysteries'.¹⁴ Meeting yourself and meeting God, which is unique in ritual, exposes a person to reflect on his everyday decisions and his way of life; it helps in orientation and discernment. In the ritual, this discernment and deciding is strengthened by certainty which comes from other sources than only rational, and touches man holistically.

Rituals can be strengthening in the search of security. In life situations and in long life stages, when there is no basic certainty, they can be supportive. If a person is not able in some situation or life stages to make discernment and the right decision, to undertake the right steps, conscious of his or her weakness and uncertainty, he or she can rely on a proven beaten path, immerse himself or herself in a safe stream, obey Christ's command or follow the example of parents and ancestors.

At the same time, this certainty can become a trap when it becomes irreversible and unreflected upon. Unilateral clinging to tradition, form, doctrine or unreflected-upon performance of external actions can lead to ritualism, emptying the inner content and meaning of the ritual, and to performing ritual acts without participants identifying with their content. Clinging to the outer form, tradition and doctrinal aspects may be a concealment of one's own insecurity, unwillingness, or reluctance towards responsible discernment.

We tried to identify significant resources through which human security is strengthened in ritual action. The cognitive dimension of ritual – in our text represented by doctrine, narrative, and ritual prescriptions – we put in the last place. This does not mean that we do not consider it essential in the ritual. But it does not have to be considered the most important.

In any case, this dimension of Christian rites is given the greatest, almost exclusive, attention in liturgical science. Taking into account the findings of ritual studies that emphasise the importance of

¹⁴ Usher, *Replenishing ritual*, 14.

pre-cognitive dimension of ritual may also contribute to balancing the somewhat one-sided approach.¹⁵

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¹⁵ “If one asks ritualists what their rites and symbols mean, one quickly finds that there is little connection between how much can people articulate about a symbol’s referents and how meaningful it is to them” writes Ronald Grimes, although he himself does not consider rituals to be purely pre-cognitive. He considers the body to be cognitive, not only an object, but a subject with its own way of questioning, arguing, asserting, thinking – its own form of wisdom.’ Ronald Grimes, Reading, *Writing and Ritualizing, Ritual in Fictive, Liturgical and Public Places* (Washington D.C.: The Pastoral Press, 1995), 16, 19.
Catherine Bell describes the logic of ritual as ‘inscribed in the body’. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 101–107.

HELPFUL MODELS OF THEOLOGICAL, MORAL, AND SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT IN CATHOLICISM, PROTESTANTISM, AND ORTHODOXY*

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FRANTIŠEK ŠTĚCH,
MICHAELA KUŠNIERIKOVÁ

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the theme of the discernment of good and evil from the perspective of three Christian traditions. It is written in a form of a dialogue between three authors, where each represents the voice of one Christian tradition. Dialogue is not just an important part of theological discourse but also an essential element of every kind of discernment since it creates space for a non-fundamentalist approach to truth about God, oneself, and the world. For a better understanding of the conversational flow, which sometimes leads us to associated themes, the article is divided into five parts. Firstly, it speaks about the difference between theological, moral, and spiritual discernment. Secondly, it concentrates on discernment in connection with the different concepts of redemption. Consequently, the article deals with the discernment of good and evil in relationship with the origin of evil. Lastly, it elaborates the present and eschatological aspects of discernment and the role of individuals and community in the process of how Christians discern.

Key words

Discernment; Evil; Good; Dialogue; Christian traditions; Eschatology; Pneumatology; Ascesis

DOI: 10.14712/23363398.2020.5

* This article is supported by Charles University Research Centre No. 204052. František Štěch's part was also supported by Charles University grant Primus/Hum/23.

In our article, we will speak about the discernment of good and evil from the perspective of three Christian traditions. It is written in a form of a dialogue between the three of us. We are aware that this is not a usual form in the contemporary academic discourse within the humanities.¹ However, it was not just an important style of philosophical and theological questioning in the past,² but also a fundamental part of every discernment. Discernment is *dia-logos*: one gains knowledge about reality via exchanging the *logos (logoi)* with oneself and others but also with the whole cosmos. The real dialogue forces us to let ourselves be, to let Ego go and thus create space for a non-fundamentalist approach to truth about God, oneself, and the world. For a better understanding of the conversational flow, which sometimes leads us to other associated themes, the text has been divided into five parts.

Part I: The Difference between Theological, Moral, and Spiritual Discernment

M: Is there any difference between theological, moral, and spiritual discernment?

F: I think that a distinction between theological, moral, and spiritual discernment is possible; however, it is merely a technical distinction based on the decision to accent a particular aspect of the singular discernment, a process which is always composed of all three components. In reality, theological, moral, and spiritual discernment cannot be separated, but in theory we may consider each of them as a particular access point to the human praxis of discernment, which is commonly understood as an '*art of perceiving differences*'³ that opens up the process of inquiry of what is true and false, right and wrong, and what action actually does good and what does bad.

¹ See, for example, Ivana Noble, Anne-Marie Reijnen, and Kateřina Bauerová, 'Newness in Theology: How to Tell a Fashion from a Paradigm Shift,' *Cursor: Zeitschrift für explorative Theologie*, accessed December 4, 2019, <https://cursor.pubpub.org/pub/noble-newness-2017?version=44daceeb-2f71-4f10-bc7e-f8043577fa92>.

² Let us recall here Plato's dialogues or Thomas Aquinas's Scholastic style of his *Summa*.

³ Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman, 'Moral Theology and the Will of God – Critical Discernment,' *The Furrow* 63, no. 10 (2012): 484.

K: Can you think of any theological figure from contemporary Roman Catholic theologians whose theology describes the art of perceiving differences in a helpful way for us?

F: I think Karl Rahner could serve here as a profound example.⁴ Rahner holds a possibility of an immediate human experience of God and supports this insistence by a theology of grace, which is to a great extent based on Ignatian discernment helping people to discover where God is acting in their lives.⁵ According to Rahner's concept of supernatural existential, people are created after the image and likeness of God, and through the very act of creation God communicates himself to people as a loving and generous discerner; the one who discerns and elevates human nature above all other natures through granting them the supernatural existential.⁶ Consequently, human beings are also capable of discernment. It might be perhaps said that they are even called to discernment in order to discover God, their creator, and to enter into a relationship with Him. Discernment is what human beings have in common with God, yet judgment (about what is finally good and evil) remains reserved for the Creator.

K: Do you mean that all three aspects of the discernment are given to people as a potentiality?

F: As we said earlier, discernment has not only a moral level but also two other levels: theological and spiritual. For me, it appears that while moral discernment in the Roman Catholic tradition is connected to practical reason (*ratio practica*), theological discernment relates more to theoretical reason (*ratio theoretica*). While practical reason is focused on the discernment of what one is to do, theoretical reason discerns what one ought to believe.

K: For me, the Kantian or earlier Aristotelian distinction of two reasons can be a helpful model only to some extent as it does not speak about spirit and spiritual discernment or, for example, about the heart as one of the organs making decisions or about the human senses: the eyes, ears, or nose.

⁴ Some authors speak of Rahner's theology as about the 'anthropological turn' in theology. See, for instance, Anton Losinger, *The Anthropological Turn: The Human Orientation of the Theology of Karl Rahner* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000).

⁵ Cf. John J. O'Donnell, *Karl Rahner: Life in the Spirit* (Roma: E.P.U.G., 2004), 27.

⁶ Rahner's expression 'supernatural existential' is a substantive which refers to an element of human existence, which is an offer of grace. See Karl Rahner, 'Über das Verhältnis von Natur und Gnade,' in *Schriften zur Theologie 1* (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1954), 323–345.

F: Indeed, I agree with you. Right here one may raise an objection that using theoretical and practical reason in the theological and moral sphere has nothing to do with discernment because it is just reasoning. True theological as well as theologically motivated moral discernment needs a connection to spiritual life or spirituality, which provides the last necessary dimension to the human capacity of discernment. And precisely here we may find a link to the Holy Spirit at work in human discernment. As, for instance, I can mention Dawn Nothwehr, who, in his article on the relation between discernment of spirits and moral choice in the Roman Catholic tradition, claims: ‘In our pluralistic, fearful, ecologically threatened world, Catholics need to reclaim the significant role of the life-giving and communion-building Holy Spirit in empowering, sustaining, and enabling them to make moral decisions.’⁷ And the same may be true for theology as well. Without the significant role of the Holy Spirit each theology can appear only as dry reasoning with no ability to ignite or sustain the fire of faith in human beings. Thus, in connection to Nothwehr’s relating the Holy Spirit to moral decisions, I would like to underline that spiritual discernment (discernment of spirits) is the third necessary component of the human capacity of discernment which maintains the desired synergy between theological, moral, and spiritual life.

F: Even though there is a principal synergy among theological, moral, and spiritual life and discernment, there are also differences to be perceived. I would like to ask you, what is your opinion on the difference among those three aspects?

K: I also agree with you that the three aspects of discernment are very difficult to split apart in praxis. I even see a kind of danger in separating the spiritual ability of discernment from the ethical part of our behaviour and moral discernment, and vice versa. I can imagine how the two aspects when separated end up in two extremes: ‘spiritualizing’ reality without being aware of corporality and immanence of it, and ‘moralism’ without any discernment of the particular embodiment in space and time. In the Orthodox tradition, you find the description of the steps of spiritual growth that always contain practical, theoretical, and mystical steps.⁸ Even if they are called steps, they never

⁷ Dawn M. Nothwehr, ‘By the Power of the Holy Spirit Discernment of Spirits and Moral Choice,’ *New Theology Review* 20, no.1 (2007): 18.

⁸ Sometimes the three stages or steps are called: purification (*katharsis*), illumination (*photisis*), and perfection (*teleiosis*).

exist separately. In patristic terminology, *theoria* is more contemplating Scripture or creation, but it is also the inner ability to see God. Even if it somehow transcends the practical part as, for example, fasting, cleansing of passion, at the same time *theoria* never leaves praxis behind. You find the same emphasis in the contemporary Orthodox authors such as Dumitru Stăniloae⁹ or Kallistos Ware.¹⁰ The spiritual discernment of good and evil thoughts is possible only together with practical doing.¹¹

F: But what about theological discernment?

K: I think that the same is valid for theological discernment. You can gain a university degree in theology but still have no ability of spiritual discernment.¹² But ideally, in the stage of *theoria* knowledge of God is also a communion with God so theology becomes spirituality. Here, I agree with Father Sophrony Sakharov (1886–1993), who recognises two types of theology: the first type of theology ends up in pure abstract concepts without any ‘knowing Christ in the heart’ and the other which is always connected with prayer and brings not just knowledge but also wisdom.¹⁵

F: And do you find here some example of this in the modern theologians who managed to combine all three aspects or, in your words, all three steps?

K: Well, the third step as the mystical one connected with perfection is hard to judge since perfection is mostly an eschatological category. But I can think of one person – Mother Maria Skobtsova,¹⁴ who is for me an example of someone who managed to combine the

⁹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a Definitive Manual for the Scholar* (South Canaan: St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 2002), 69.

¹⁰ Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1986), 140–177; Stăniloae, *Orthodox spirituality*, 40–45.

¹¹ Stăniloae, *Orthodox spirituality*, 69–70.

¹² See Fr. Theodore G. Stylianopoulos, *Gospel, Spirituality and Renewal in Orthodoxy*, accessed March 22, 2019, http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG0823/_P13.HTM.

¹⁵ Father Sophrony Sakharov, *On Prayer* (Essex: Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1996), 62.

¹⁴ For more details about her life, see, for example, Xenija Krivošejna, *Мать Мария (Скобцова): Святая наших дней* [Mother Maria (Skobtsova): A Saint for Our Time] (Moscow: Eksmo, 2015); Kateřina Bauerová, ‘Emigration as Taking Roots and Giving Wings: Sergei Bulgakov, Nikolai Berdyaev and Mother Maria Skobtsova,’ *Communio Viatorum* 54, no. 2 (2012): 184–201; Kateřina Kočandrle Bauer, ‘Emigration as a Space for Creative Freedom: Mother Maria Skobtsova and Sister Joanna Reitlinger,’ *Journal of the European Society of Women in Theological Research* 26 (2018): 95–107.

spiritual, practical, and mystical in her life. Her specific vision of monastic life came out of the context she lived in. She came to Paris as a refugee after the 1917 revolution in Russia. She represents a special monastic life in the city without a monastery. She calls for the true monastic non-possession, which means even the non-possession of one's own image about the right, exclusive way of monastic life. From the context of exile in France, she criticised even the Hesychast practice of Mount Athos as being too concentrated on the monk's own spiritual hygiene while being far from the 'sinner' and the world.¹⁵ For her, monasticism does not mean to escape the world but rather to live within it. Spiritual discernment is also ethical or practical and mystical at the same time.¹⁶

K: Michaela, are the theological, moral, and spiritual only aspects of one discernment or not for you?

M: I agree with you both that theological, moral, and spiritual discernment are intertwined since in all of them we examine our experience, but foremost, strive to understand God's revelation and presence in various contexts of our world and lives. For me, each of the three discernments consists of dialogue, of which listening is a crucial part. Listening to those with whom we share not only hymns and pews but the world, lives, our concerns, and ideas regardless of whether they are Christian, religious, agnostics, or atheists is a crucial aspect of any thinking process. For me, it is important to keep in mind that none of the discernments is purely a human undertaking since God remains the free agent of God's own revelation(s).¹⁷ Any reflection of faith is based on God's acting in the world primarily in Christ who became a sinner for us, lived, died, rose and ascended for us.¹⁸ According to

¹⁵ See Mother Maria Skobtsova, 'Types of Religious Life,' in *Mother Maria Skobtsova: Essential Writings* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2003), 140–186; here 154.

¹⁶ To meet God's image in humanity was for her seen as meeting the mystery of the Incarnation and God-man-hood. See Mother Maria Skobtsova, 'The Second Gospel Commandment,' 57.

¹⁷ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology 1*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (London, New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 4–8.

¹⁸ As Luther said in one of his Christmas sermons: 'We do not believe that the virgin mother bore a son and that he is the Lord and Saviour unless, added to this, I believe the second thing, namely, that he is my Saviour and Lord. When I can say: This I accept as my own because the angel meant it for me, then, if I believe it in my heart, I shall not fail to love the mother Mary, and even more the child, and especially the Father.' Martin Luther, 'Sermon on the Afternoon of Christmas Day 1530,' in *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, ed. Timothy F. Lull (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 232.

Luther,¹⁹ each person needs salvation of their whole being, including reason, spirit, and conscience. The word of God, coming to us from the outside in the word and Sacraments, is the counsel we need in examining any aspect of our spiritual and life journeys. Therefore, to him, any discernment needs to start with redemption – with divine intervention in a person’s whole being and life. Accordingly, it would be probably a bit artificial for him to divide this theological discourse into three separate divisions since the criteria for any discernment for him is and remains the word of God.

Part II: Discernment as Connected to the Concept of Redemption: Justification and Deification?

K: For me, Luther’s anthropology and cosmology do not provide any space for the co-operation of people and God in the journey of salvation and the potentiality to discern out of human nature.

M: The Fall has left its marks upon this world – human and natural. However, I think there is space for co-operation in a person’s life towards salvation – to live a life of sanctification, without salvation becoming merit. Sanctification is a life united with God, a life accepting and living out Christ’s presence within a person through the Holy Spirit. Thus, this life has a different source – participating in the life of Christ, living a full life. I think it might be helpful to distinguish between theological and psychological aspects of divine action in human beings. One is not forced to accept God’s grace. A person obeys the call to follow Christ and strives to search for God’s will. Theologically speaking, one can set out and grow on the journey of salvation only through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Decalogue is the framework of such life and at the same time ‘we also need it to discern how far the Holy Spirit has advanced us in his work of sanctification and by how much we still fall short of the goal’.²⁰ Luther distinguishes between our effort and its progress or failing and the work of the Holy Spirit in us. I keep Luther’s suspicion of conscience and reason on their own (unredeemed) together with his two kingdoms doctrine, which claims that people outside of the Christian faith are able to make reasonable

¹⁹ Cf. LW 32, 112–113; LW 27, 387.

²⁰ Martin Luther, ‘On the Councils of the Church,’ in *Martin Luther’s Basic Theological Writings*, 563.

and even moral choices based on the use of their reason. Such reason, however, would not be able to shed light on theological and/or spiritual questions.

K: Can you think of any contemporary Protestant theologian, who would bring a more positive anthropology and who speaks about people's potentiality and ability to discern?

M: I find a very helpful model in the works of the Lutheran theologian Dorothee Sölle. In her book *Beyond Mere Obedience*, she makes a distinction between automatic obedience blinded towards the world from discerning the will of God in a creative way, which takes into account not only God's command but also human responsibility and specific life situations.²¹ Following the story of Jesus, she says, we are liberated and transformed for a life of happiness, which is a fulfilled life. It is marked with fantasy and spontaneity within the human community. God's liberation consists in freedom from a view of God's will that is thoughtless and devoid of creativity. Therefore, discernment could concern also the concept of sin in connection with human imagination, integrity, and happiness.

As I said, the potential for moral discernment remains also for non-Christians, even though not in its fullness. Those who continue to live in sin, they live a life of disunity, estrangement – from God, themselves, others, and the world. For example, Dietrich Bonhoeffer says that even the conscience of a person living in sin, in the Old Adam, is attempting self-justification and self-purification.²² Once united with Christ, the human will is liberated from worrying about one's own pure conscience but gives the freedom to live for others and, if necessary, become guilty in that life.²³ Since the concepts of the forgiveness of sins and new life in Christ are exposed primarily in the theological discourse, I consider it as having a certain primacy among the three discourses.

²¹ Cf. Dorothee Sölle, *Beyond Mere Obedience: Reflections on a Christian Ethic for the Future* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1970).

²² Cf. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 'Akt und Sein: Transzendentalphilosophie und Ontologie in der systematischen Theologie,' in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke 2*, ed. Hans-Richard Reuter (München: Christian Kaiser-Verlag, 1988), 110–111. Bonhoeffer describes human conscience as 'a binding call of the human existence towards unity with itself'. See Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 'Ethik,' in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke 6*, ed. Clifford Green, Ilse Tödt, Heinz Eduard Tödt and Ernst Feil (München: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1998), 277.

²³ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters from Prison* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 4.

K: You use the vocabulary as ‘sin’ or ‘sinful’, which is connected to the concept of redemption as justification. For me salvation is more the journey of people with God. This journey means to become deeply human, not to transcend what is human, but it is rather the fulfilment of it. Therefore, I still have a question whether some of the principles of Orthodox morality and moral discernment might differ from the Protestant and Catholic approach because of a different conception of original sin, a different interpretation of redemption as seen more as deification?

F: I estimate that there will be no difference in general Christian moral principles, but it may differ in their interpretation. And it is precisely because of the notion of *theosis* as you suggest, Kateřina. The Roman-Catholic tradition may differ from the Orthodox in the concept of *peccabilitas* – the principal ability to sin.²⁴ This term, is not of biblical origin but rather of a philosophical-theological nature. The Bible uses the term concupiscence or desirousness (*concupiscentia*), which is not a term identical to sin, but it suggests an openness or possibility to sin.²⁵

K: Yes, it is true that deification (*theosis*) has been used as the distinctive teaching of the Orthodox Church and stands in the contrast to the teaching about justification. The possibility of human synergic work in deification comes out of positive anthropology but also cosmology. Here, the Orthodox priest and theologian Sergei Bulgakov inspires me a lot when he speaks about the theme of grace in connection with

²⁴ See, for instance, Vladimír Boublík, *Teologická antropologie* (Kostelní Vydří: Karmelitánské nakladatelství, 2006), 92–96.

²⁵ There is a long tradition of interpretation of the notion of *peccabilitas* starting from St. Augustine, who inclined to identify concupiscence with original sin. Going through medieval theology, this maintained the physical (bodily) character of concupiscence but did not identify it with sin. This is, according to Boublík, especially visible in the theology of St Thomas for whom concupiscence is essentially good (because it is spontaneous), but in principle allows for sin if it is influenced by temptation and not by the Spirit and grace. See Boublík, *Teologická antropologie*, 93–94. In fact, *peccabilitas*, as the real possibility to sin and as part of human createdness cannot be overcome by any human powers, only by Christ's grace. In other words, creation must be transformed from within by the creator itself so that the ability to sin might be finally cancelled and not able to condition people anymore. This is, however, identical with the eschatological transformation of human beings through salvation – through the climax of the process of human deification. While the first Adam (archetypal human) ate from the tree of knowledge, through salvation in Jesus Christ (the second Adam), who overcame *peccabilitas*, the new creation will eat from the tree of life. Cf. František Štěch, *Tu se jim otevřely oči: Zjevení, víra a církev v teologii kardinála Avery Dullese*, SJ (Olomouc: Refugium, 2011), 108.

deification. Instead of ‘original sin’ he speaks about ‘original grace’.²⁶ He also denies the categorisation of ‘natural grace’ and ‘supernatural mercy’.²⁷ For him, the only distinction that has to be made is between created being and grace that is of divine character. But between these two there has to be a positive attitude from both sides; otherwise it would be violence of God on creation.²⁸ Here Bulgakov emphasises the role of the Holy Spirit whose power was already present at the moment of creation, and through the Holy Spirit we can participate in the natural mercy of God’s creation.²⁹

M: There has been an ongoing Lutheran-Orthodox ecumenical dialogue focusing on the different interpretations of redemption in those traditions. For example, the Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission has elaborated on the concepts of *theosis* and justification, synergy and personal responsibility, stating that ‘Lutherans, together with the Orthodox, affirm that salvation is real participation by grace in the nature of God’, Lutheran theology has a tendency to emphasise God’s unmerited grace by using the term forensic justification and talks about sanctification (not using the term *theosis*) when dealing with a new life in Christ. There is a true notion of transformation expressed with that concept. Moreover, ‘Lutherans and Orthodox both understand good works as the fruits and manifestations of the believer’s faith and not as a means of salvation’.³⁰ Thus, this document identifies distinct terminology (justification and *theosis*) in both traditions, expressing salvation while emphasising common theology that is behind them.

²⁶ See Paul Vallier, *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov: orthodox Theology in a New Key* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 352.

²⁷ Sergei Bulgakov, *Невеста Агнеца: О богочеловечестве* (Paris: YMCA, 1945), 318–328 and Sergei Bulgakov, *Утешитель. О Богочеловечестве. часть II* (Paris: YMCA, 1936), 233–251.

²⁸ See Bulgakov, *Невеста Агнеца: О богочеловечестве*, 320.

²⁹ See Bulgakov, *Утешитель*, 233–251.

³⁰ ‘Authority in and of the Church in the Light of the Ecumenical Councils,’ *9th Plenary of the Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission, Sigtuna/Sweden* (31 July – 8 August 1998), accessed March, 22, 2019, https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/1998-Lutheran_Orthodox_Dialogue-EN.pdf.

What is also distinct is the explanation of how this participation in divine life takes place. The Orthodox tradition talks about divine energies, while the Lutheran tradition does not use this distinction between the divine essence and divine energies. Cf. *ibid.*

Part III: The Ability to Discern Good and Evil Related to the Question of the Origin of Evil

M: The discernment of good and evil is connected with the question of the origin of evil. In your opinion, is evil something or someone? Is discernment a matter of human free will and God's grace without any influences of the angelic world?

K: Well, here, Augustine's idea of evil as *privatio boni*⁵¹ has been followed by centuries up to today by the whole Christian world. The Orthodox theologian Kallistos Ware interprets evil from the Orthodox point of view on the basis of the fall in two stages: first the angelic fall and then the human fall. He points out three important consequences of it: firstly, besides the evil for which we humans are personally responsible, there are forces whose will is turned to evil in the universe. Secondly, fallen spiritual powers help us to understand why, prior to man's creation, there should be disorder or waste found in the world of nature. Thirdly, the rebellion of angels makes it clear that evil originates not from below but from above, not from matter but from spirit. Some others, as for example Nikolai Berdyaev, concentrate more on evil as the result of human free will and thus as a part of human discernment between good and evil. He emphasises that good and evil are different categories of reality. These two principles cannot be compared – as absolute and relative they cannot stand in real opposition.⁵² 'Evil means the falling apart of the absolute being, which happened only because of freedom' and freedom is the basic internal attribute of every being, which is created according to God's image and likeness.⁵³

F: As far as I can see, it is both. A person as well as an act can be evil. I am not sure about objects. Perhaps weapons? Is a nuclear weapon evil per se? In Hebrew, Satan is 'adversary' – that means it could be anyone. See, for instance, Matthew 16:22–23. Jesus calls Peter 'Satan'. Humanity has both principal inclinations to good and to evil. As far as

⁵¹ Augustine, *Confessions*, VII.

⁵² To compare them we might end up in Manicheism with its dualistic cosmology. See Nikolai Berdyaev, *Filosofie Svobody: Původ a smysl dějin* [Philosophy of Freedom] (Votobia, 2000), 20.

⁵³ Another example is Vladimir Lossky in his *Dogmatic Theology*, who sees evil not only as mere passivity, but he sees evil as active. For him evil is not something, it is not a thing, it is who. Evil is personal. See Vladimir Lossky, *Orthodox Theology: An Introduction* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978), 79–81.

humanity is created after the image and likeness of God, we are free to choose which way we go. And it is not once and for all that we make many choices in our lives. Sometimes we are ‘Satan for ourselves’. I believe our own (selfish) desires are the worst enemies or adversaries we must fight in our lives. I can become evil by decision and, if that is the case, what I do and create is evil too. But all evil might be turned into good by God in one way or another. Here, another question arises if evil is the same as sin.

M: This last sentence is an important question for me – what is the relation between evil and sin? And how we can discern evil as such? I am drawn to the book by Edward Farley *Good and Evil*, where he writes:

Human evil is never a discrete and isolated corruption, a demonic inhabitation, or a piece of human ontology. It is a network of occurrences that varies with every agent, situation and period of time. [...] An agent's posture of enmity will always reflect the subjugations and relations of that time and place and will be embodied in the agent's unique autobiographical and developmental situation. The same holds for specific relations and institutions.⁵⁴

He traces evil to the tragic character of the human condition in that the structure of human reality is such that ‘agents, relations, and institutions obtain and maintain their goods only in conjunction with all sorts of intrinsic limitations, exclusions, and sufferings’.⁵⁵ Thus, it is not so much about inclinations or a person's dispositions, in his opinion. It is about the structure of the human condition that is formed by three interrelated spheres – interhuman, social, and interpersonal. Each of them is marked by isolation and the tragic structure. So, I guess, drawing on Farley, I would say evil is rather something.

F: Is good the only alternative to evil? Is there anything in between? Am I good or bad? Or am I both? This anthropological condition influences our discernment, which does not have to be necessarily only discernment between good and evil, but also discernment between good and even better or between different levels of goodness.

⁵⁴ Edward Farley, *Good and Evil: Interpreting the Human Condition* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 286

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

K: I like your question very much as, so far, we have spoken in the dualistic language of good and evil because in our mind discernment is strongly connected to dualism. However, sometimes we have to discern between good and better or the best, and already here theological anthropology plays an important role. Orthodox tradition more than the Protestant one, I guess, emphasises first of all the Edenic image of God in people, and already after this we have two falls as I described earlier. But even the Orthodox tradition does not forget that sin exists within people, and they are a mixture of good and evil. We are not only God's image, but we are also sinners. The Orthodox theologian Olivier Clément speaks about people as sinful mortals but at the same time as about kings.⁵⁶ This is our fragile existence; this is the state in which we live, and we discern out of this fragility.

M: From the Protestant perspective I think of Luther here and his notion of the existence of every Christian as being *simul iustus et peccator* – justified and sinner at the same time. Every day, they need to die and be born again with Christ.⁵⁷ Thus, they are always as if they are in-between. They are redeemed sinners, which does not automatically make them into good people and/or immune to evil deeds, thoughts, or words. Theologically and spiritually they are united with Christ, and thus born-again sinners – every day, they are crucified and rise with Christ. I think Luther did not talk about specifically good or bad, but the constant need of Christians to look at Christ's cross and resurrection instead of despair or pride of their deeds.

F: And is it the same theologically and morally?

M: I would say, theologically, human beings in Christ are justified sinners while morally they might do both, even simultaneously, good and/or evil. Their unity with the New Adam does not automatically condone their moral discernment or action since their struggle with the Old Adam for sanctification continues.

K: Concerning the ability to discern we have to clear up whether evil is really a part of human nature or whether it depends on human free will.

⁵⁶ See Olivieri Clément, *Tělo pro smrt a slávu: malé uvedení do teopoetiky těla* (Velehrad: Refugium, 2004), 10.

⁵⁷ Cf. Martin Luther, *Lecture on Romans* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 322–323. For a discussion of the concept within Luther's historical context, see Scott H. Hendrix, *Martin Luther: Visionary Reformer* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 2015), 111–112.

F: I would think both. I would say an inclination to evil is present in everyone in potential. The question of free will is whether we will develop this potential or deny it.

K: If evil is part of our nature, which is completely corrupted, then only those redeemed can participate in God's salvific actions, and only those redeemed have power to discern. There is a sharp division between church and the world. To answer the question, perhaps we need to start from the issue of original sin and its interpretation. Within the Orthodox tradition the teaching about *peccatum heareditorum* has never been so much developed as in the Roman Catholic tradition and also it has never had only personal consequences as Michaela emphasised above by commenting on Farley. The fact that people were made according to God's image and likeness stands before their corruption, which is important. And also, human free will, which after the angelic world caused the fall, influenced not only humans but the whole cosmos. The original harmony of people but also the original harmony of the whole cosmos was disturbed. Death (*thantos*) and corruption (*pthora*) touched the whole cosmos, as Andrew Louth reminds us.⁵⁸

M: As I have mentioned earlier, instead of focusing on human nature, I prefer to reflect on human beings conditioned by the Fall, thus having an inclination to perceive God and the world through the filter of themselves.

Because of this human egoism Bonhoeffer refused to talk about good and evil as a starting point of Christian ethics. He claims questions such as 'how to be good', 'what is the good I need to do' repeat the aspirations of Adam and Eve that led to the Fall. Christian theology inquires about the will of God, which is a question beyond the knowledge of good and evil. This will is embodied in the person of the God-Man creating a new reality. This is the starting point of moral discernment, not the reality of one's own 'I', of the world, norms, or values. Bonhoeffer puts into contrast the aim of the Old Adam to knowing good (and evil), with the question of the new person – what is the will of God? This inquiry surpasses the sinful attempt to be like God, an attempt to better the world or be good. Seeking the will of God has only the reality of God in the world in its focus.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ See Andrew Louth, *Introducing to Orthodox Theology* (London: SPCK, 2015), 75.

⁵⁹ Cf. Bonhoeffer, 'Ethik,' 31–35.

F: I think that the origin of evil is any selfishness. It is a sin. I think the history of salvation has not only a dynamic of salvation but also a dynamic of sin, and that dynamic unveils a presence and the nature of evil in the history of all creation. It starts with the original sin, which I would identify with pride. The first people wanted to be not like God but the same as God. Christian theology holds that, at the beginning, everything was created out of the love of God, and through this love (Christ, the logos), the Creator's revelation of God's loving nature opens up its salvific-historical dynamic. But the original love relationship between God and humankind is perverted by the pride of original sin. In the Christian tradition, the symbol of eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden symbolises this original sin (Genesis 2:9). That fruit is commonly associated with an apple. Maybe, it is due to resemblance of the Latin words for apple and evil (*malum*). But as, for instance, Jan Samohýl points out,⁴⁰ in Jewish, rabbinic tradition this mythical tree of the knowledge of good and evil is sometimes interpreted as an etrog tree (*hadar*). Etrog is a kind of citrus fruit (*Citrus medica*) which is called in Hebrew *peri ez hadar* (or else *pri etz hadar*),⁴¹ literally the *fruit of the beautiful tree*. This fruit has a shape like a human heart and because of that shape it symbolises the heart during the Jewish feast *Sukkot* in its ritual bouquet called *Lulav*.⁴² Such an interpretation comes most probably from rabbinic commentaries on the Midrash *Vayikrah Rabba* 30:14.⁴³ *Lulav* consists of a palm leaf, a willow branch, myrtle, and the etrog fruit. In this context, the story of Genesis gains a new dimension. The first people were seduced by the wily (crafty) serpent not to eat just some apple but their own

⁴⁰ Cf. Jan Samohýl, *Židovské inspirace křesťanství* (Kostelní Vydří: Karmelitánské nakladatelství, 2017), 104.

⁴¹ This transcription is used, for instance, by Daniel Feldman in his article 'Sukkot: Pri Etz Hadar,' accessed March 21, 2019, <http://www.mazornet.com/holidays/Sukkot/pri-hadar.htm>.

⁴² This interpretation is mentioned, for instance, by David Brofski in his book *Hilkhhot Mo'adim: Understanding the Laws of the Festivals*. See David Brofsky, *Hilkhhot Mo'adim: Understanding the Laws of the Festivals* (Jerusalem: Koren Publishers, 2013), 299; see also this use by Rivka C. Berman, Sukkot, *The Lulav and the Etrog*, accessed March 21, 2019, <http://www.mazornet.com/holidays/Sukkot/lulav.htm>. The same interpretation could be found also in the article by Rabbi Scheinerman, 'Sukkot: The Harvest Festival,' accessed March 21, 2019, <http://scheinerman.net/judaism/Holidays/index.html>.

⁴³ Cf. Rivka C. Berman, *Sukkot: The Lulav and the Etrog*, accessed March 21, 2019, <http://www.mazornet.com/holidays/Sukkot/lulav.htm>.

heart. And, if we eat our own heart, are we not losing the ability to love? The only thing God wants from his people is their love. But what can they give when they have gaping wound in place of their heart? Human love always requires God's intervention and help. 'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh' (Ezekiel 36:26), calls God through the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel.

K: I like this interpretation very much. It reminds me of the praxis of the Jesus prayer of the Hesychast tradition, which is also called the prayer of our heart. Our renewed heart decides and discerns. But the renewed heart is not a mere state but the whole journey, where the cleansing of our heart takes place. In the Orthodox tradition, there is an emphasis on the ascetic practice of the cleansing of our heart from all passions and all images, which is accompanied by repentance.⁴⁴ But of course, the cleansing of the heart is not an end in itself, as it brings a renewed relationship with God, others, and the whole creation.

M: It is the heart open for others, yet not forcing itself upon others. From the Christian belief that human beings are created in the image of God, Bonhoeffer draws the concept of *analogia relationis* – we are created to live in relation to God and to others. That is the intended human freedom – to be for others. However, to break the limits – the boundaries of the other, to disrespect them – is sinful. One of the fundamental limits is to be human, not to want to be like God. Otherwise, we want to live at the expense of the other. To break the limits of God, of ourselves, other people, and nature is sinful. Pride and egoism make the worldly community – between God and people, themselves and nature – impossible. God enters into the middle of the world in Christ to re-establish the limit and simultaneously, to be at the centre of the world's existence, taking sin and its evil upon himself to free us from them giving us new hearts. Thus, the new community (embodied in the church) is created.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ See Tomáš Špidlík, *Spiritualita křesťanského Východu: modlitba* (Velehrad: Refugium, 1999), 339–377.

⁴⁵ Cf. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Schöpfung und Fall*, in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke 3*, ed. Martin Rüter and Ilse Tödt (München: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1989), 60.

Part IV: The Discernment of Good and Evil: Present and Eschatological Aspects

M: How does the goal of discernment, as you perceive it, affect the process of discerning?

K: Yes, we have to consider the final *telos* of the struggle between good and evil, which is the victory of the Kingdom of God. Then the struggle is a part of the process of deification, which means the co-operation of God and people, and thus also the discernment of what is good and what is evil is necessary here. But the battle between good and evil does not happen only on the spiritual level of the fallen angels, or in the hearts of people or society, it also happens on the level of nature itself. As I said, the fall in the angelic and human spheres brought disharmony for the whole creation, thus the final victory also concerns the whole creation. Therefore, we need also a broad understanding of deification that would include all levels of the cosmos. A helpful model is provided here by the most significant figure of the Russian religious philosophy Vladimir Solovyov. The process of deification, of the unification of God and human, includes not just people themselves (the struggle for their own soul) but also biological development and human culture and history.⁴⁶ The process of deification towards the final victory of God is not a privilege of people, but they are privileged in their discernment together with God to contribute to the transformation of all reality into the divine.

F: If there is a struggle at all ... But perhaps there is. It may be happening within (inside) created creatures who are able to make free decisions: I do not think that there is a dualistic struggle between good and evil, like in Zoroastrianism, for instance,⁴⁷ but there is a struggle between good and evil within persons and consequently also within the created world but that kind of struggle depends on morals and does not have a ‘cosmic (or cosmological) relevance’.

M: Even if we know that the hermeneutical key of the struggle comes from the future, how does spiritual discernment look like in praxis?

⁴⁶ See Kateřina Bauerová, ‘The Mysticism of Pan-unity: Sophiology Revisited,’ in *Wrestling with the Mind of the Fathers*, Ivana Noble et al. (Yonkers: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2015), 174–185.

⁴⁷ See John Bowker, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1070.

K: I think within the Orthodox tradition we have two models of ascetic endeavour, which split to some extent the integrity of the external and internal battle of St. Antonius of the 3rd century. The first model emphasised more the internal endeavour and is based on the apophatic way of knowing God. We find such a spiritual way, for example, in Father Soprony of Essex. He followed the tradition of Hesychasm together with the praxis of the Jesus prayer. Father Soprony concentrates a lot on the role of *apatheia*, that is the mastery and cleansing of all passions, but the Hesychast prayer does not mean for him just the practice of *hesychia* as an instrument. In the battle with sin, repentance plays the most important role.⁴⁸ For him, there is a huge difference between those who want just to contemplate and those who want to repent. The second type is again represented for me by Mother Maria Skobtsova, whose way of ascetic struggle is aimed especially externally, to the world. The struggle between good and evil is the struggle for any deformation of God's image in people, which for her means the struggle for those in need. The discernment for her is based on commandments of love: to love God and to love fellow man.⁴⁹ Even if she doubts, even if she is afraid that this is just her imagination, her idea, the objective indications are the two commandments.

If I am faced with two paths and I am in doubt, then even if all human wisdom, experience, and tradition point to one of these, but I feel that Christ would have followed the other – all my doubts should immediately disappear and I should choose to follow Christ in spite of all experience, tradition, and wisdom that are opposed to it.⁵⁰

F: Maybe we should think about discernment which stands between the dualistic language of good and evil? Is there any example of it?

K: Yes, I think of the example of God's Mother. When we speak of spiritual discernment, we often use again the metaphor of light for good and dark for evil, but there are also shadows, the states 'in between'. This stage 'in between' stands above the dualism of good and evil. If we look at God's Mother and her doubt in hearing Gabriel's

⁴⁸ See Archimandrite Soprony, *Saint Silouan, the Athonite* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999), 180–181.

⁴⁹ See Mother Maria Skobtsova, 'Types of Religious Life,' in *Mother Maria Skobtsova: Essential Writings*, 140–186; here 175.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 174.

words, we see that doubts are an important part of the process of discernment. I think doubts are not positive or negative but the value of them depends on where doubts lead us. Again, here the hermeneutic of future plays its role.

Part V: Discernment as Individual and Communal

M: But perhaps we cannot speak about the discernment of good and evil on the individual level only. What are your thoughts on the communal aspect of discernment?

F: I think it is a ‘communal discernment of spirits’ which Christianity suggests as a tool for this. Perhaps it is what we need to investigate theologically – the question of how we recognise good and evil. I personally find Scripture, Church tradition, and a life of prayer as guides for communal discernment. What tools does community have to be able to discern anything?

K: Yes, I think we definitely have to make the difference between the discernment aimed at the community and also the discernment of individuals: (i.) The discernment of spirits has to be understood as a gift from God. In Paul, we have the gift described mainly in I. Cor 12:1–13. Here in Paul, we see that the gift of discernment is aimed at the community of believers. This passage does not pertain to individuals. Communal discernment through history has ended up in schisms or in judging extreme teachings as heresies. (ii.) Individual discernment does not stand in isolation from the communal one, but still, it differs. The big issue here is how we discern. It is not just by judging, but also by intuition, by love. As here within the Orthodox spiritual practice, we have to say by heart, as the heart is understood as the very centre of people. As Olivier Clément puts it: ‘The dividing line between good and evil goes through the heart of every person (...) from good to evil it is just one step (...) but then from evil to good also.’⁵¹ Here, discernment should not be mistaken by a needed difference without which real communion does not exist as without difference there cannot be any real unity. The perfect depiction of unity in diversity is Rublev’s icon of the Trinity.

M: As I said earlier, I perceive all three aspects of discernment intrinsically as a dialogue between various people sharing one world

⁵¹ Clément, *Tělo pro smrt a pro slávu*, 17.

and their life of faith in God.⁵² That presupposes an individual level of discernment, while being in communication with the others' search and answers. We find God in Christ in a concrete community,⁵³ where one hears the word of God in the proclamation of sin and forgiveness, in the Sacraments, and in the calling to follow Christ.

M: As we speak about the communal aspect of discernment can you think of any example of how a theological insight into the notion of good and evil may be helpful in a current public debate in your context?

K: I cannot think about a current debate explicitly, but I am sure that generally a theological insight of what is good and evil influences what is deeply human. If, together with Mother Maria Skobtsova, to fight against evil means to fight for God's image in us but also in others,⁵⁴ then it has an impact also on our context in which we live. However, we must be careful here not to project our own selfish images into others. The mirrored, narcissistic reflection of our own self onto others is dangerous and again means the deformation of others rather than freeing them. The deformation means often also the violent overcoming of evil by good that is objectified, that is only a tool where the other person becomes a victim of good, *a-prosopon*, someone without a face.⁵⁵ Thereby, Vladimir Solovyov speaks to me a lot in his iconic approach to good. The truth cannot ever be separated from searching for good and beauty at the same time. To isolate one of them means to end up in a kind of idolatry. If we isolate good from truth and beauty, it can turn to be only an attempt without any meaning, or we have only abstract truth, which is just an empty concept, or we have isolated beauty which becomes an idol.⁵⁶ Not-incarnated truth and good can easily be turned into dogmatism and moralism. The advantage of

⁵² Here, I draw primarily on Staniloae's notion of dialogue that I discussed mainly in the fourth charter of my book Michaela Kusnierikova, *Acting for Others: Trinitarian Communion and Christological Agency* (Minneapolis: Fortress press, 2017).

⁵³ As Bonhoeffer puts it, Christ exists as a Church-community in the sense of an actual fellowship and their life together, living a life of discipleship. Cf. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995). Also: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 'Life Together: Prayerbook of the Bible,' in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works: Volume 5*, ed. Geoffrey B. Kelly (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005).

⁵⁴ See Mother Maria Skobtsova, 'The Second Gospel Commandment,' in *Mother Maria Skobtsova: Essential Writings*, 45–60; here 60.

⁵⁵ See Clément, *Tělo pro smrt a slávu*, 21.

⁵⁶ See Vladimir Solovyov, 'Три речи в память Достоевского [Three Talks in Memory of Dostoevsky],' Accessed April 3, 2019, <http://www.vehi.net/soloviev/trirechi.html>.

beauty is that it cannot exist without corporality and materiality, and that means that when we discern we have to take into account a real person, not an abstract illusion.

F: I agree here that Christian discernment as a part of searching for religious Christian identity is in fact searching for human identity in the light of (or an experience of) Christian revelation. This could be a particular perspective which Christians could bring to the society-wide, public process of discernment and realisation of ideals of humanity and contribute towards forming the basic human identity. All who want to fully realise their own humanity naturally search for the absolute horizon of humanity. Christians are not following Jesus Christ for the sake of their own salvation but for the sake of the whole humanity's welfare. From my perspective, the idea of discernment in general is connected to life and as such it can be linked also to the ancient practice of mystagogy. An inspiration may be found in Karl Rahner's treatment of mystagogy.⁵⁷ Rahner's primary concern is to make mystagogy relevant for contemporaries and regard discernment as the practice of an ongoing hermeneutical re-reading of experience and tradition. Such a 're-reading' includes not only written texts but also practices. The ancient texts and practices of the Church may help people today to understand their life experiences. But for this to be the case, they must be reinterpreted in order to become meaningful, anew, and once again.⁵⁸

M: I think of the examples of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Samuel Štefan Osuský, Jozef Bučko, and others, who were able to discern between good and evil not only after the fact or theoretically, but when, for example, as Bonhoeffer said 'the masquerade of evil' is taking place and act (or refrain from activity) accordingly. Today, when we hear about the 'evil from Istanbul' referring to the document 'Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of the Council of Europe', or evil being imported by migrants, or as we face the rise of Christian-based right-wing movements and political parties, such a theological voice would be helpful not only within the churches but also in the public-political space. To me, the Roman-Catholic priest Anton Srholec was an example of a contemporary in Slovakia who,

⁵⁷ See, for instance, Karl Rahner, 'The Concept of Mystery in Catholic Theology,' in *Theological Investigations 4* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966).

⁵⁸ Cf. David Regan, *Experience the Mystery: Pastoral Possibilities for Christian Mystagogy* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994), 33.

living out his faith, became a kind of a public spiritual figure (here I allude to the concept of public intellectual/theologian) who was able to convey the message of goodness rooted in the Gospel not only to Christians but also to the public.

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A RESPONSE ARTICLE TO ‘HELPFUL
MODELS OF THEOLOGICAL, MORAL,
AND SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT
IN CATHOLICISM, PROTESTANTISM,
AND ORTHODOXY BY KATEŘINA BAUER,
FRANTIŠEK ŠTĚCH,
AND MICHAELA KUŠNIERIKOVÁ’

VIOREL COMAN

ABSTRACT

This article constitutes a brief response to the reflections of Kateřina Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušnieriková on helpful models of theological, moral, and spiritual discernment, emphasising that the meta-praxis of discernment is needed in order to theoretically reflect on *diakrisis* and its theological, spiritual, and moral aspects. The article continues with a couple of remarks on discernment in Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodoxy. The article focuses on (i) discernment as the art of learning and listening; (ii) the practice of discernment as an ongoing hermeneutical re-reading of the past experiences and traditions; and (iii) false forms of discernment.

Key words

Discernment; Dialogue; Orthodox Theology; Ecumenism; Spirituality; Hermeneutics

DOI: 10.14712/23363398.2020.6

The excellent article that I have been invited to respond to explores the topic of discernment and its associated themes in the form of a conversation between three theologians coming from different Christian traditions: Kateřina K. Bauer (Orthodox), František Štěch (Roman Catholic), and Michaela Kušnieriková (Protestant). Before I start my brief response, I would like to point out that I find the topic of their article acutely relevant for the contemporary Church, academia, and society; we no longer inhabit today – especially in Europe, but in

some other parts too – a society which is homogenous and uniform, but a space colored by religious, social, and cultural plurality, where the variety of opinions, choices, and experiences renders the praxis of *diakrisis* (the Greek term for ‘discernment’) an invaluable tool that helps us decipher our own way and our own path towards salvation. It comes without any surprise that patristic tradition refers to discernment as to ‘the queen of all the virtues’.¹ Moreover, the praxis of discernment, as ‘the process of inquiry of what is true and false, good and wrong’,² just to use the definition provided by František Štěch in the article, is all the more important as our contemporary society is increasingly dominated by a series of phenomena such as fake news, alternative facts, and disinformation.

When it comes to the article I was invited to respond to, I would like to begin with a couple of general remarks. The fact that it is written and presented in a form of a dialogue between three theologians pertaining to different Christian churches confirms that, in the academia – yet not only in the academia, discernment should always function as a sort of a meta-praxis, that is, as the guiding methodology of every discourse and reflection: the article of Kateřina Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušnieriková indicates that, in order to speak on discernment, one needs a kind of meta-discernment, that is the human capacity or ability to offer the correct interpretation of what *diakrisis* means in reality.³ In other words, one needs a strong dose of meta-discernment

¹ Stanley S. Harakas, *Towards Transfigured Life: The Theoria of Eastern Orthodox Ethics* (Minneapolis: Light and Life, 1983), 212.

² Christianity speaks of discernment as the effort to understand God’s will and to align the believer’s will with that of God’s. For example, Donald K. McKim defines theological discernment as ‘the process of assessing and evaluating, particularly in relation to trying to determine God’s will in a particular situation for one’s life direction’ – *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 78. In a similar way, the Russian Orthodox theologian from the Parisian diaspora Paul Evdokimov refers to the notion of discernment as the spiritual charism of the human person that makes him/her capable (i) of distinguishing between right and wrong and (ii) of making decisive choices. See Paul Evdokimov, *Ages of the Spiritual Life* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2000), 190. Although the notion of discernment is an important concept in the Church, not all dictionaries dedicated to Christianity refer to it. See, for example L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: University Press, 1998).

³ A similar idea is expressed by the American theologian Paul Gavrilyuk in his unpublished paper entitled ‘John Climacus and Spiritual Discernment’. As P. Gavrilyuk says in this paper, ‘the practice of discernment is [...] somewhat circular: we need a measure of discernment to analyze and reflect on discernment’ (p. 1). Gavrilyuk’s paper

to reflect theoretically on the nature, practice, and significance of discernment. The meta-praxis of discernment that has felicitously been chosen by the authors of the article to navigate through the complexity of the practice of *diakrisis* and its theological, moral, and spiritual dimensions is the method of dialogue, conversation, and exchange of opinions. The method of dialogue is the place where the personal dimension of discernment encounters both the otherness and the collective wisdom of the group, which allows individual voices to be heard and creates space for a 'non-fundamentalist approach to truth about God, oneself, and the world', as it is mentioned in the introduction of the article. Discernment in the form of dialogue shows that human persons do not own or poses truth, but truth is given to them when they create space for alterity to flourish and when they are willing to listen to and to receive from their partners of conversation. In this sense, what I found interesting in their article is its emphasis on the praxis of discernment as a co-journey: one finds the truth in a dialogical and relational process. The very best of our lives is always achieved through dialogue with the other. Dialogue creates a space where each person can share ideas, insights, and questions.

The meta-practice of *diakrisis* is also traceable in this article when the authors speak of discernment without neglecting the fact that, even though one can theoretically postulate a distinction between theological, moral, and spiritual discernment, these three levels must not be separated from one another: without spiritual discernment, theologically motivated moral decisions are disembodied, while spiritual discernment without theology and morality is rootless. In so doing, the three authors defined discernment as an art, which requires two main things. On the one hand, it is the fidelity to the theological and moral rules that come to us from the past, that is, I would say, the objective element of tradition: the human person acquires discernment if he/she embodies a set of pre-established ethical rules or if he/she follows the path that has been followed by others in the past. On the other hand, the art of discernment requires faithfulness to the spiritual, embodied, and contextually-determined aspect of human existence. In this regard, discernment is also an ongoing and dynamic conversation with God, where the application of ethical rules implies attentiveness to the

was delivered at the 26th International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox Spirituality, Monastery of Bose, 5–8 September 2018.

uniqueness of the human person, to the fact that each human being has to respond to each new situation in a personal and unique way. This is, I would say, the more subjective nature of discernment; the freedom of the human person in the process of discernment is at stake here. Accumulated wisdom and norms help, but discernment is always a personal response in a specific and concrete situation.⁴ In this sense, I read the reflections of Kateřina Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušnieriková on the three aspects of discernment and the need to keep them together as a balanced approach to the twin-fidelities that I have just indicated in regard to the art of *diakrisis*: faithfulness to tradition and fidelity to innovation and newness.

After these general observations regarding discernment, my response article now turns to offer some reflections on a couple of important theological points connected to the practice of *diakrisis* that have emerged in the conversation between Kateřina Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušnieriková. It is from the perspective of an Orthodox theologian and with the problems confronting the Orthodox Christian world in mind that I approach the conversation between the three authors on discernment.

1. Discernment as the Art of Listening and Learning

As an Orthodox theologian whose Church is, generally speaking, somehow self-centered and less willing to adopt a learning position in its relation to other churches, religions, and the world, I consider Michaela Kušnieriková's response to the question whether discernment is a dialogue as being of a crucial relevance. As Dr. Kušnieriková rightly

⁴ Richard M. Gula alludes to this when he says that 'the meaning and function of discernment [...] may be seen by comparing our relationship to God to an ongoing conversation with a friend. God speaks and we respond. In a conversation, no set rules of grammar tell us what to say next. The conversation progresses on the basis of fine feelings picking up the mood and attitude of the other as well as the meaning of the issue under discussion. The grammar which makes language intelligible to the conversation partner is like the moral norms which make action intelligible within a community of shared values. If we speak according to proper grammar, we can understand each other. But grammar does not tell us what to say next in a conversation. Discernment does. In the moral life, a gap exists between moral norms and one's personal imperative in a situation. Norm can direct us toward what we ought to do, but discernment ultimately leads us to the action most expressive of ourselves and of our relationship with God.' Richard M. Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith: Foundations of Catholic Morality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 314.

pointed out, 'each of the three discernments (theological, moral, and spiritual) consists of dialogue, of which listening is a crucial part. Listening to those with whom we share not only hymns and pews, but the world, lives, our concerns, and ideas with all regardless if they are Christian, religious, agnostics or atheists, is a crucial aspect of any spiritual discernment.'

My general observations with regard to the practice of discernment alluded already to the dialogical component of *diakrisis*; yet I would like to add that Michaela Kušnieriková's emphasis on the need of our churches to open their windows to the fresh air of the world, and listen to and learn from it in the process of discernment reminds me of Dumitru Stăniloae's concept of 'open sobornicity',⁵ which claims that churches and theologies must always embrace humanity and the cosmos, and get enriched by what the 'other' has to offer to them. Unfortunately, in Orthodoxy, Stăniloae's concept of 'open sobornicity' remains a beautiful theoretical reflection on the need of the Orthodox Church to let itself be enriched by the world; in practice, however, the Orthodox Church tends to set itself up in opposition to the world rather than in dialogue and conversation with it.

Discernment is a journey and involves dialogue, conversation, and exchange of opinions; the praxis of discernment is, therefore, opposed to any form of parochialism, isolation, and self-sufficiencies. The praxis

⁵ Dumitru Stăniloae is widely considered to be one of the most important 20th-century Orthodox theologians and a towering figure of the Neo-patristic movement. He occupies a position in present-day Orthodoxy comparable to that of Karl Barth in Protestantism or Karl Rahner in Catholicism, as Kallistos Ware emphasised in his 'Foreword', to Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God, Vol. I: Revelation and Knowledge of the Triune God*, trans. Ioan Ionita and Robert Barringer (Brooklyn: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1998), xxiv. For a comprehensive introduction into Stăniloae's concept of 'open sobornicity', see D. Stăniloae, 'Sobornicitatea deschisă,' *Ortodoxia* 25, no. 2 (1971): 165–180; Idem, 'Coordonatele ecumenismului din punct de vedere ortodox [The Coordinates of Ecumenism from the Orthodox Perspective],' *Ortodoxia* 19, no. 4 (1967): 494–540. For the secondary literature on the same topic, see Viorel Coman, "'Open Sobornicity" and "Receptive Ecumenism": Fruitful Models of Ecumenical Interaction,' in *Just Do It? Recognition and Reception in Ecumenical Relations: Proceedings of the 19th Academic Consultation of the Societas Oecumenica, Beihefte zur Ökumenischen Rundschau* 117, ed. D. Heller and M. Hietamaki (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt), 241–251; Radu Bordeianu, '(In)Voluntary Ecumenism: Dumitru Staniloae's Interaction with the West as Open Sobornicity,' in *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, ed. G. Demacopoulos and A. Papanikolaou (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 240–253; Lucian Turcescu, 'Eucharistic Ecclesiology or Open Sobornicity?' in *Dumitru Stăniloae: Tradition and Modernity in Theology*, ed. L. Turcescu (Iași: The Center For Romanian Studies, 2002), 83–105.

of discernment is ultimately rooted in a hermeneutic of receptivity,⁶ which presupposes attentiveness and openness to the insights of the other. As I have said, as an Orthodox, I have the impression that, very often, my own Church turns its dialogue with the world and the religious other into a monologue: the Orthodox Church's interaction with the world is very often limited to its mission to proclaim to the world the truth and revelation that the Church possesses. This is a unilateral approach as it is only the Church that helps the world discern what is good from what is wrong. There is not so much space for the opposite movement: the world can also help the Church throughout this process of discernment. As Metropolitan John Zizioulas stated at the International Congress of Orthodox Theological Schools (Sophia, Bulgaria, 2004), 'if the Church wants to speak to the world, it has to listen to it [...] we cannot self-define ourselves by opposing others, but can only do so through establishing a connection with them'. For the same theologian, the Orthodox Church's task of discerning what is good from what is wrong in our contemporary society needs a permanent conversation with the world and its modern achievements. To give just an example, many contemporary problems raised by biotechnology and the Orthodox Church's task to address these issues renders the dialogue between Eastern Christians and specialists in secular bioethics or ecological ethics of primary importance. As Zizioulas pointed out, the new realities, especially in the context of European Union, require active cooperation with the heterodox, including the secular world.⁷

⁶ Paul Murray's notion of 'receptive ecumenism' could equally be extended to the relationship between the Church and the world. The notion of 'receptive ecumenism' invites Christian traditions to place the self-critical question 'what, in any given situation, can one's own tradition appropriately learn with integrity from other traditions?' at the center of the ecumenical agenda. The basic principle of this ecumenical approach is that considerable further ecumenical progress is indeed possible but only if each tradition, both singly and jointly, makes a clear, programmatic shift from prioritizing the question 'what do our various others first need to learn from us?' to asking instead 'what do we need to learn and what can we learn – or receive – with integrity from our others?' See P. Murray (ed.), *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning: Exploring a Way for Contemporary Ecumenism* (Oxford: University Press, 2008); Idem, 'Receptive Ecumenism and Ecclesial Learning: Receiving Gifts for our Needs,' *Lowain Studies* 33, no. 1–2 (2008): 30–45; See also Antonia Pizzey, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Renewal of the Ecumenical Movement: The Path of Ecclesial Conversion* (Leiden: Brill, 2019). When applied to the relationship between the Church and the world, the same question takes the following form: 'What, in any given situation, can one's own tradition or Church appropriately learn with integrity from the world?'

⁷ Cf. Jason Byassee, 'Looking East: The Impact of Orthodox Theology,' *Christian Century* (28 December 2004). A couple of years ago, the same Orthodox Metropolitan

2. Discernment in Our Re-reading of the Past

František Štěch's claim that discernment 'is also a practice of ongoing hermeneutical re-reading of experience and tradition' touches upon a very important function of *diakrisis*, especially when memory, tradition, and past experiences work as elements that build up ecclesial identities and strongly shape their future. Discernment in such situations is always a difficult task and practice, because, both individually and collectively, human persons tend to over-remember and over-emphasise some aspects of the past, while, at the same time, under-remembering or even intentionally forgetting other aspects that do not fit into their identity model or vision. That is why the practice of discernment in the act of remembering should seek to operate with a memory faithful to the truth of the past, making sure that no voices have been silenced, no events have been forgotten, and no central aspects have been neglected. I will offer two relevant examples in order to make my statement regarding remembering clear. All these examples that I use are taken from the Orthodox world; but the problem they reveal is of a universal type and concern.

The first example refers to the way in which some members of the Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe tend to read the communist past of their countries. As the American theologian John Erickson pointed out in an article published in 2019, it is very common nowadays for the representatives of the Orthodox Church in Eastern countries such as Romania, Russia, Ukraine, to mention just a few of them, to remember – and even to over-remember – that a large number of Orthodox believers, clergy, and lay people alike, became victims of the communist régime in the past, being either unjustly incarcerated, tortured, persecuted, or killed. Without any doubt, it is our individual and collective moral duty to remember the victims of the communist régime; and not only the victims of the communism but all people who have suffered throughout history, in a way or another, injustices and atrocities, either in Europe or elsewhere in the world. It is not the act of remembering

acknowledge the need of the Orthodox Church to discern together with the modern world and not in opposition to it, when he said that the 'agenda of Theology is set by history'. To determine its agenda, Theology must discern the problems of the contemporary world first. And such a discernment is supposed to take place in dialogue and mutual conversation with the world. The Church discerns the problems of the world and can offer solutions to them if it cooperates with the world and listens to it.

these victims that I call into question. The problem lies, as John Erickson emphasised, in the fact that, while Orthodox Churches are inclined to over-remember these victims of the communist régime, they incline to forget atrocities and injustices in which the members of the Orthodox Church have to a certain extent been complicit, such as the forced suppression of the Eastern Catholic Churches during the same communist regime for example.⁸ Unfortunately, these injustices, which were very often committed during that period with the silent consent of the members of the Orthodox Church, are either ‘forgotten, relegated to a footnote, or simply deleted’.⁹

The second example refers to the way in which the very fundamentalist groups in the Orthodox Church read the agenda of the 20th-century Neo-Patristic movement to promote their current anti-ecumenical and anti-Western feelings. The Neo-Patristic movement¹⁰ was the most influential theological direction in 20th-century Orthodox Christianity. It consisted of a large group of 20th-century Orthodox thinkers (Georges Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky, and Dumitru Stăniloae) who advocated the need of Eastern theology to return to the patristic sources of Chris-

⁸ John Erickson, ‘The Temporal Dimension of Discernment: History and Memory,’ *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (2019): 18. See also Robert Taft, ‘Anamnesis, Not Amnesia: The “Healing Memories” and the Problem of “Uniatism”,’ 21st Kelly Lecture given at the University of St. Michael’s College, Toronto, Canada, on the 1st of December 2000. The text of his lecture is available at <https://www.royaldoors.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Anamnesis-not-Amnesia.pdf> [accessed on August 14, 2019]; Miroslav Volf, *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2016).

⁹ J. Erickson, ‘The Temporal Dimension of Discernment,’ 8. Related to what I have mentioned above about Eastern countries’ reading of their communist past is also the fact that contemporary Romanian theologians and priests like to point out that since a lot of Christians of Romanian origin have been tortured during the communist persecution, the Romanian people and nation possesses naturally the vocation of sainthood and martyrdom. But those who make such claims forget that those who tortured and killed during the communist regime were also Romanians.

¹⁰ See Paul Ladouceur, *Modern Orthodox Theology: ‘Behold, I Make All Things New’* (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 95–122; Idem, ‘Treasures New and Old: Landmarks of Orthodox Neopatristic Theology,’ *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2012): 191–228; Christos Filiotis-Vlachavas, ‘La théologie orthodoxe, entre retour aux pères et appel de la modernité,’ *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 89, no. 4 (2015): 425–442; Ioan I. Ică jr., ‘Modern and Contemporary Orthodox Theology: Key Moments, Key Figures, Developments, and Assessments,’ in *Orthodox Theology in the 20th Century and Early 21st Century: A Romanian Orthodox Perspective*, ed. V. Ioniță (Bucharest: Basilica, 2013), 21–94; Andrew Louth, ‘The Patristic Revival and its Protagonists,’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, ed. M. B. Cunningham and E. Theokritoff (Cambridge: University Press, 2008), 188–203.

tianity in order to renew itself and depart from the negative influences of Western scholasticism, which had permeated its ecclesiology, ethics, and spirituality for centuries. Even though the Neo-Patristic movement's attempt to liberate Eastern Christian theology from Western scholastic patterns of thought developed, to a certain extent, a politics of identity in which Orthodoxy defines itself in opposition to the West,¹¹ the interaction of the movement with Roman Catholicism and Protestantism cannot be reduced to this hermeneutics of rejections; the agenda of the Neo-Patristic movement included an ecumenical component as well,¹² which is completely ignored by the Orthodox fundamentalists groups because it does not fit their anti-Western and anti-ecumenical rhetoric. More can be said about the ecumenical interactions of the representatives of the Neo-Patristic movement and their approach to Western theology, but I stop here.

3. False Forms of Discernment

The article of Kateřina Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušnieriková has also engaged with the topic related to the complex relationship between discernment, on the one hand, and good and evil, on the other hand. For this reason, I would like to briefly refer to the phenomenon related to the embodiment of false forms of discernment, which is one of the many aspects of the mixture between good and evil, between what is true and what is false. The example coming from Eastern Orthodox tradition that I have in mind is linked to the so called self-proclaimed spiritual directors, mostly monks, who turn themselves into infallible organs of discernment and claim unshakable obedience to them. To quote Georgios Vlantis, the phenomenon of false spiritual directors in contemporary Orthodoxy – the phenomena

¹¹ Pantelis Kalaitzidis, 'From the "Return to the Fathers" to the Need for a Modern Orthodox Theology,' *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 54, no. 1 (2010), 5–36.

¹² The ecumenical component of the Neo-Patristic movement has been brought to light by Matthew Baker, 'Neopatristic Synthesis and Ecumenism: Toward the "Reintegration" of Christian Tradition,' in *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of Identity and Otherness: Values, Self-Reflection, Dialogue*, ed. A. Krawchuk and T. Bremer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 235–260; Brandon Gallaher, 'Ecumenism as Civilisational Dialogue: Eastern Orthodox Anti-Ecumenism and Eastern Orthodox Ecumenism. A Creative or Sterile Antinomy?' *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* (forthcoming 2019); and Viorel Coman, 'Revisiting the Agenda of the Neo-Patristic Movement,' *The Downside Review* 138, no. 2 (2018): 99–117.

is usually called *gherontism*, *elderism*, or *fatherism* – is one of the many ‘images of holiness that do harm’.¹⁵

The genuine practice of spiritual direction in Orthodoxy involves guiding a person to the process of *theosis*, that is, the process of growth in communion with God, human fellows, and the rest of creation. An authentic spiritual director is that person who can assist, by personal experience, the advancement of his/her disciple into spiritual maturity.¹⁴ Unfortunately, the charisma of genuine fatherhood/motherhood in Orthodox tradition can also be distorted, especially when the art of spiritual guidance succumbs to the thirst for power and dominance. I can use as an example the unfortunate events that took place after the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, 19–26 June 2016), when its decisions started to be contested by a group of fundamentalist people, who considered themselves bearers of the charisma of truth, entrusted by God with the task of discerning the correct path to be followed by contemporary Orthodoxy.¹⁵ The paper I respond to did not touch upon this issue when dealing with the question of discernment between good and evil – and probably because this is an issue confronting primarily the Orthodox world; but I think that this is a good example of moments when evil is clothed in good.

Conclusions

The article of Kateřina Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušneriková on ‘Helpful Models of Theological, Moral, and Spiritual

¹⁵ Georgios Vlantis, ‘Images of Holiness That Do Harm,’ *Communio Viatorum* 61, no. 1 (2019): 99–109. John A. Monaco, ‘Contra Father-ism: On Spiritual and Theological Abuse,’ *Public Orthodoxy*, <https://publicorthodoxy.org/2019/08/16/contra-fatherism> [accessed on August 19, 2019]; (See also Viorel Coman, ‘Obnova pravoslavného hesychasmu dvacátého století a jeho obraz svatosti: Kritické zhodnocení,’ *Teologické reflexe* 24, no. 1 (2018): 46–56. The same issue has briefly been touched by Pantelis Kalaitzidis, ‘Concluding Reflections to the Colloquium “The Forthcoming Council of the Orthodox Church: Understanding the Challenges”’, The Saint-Serge Institute, Paris, 18–20 October 2012,’ *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 60, no. 1–2 (2016): 279–297.

¹⁴ See Irénée Hausher, *Spiritual Direction in the Early Christian East Cistercian Studies Series*, No. 116 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1990). The book was originally published in French in 1955.

¹⁵ The negative reactions of the fundamentalist groups have been criticised by several Orthodox theologians. See Paul Ladouceur, ‘On Ecumenoclasm: Anti-Ecumenical Theology in Orthodoxy,’ *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2017): 323–355; Georgios Vlantis, ‘Die Angst vor dem Geist: Das Heilige und Große Konzil und die orthodoxen Anti-Ökumeniker,’ *Ökumenische Rundschau* 66, no. 1 (2017): 32–41.

Discernment in Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodoxy' certainly offers excellent food for thought to anyone interested in the Christian practice of *diakrisis* and its theoretical and practical ramifications. Given the complexity of the topic explored in the article, it was not possible for me to comment upon all the issues that have been addressed by the authors. What my response intended to do was to offer a few general remarks related to the topic of discernment and to engage with those major aspects of the practice of discernment that in the article ask for an Eastern Orthodox reaction. Kateřina Bauer, František Štěch, and Michaela Kušnieriková do not claim to have exhausted the discussions on discernment. Undoubtedly, the practice of *diakrisis* is an ongoing journey and so is any serious theoretical reflection on discernment, which needs to continue and explore uncharted territories that will shed even more light on the topic at stake.

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THEME

The Book of Isaiah

RECEPTION OF ISA 7:17 IN QUMRAN: THE USE OF AMBIGUITY OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

LIBOR MAREK

ABSTRACT

Verse 7:17 from Isaiah presents its interpreters, both ancient and modern, with difficulties and ambiguities regarding the text that must be accounted for on the level of formulation (problematic grammar), content (uncertain meaning) and incorporation into the larger context of Isa 7:1–17. The Damascus Document from Qumran uses this verse twice (in CD VII & XIII) in texts of different types (Admonitions and Laws). The author of the Damascus Document resolves the ambiguities of the biblical verse and incorporates it into his two compositions for the benefit of his argumentation. This type of redactional work is possible due to a recognition by the author of a continuity between the biblical Israel and the current (Qumran) community. While resolving the problems inherent to the biblical verse, the author of the Damascus Document also creates a new tension between the ways in which this verse is incorporated into the two documents.

Key words

Syro-Ephraimite War; Damascus Document; Ambiguity; Reception

DOI: 10.14712/23563398.2020.7

The purpose of this article is to explain the use of the quotation from Isa 7:17 in the writings from Qumran. This quotation is used twice in the Damascus Document (CD) and the wording is very close to the Masoretic Text in both instances. However, the use of this quotation in two different types of texts (Admonishments in CD VII and Laws in CD XIII) begs an explanation in terms of exegetical approach of the author. I argue that the author of CD knew the larger passage of

Isa 7, was aware of its ambiguity in multiple senses, found continuity with his current situation, but also left a new ambiguity observable by comparing CD VII and CD XIII.

1. Function of Isa 7:17 in the Biblical Book

Chapters 7–12 of the Book of Isaiah capture the events of the so-called Syro-Ephraimite war and verse 7:17 is part of a prophetic speech, where Isaiah talks with the king Ahaz in the moment of distress during the war, while the capital city is under siege by the Assyrian armies. The Masoretic Text reads *יְבִיא יְהוָה עָלֶיךָ וְעַל-עַמֶּיךָ וְעַל-בַּיִת אָבִיךָ יָמִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא-בָאוּ לְבֵית יְהוָה אֶת מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר* and it can be translated ‘The LORD shall bring upon you and your people and your father’s house such days as have not come since Ephraim seceded from Judah (the king of Assyria)’.¹ I want to demonstrate that this biblical verse, as reported in the MT, is ambiguous. It is not clear whether it announces a punishment, or anticipates a hopeful promise regarding an upcoming salvation. Such an ambiguity of the text reflects the complexity of the historical situation and correlates with the description of the events in Isa 7:1–17. This text captures conflicting positions defended by the king and by people. Ambiguity, or uncertainty, is visible on three different levels. 1. The actual formulation of the text in the given verse (morphology and syntax). 2. Content and meaning of the verse. 3. Context and incorporation of the verse into the larger episode. The second part of my paper will evidence as to how the author of the Damascus Document deals with these three ambiguities.

1.1 Formulation of the Verse

Ambiguity or uncertain meaning of the text is conditioned, in the first place, by its equivocal grammar. The text is unclear from the grammatical point of view, in the sense that one verb governs two direct objects: the LORD shall bring *days* and the LORD shall bring *the king of Assyria*. Such a grammatical oddity is addressed by the BHS apparatus that suggests reading the words *the king of Assyria* as a secondary addition to the text. This position is shared by several modern exegetes²

¹ All translations into English are taken from the NAB, unless otherwise noted.

² Ronald E. Clements, *Isaiah 1-39: Based on the Revised Standard Version, NCBC* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 89; Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah: A Continental Comm-*

and translations that offer various solutions: the NAB puts these words in brackets, understanding them as a gloss. The RSV separates them by a hyphen, without clarifying, though, the syntactical link with the verse. The German EIN moves these words to the middle of the verse, changing them from a direct into an indirect object, but leaving them in brackets. The CEP reads the first object מִיָּמִן as an adverb of time and adjusts the text by adding the demonstrative pronoun ‘v *těch* dnech’. At the same time, the second object (the king of Assyria) is preserved. The Italian CEI translation repeats the same verb twice, altering thus the MT ‘*manderà ... giorni, ... manderà il re d’Assiria*’. The Latin Vulgate translates ‘*cum rege Assyriorum*’, understanding the Hebrew particle ׀ as not as a direct object marker, but due to a different vocalization, as the conjunction ‘with’.

Another, rather marginal problem is the rare expression מִיָּמִן that combines two Hebrew prepositions (*lamed* and *min*). Both ancient and modern translations opt for simplifying this expression, similarly to other instances in the OT (Judg 19:30; 2 Sam 7:6).

1.2 Content and Meaning of the Verse

Besides the unclear grammatical formulations within the verse, even its meaning is somewhat vague. The wording does not allow for deciding whether *the days* have a positive or a negative content. Days could mean the days of prosperity experienced by Israel during the time of the united monarchy under David and Solomon, which ended in the moment of the division of the monarchy after the death of Solomon. Then, the verse envisions a return of the better days which were experienced by Israel prior to the split of the monarchy.

On the other hand, *the days* can be taken in a negative sense as days of visitation, or punishment. Such a negative connotation would evoke the very instant of the division of the monarchy as a catastrophic moment that ended the previous prosperity. Even the brief addition about the king of Assyria at the end of the verse appears to support this position, especially if it is read as a new subject, or as an explanatory gloss: ‘The LORD shall bring ... days, [*which means*] ... the king of Assyria’ particularly if the Assyrians are perceived as a chastisement (as they typically are in the OT, e.g. Isa 10:5). Even the expression ‘bring

tary (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 287; Willem A. M. Beuken, *Jesaja 1-12, HThKAT* (Freiburg: Herder, 2005), 207.

upon you' is best explained as anticipating punishment, since the Hebrew phrase על גביא עַל mostly refers to judgment, misery, and punishment (Gen 27:12; Deut 28:45).

Due to the meager description of these days in the text, as well as an unclear function of the Assyrians in the entire scenario, it is impossible to decide between a positive and a negative significance of these days and thus of the whole verse.

1.3 Incorporation of the Verse into the Larger Context of Isaiah 7:1–17

Exploring the incorporation of the verse into the larger episode of Isaiah 7:1–17, an explicit interpretation is not found, and thus it can still be read in both a positive as well as a negative sense, coinciding with the fact that even the entire episode oscillates between these two opposite poles.

A positive interpretation of v. 17 within the episode can be substantiated by its immediate link with the previous verses. The promise of the birth of a son, who will receive the name Emmanuel (Isa 7:14) and soon will have access to curds and honey (Isa 7:15) continues through v. 17, where the Lord brings the days of prosperity upon Judah. Such a prosperity has not been experienced since the time when the northern tribes separated from Judah under the successors of Solomon.⁵ This prosperity is captured in v. 15 and repeatedly stressed in v. 16–17. Together these verses are introduced by the particle וְ, while v. 17 – beginning without a conjunction – can be read as a continuation or a closer explanation of v. 16. The positive outlook from v. 15 is further developed and includes two aspects: punishment for the enemies of Judah and prosperity for Achaz and his people.

Another reading, however, is possible as well and v. 17 can be read in a negative sense within the context of the episode. Even though, from the formal point of view, v. 16–17 develop v. 14–15, their relationship is not evident on the level of content: we learn nothing new about the mother of the child, nor about his name (Emmanuel). The only established connection exists on the level of time (*'before the child learns ...'* Isa 7:16), but not logic. Even the content of the promise itself (curds and honey; Isa 7:15) might have a negative meaning: although it is often

⁵ J. J. M. Roberts, *First Isaiah. A Commentary*, ed. Peter Machinist, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), 120.

used as a symbol of prosperity (country flowing with milk and honey), curds and honey might as well be a symbol of desolation, in which they are the only foods available, where one has to live off the land (Isa 7:22),⁴ and thus this promise regarding the curds and honey might even evoke the sense of a time of punishment. Such a negative reading would align with the fact that Ahaz is punished for his lack of faith and trust.⁵ The relationship between verses 16 & 17 remains unclear, and this problem has been previously addressed by translations in antiquity. While v. 16 speaks of punishment for the enemies of Judah ('the land of those two kings whom you dread shall be deserted'), v. 17 focuses on Ahaz and his people. This contrast between v. 16 & 17 is already visible in the Septuagint (v. 17 starts with the adversative conjunction ἀλλά), as well as in the 1QIsa scroll from Qumran which preserves the reading with the adversative waw (וַיִּבֵּא).

This ambiguity of the verse (announcement of punishment, vs promise of salvation) reflects the tension present in the episode, where the king Ahaz as well as his people face a test and they all have to make a decision. The verse as such is part of the prophet's speech where the king Ahaz receives a response and a promise. This speech is a reaction to his lack of faith and his doubts, but the prophet's speech also connects to the previous challenge of the people who hesitate as well. The beginning of the text in Isa 7 puts both the king and the people on the same level: '*his heart and the hearts of his people* shook' (Isa 7:2). The entire incident comprises a test for both the king and his people; Isaiah addresses the people along with the king: 'Unless your [pl.] faith is firm, you [pl.] shall not be firm' (Isa 7:9). It is a language that is typical for promises associated with David's monarchy (1 Sam 25:28; 1 Kings 8:26; Isa 55:3) and the preservation of the monarchy concerns the people as well as their kings. Within this context of political instability, both the king and the people have an opportunity to decide. King Ahaz is challenged directly: 'Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God; let it be deep as Sheol, or high as the sky!' (Isa 7:11). Ahaz is allowed to choose from amongst the entire world reality expressed by the merism Sheol ... sky, but he refuses to ask for a sign: 'I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!' (Isa 7:12). Refusing to ask for a sign is significant,

⁴ Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville: Westminster, 2001), 68.

⁵ Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-12, The Old Testament Library* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 104.

as it implies not making a decision, or refusing to trust in the Lord. Consequently, the promise is extended to include the people as well: 'Listen, house of David! Is it not enough that you weary human beings? Must you also weary my God?' (Isa 7:13). The call to listen (in plural) is addressed to the house of David. It is a metonymy for the king, who, as a collective personality, embodies the entire people. The fate of the king and his people are linked and they are both a part of the conclusive statement in v. 17.

Facing this challenge, the king and the people will fare differently. The sign given to Ahaz (Isa 7:10–17) indicates both salvation and damnation. Ahaz refuses to trust and to be an obedient son and therefore the Lord promises another son. The sign of Emmanuel will mean downfall for the king (Isa 7:17), but a promise for those who believe (Isa 7:16).⁶ The people will stand the test much better and at least a remnant will be saved, as indicated at the beginning of the episode: the LORD said to Isaiah: 'go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub' (Isa 7:3). An explicit interpretation of the ambiguous name Shear-jashub follows much later in the text: 'A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God' (Isa 10:21). This remnant is a symbol of the portion of Israel which will survive the Assyrian invasion (Isa 10:20–23) and is also a symbol of the people of God (Isa 8:18).

2. The Use of Isaiah 7:17 in Qumran

The ambiguities of the biblical text of Isa 7:17 are reflected in the Qumran documents as well and the authors deal with these issues in various ways. Besides being found in biblical manuscripts (the scroll 1QIsa), verse Isa 7:17 is preserved as a quotation in two fragments (4Q266 and 4Q267) of a major document customarily called the Damascus Document (CD).

Scholarly studies of this document are based on its content and divide it into two sections: *Admonitions* and *Laws*. Admonitions (CD I–VIII; XIX–XX) present a parenesis based on a reflection of Israel's history. These admonitions describe not only the past and future punishments, but also the salvation of the people. The Laws (CD IX–XVI) are developed based on biblical rules and legislations regarding the organization of the community. The exact relationship between these two types of text

⁶ Childs, *Isaiah*, 68–69.

has not been convincingly demonstrated by scholars, although several hypotheses are defended.⁷ The Qumran discoveries prove, however, that, already in antiquity, the Admonitions, along with the Laws, were part of one literary composition; some of the Qumran fragments contain parts of both works, e.g. 4Q266 and 4Q270.

The quotation from Isa 7:17 is contained in two independent texts – one belongs to the Admonitions and the other to the Laws. In both instances the author integrates the biblical quotation into a new context and has to deal with the ambiguity, or lack of clarity of the biblical text. Based on my analysis I argue that the author of CD approaches this ambiguity in two different ways: it is an obstacle to overcome, but also an opportunity of which to take advantage. While addressing the obscurity of the biblical text, the author of CD creates a new ambiguity.

2.1 Isaiah 7:17 in CD VII

The text of CD VII is conventionally called *Amos-Numbers midrash* and the quotation from Isa 7:17 is incorporated into it. The midrash is framed by a warning for those who attempted to enter into the community, but eventually failed to do so (CD VII, 9b–10a and CD VII, 21b–VIII, 1a). This warning is justified in the central part of the text, which is sometimes considered a secondary addition.⁸ This justification is substantiated by four biblical quotations (Isa 7:17; Amos 5:26–27; 9:11; Num 24:17) and these quotations are adjusted so as to fit into and support the current argumentation. The *peshet* technique is used in some instances, while otherwise there are more extensive passages from the biblical texts inserted into the midrash⁹.

The text of Isa 7:17 is used as a fulfilment quotation, or a proof-text, and the weight of this argument is augmented by the adjustments made to the biblical text. By interpreting the biblical text and demonstrating its relevance for the audience, the author deals with the ambiguity of the biblical text.

⁷ Michael A. Knibb, 'The Place of the Damascus Document,' in *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site: Present Realities and Future Prospects*, ed. Michael O. Wise et al., Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci. 722 (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1994), 151–52.

⁸ Philip R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the 'Damascus Document'*, JSOTS 25 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), 144.

⁹ Steven D. Fraade, 'Midrashim,' in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Seas Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam (Oxford: University Press, 2000), 550.

In order to make the biblical text intelligible, the author of CD addresses the problems caused by the obscure formulations (morphology and syntax on the level of the text). The difficult expression לְמִיּוֹם is substituted by its simpler form מִיּוֹם.¹⁰ Furthermore, the author of CD omits the tetragrammaton יהוה.¹¹ Such an omission of the divine name is theologically motivated, resulting from respect towards this divine name.¹² This omission of the tetragrammaton also changes the subject of the sentence: instead of ‘the Lord shall bring’, we read in CD ‘the days will come’. As a result of this change, the verb in singular (יָבֹוא) is associated with the subject in plural (יָמִים). Although it is not necessarily to be viewed as a scribal error,¹³ the result still remains that the author of CD creates a new problem in the syntax of the text.

Another obscurity in the formulation or meaning of the biblical text can be detected in the use of the words ‘the king of Assyria’ at the end of the verse Isa 7:17 – the author of CD resolves it by leaving these words out of his text. I have previously pointed out that these words appear as a gloss in the biblical text, but they still serve the purpose of lending to the verse a negative meaning. Redactional criticism works with the thesis that the final version of Isa 7 goes back to the period of the religious reform under the king Josiah.¹⁴ Although it remains impossible to determine the biblical text available to the author of CD (a physical manuscript, or a memorized text), textual criticism can be of a help here. The presence of this addition is attested in the large Qumran scroll of Isaiah (1QIsa), as well as in ancient versions (LXX, Syr). Therefore, it

¹⁰ All texts from the Damascus Document are taken from Joseph M. Baumgarten and Daniel R. Schwartz, ‘Damascus Document,’ in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, PTSDSSP 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 4–79. In consideration is taken the reconstruction of Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1998). All translations are my own.

¹¹ Something similar is perhaps visible already in the Septuagint, where the general divine name ὁ θεός is used instead of the anticipated κύριος.

¹² The same phenomenon is also attested in other instances in the Qumran documents, especially in legislative texts: Donald W. Parry, ‘Notes on Divine Name Avoidance in Scriptural Units of the Legal Texts of Qumran,’ in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies Cambridge 1995 Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten*, ed. Moshe J. Bernstein, Florentino García Martínez, and John I. Kampen, S1TDJ 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 437–49.

¹³ Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, ‘The Cave 4 Damascus Document Manuscripts and the Text of the Bible,’ in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judean Desert Discoveries*, ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov (London: British Library, 2002), 96.

¹⁴ Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39 with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature 16* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 150.

is permissible to work with the assumption that the author of CD left these words out intentionally, or rather finished his quotation before this particular gloss. By omitting these words, the author provides an actualization of the biblical text: he skips the reference to the king of Assyria which would have been irrelevant in the period of composition (around 2nd century BCE) and might possibly have created an obstacle to understanding.

At first glance, it appears that the author of CD endorses a positive reading of this verse (he removes one of the main arguments in favor of its negative reading). Considering the immediate context, however, leads one to the opposite conclusion. CD VII, 9 speaks about punishment for the *evil ones*, and this is confirmed by the quotation from Isa 7:17. In the most immediate sense, the author of CD leans towards the negative understanding of the given verse and ‘the days to come’ are days of an unprecedented punishment. Such an interpretation is achieved by clarifying the meaning of the historical context of the days which are about to come. The author clearly understands them not as a time of prosperity during the united monarchy, but as a punishment and tribulation that was incurred after the separation. In fact, the text that follows contains an immediate explanation: ‘when the two houses of Israel separated, Ephraim departed from Judah. And all the backsliders were delivered up to the sword’ (CD VII, 13). The ambiguity of the biblical text, as previously described, is removed and the author opts for the negative interpretation of the text in his composition.

What remains unaltered is the ambiguity on the level of the entire episode as observed in Isa 7: the moment of decision by the king as well as by the people. The author of CD finds a continuity between the tension in the biblical text and the tension in the new situation which he is writing about. The situation in CD, the tension and separation of those who originally used to comprise a portion of the community, but who eventually decided not to follow God’s commandments, is interpreted from the perspective of Isaiah’s prophecy: punishment is envisioned for those who separated from the covenant. The biblical citation acts as a warning to those who are faithful and face difficulties in the present: it highlights the final destiny of the enemies, who otherwise seem to prosper.¹⁵ The author of CD finds a connection between the larger

¹⁵ James C. VanderKam, ‘To What End? Functions of Scriptural Interpretation in Qumran Texts,’ in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and Septuagint Presented to Eugene*

context of Isa 7 and CD VII in the focus on decisions. Both the king and the people face this challenge in Isa 7, in which the king (and his court) fail, but at least the people are saved (Isa 10:20–22). The audience of CD (the community of Israel in the author's presence) goes through a similar process: those who did not enter into the community ('those who rejected' CD VII, 9) align with those who failed in the past. On the other hand, those who entered into the community will be saved by escaping to the land of the north (CD VII, 14).

The author is able to connect the biblical text to the present audience because of his understanding of history, of biblical texts, and of prophecies in particular. The Damascus Document understands the origin of its own community as the goal and pinnacle of the history of Israel. The continuity with this history ensures a new beginning after a long period of failings and sins. The existence of this community demonstrates a radical reversal of a long series of failings, and the present community is a remnant that preserved faithfulness to God's commandments (CD III, 12–16).¹⁶ The community is encouraged to persevere in remaining faithful to God's plan, by highlighting the history revealed in the past, which maintains its validity, lest a tragedy will occur. The identity of the community will be preserved by separating from those who are sinful (CD VII, 9) and by fidelity to the covenant.¹⁷ This small remnant resembles the remnant of people who will be saved in Isa 7.

Conclusion: The author of CD VII has to contend with the ambiguity of the biblical text when using the quotation from Isa 7. On the level of the text, he changes the obscure formulations. On the level of the verse, he favors the negative meaning of the text and uses it in the new composition. Although such a choice might appear arbitrary, it is the author's conscious decision, enabled by recognizing the connection with the biblical episode which captures the decision-making process on the part of the king and people facing a test. The author of CD takes

Ulrich, ed. Peter W. Flint, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam, VTS 101 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 317–318.

¹⁶ Hermann Lichtenberger, 'Historiography in the Damascus Document,' in *History and Identity: How Israel's Later Authors Viewed Its Earlier History*, ed. Jan Liesen and Nuria Calduch-Benages, DCL.Y (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 232–233.

¹⁷ Peter W. Flint, 'Interpreting the Poetry of Isaiah at Qumran: Theme and Function in the Sectarian Scrolls,' in *Prayer and Poetry in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature: Essays in Honor of Eileen Schuller on the Occasion of Her 65th Birthday*, ed. Jeremy Penner, Ken M. Penner, and Cecilia Wassen, STDJ 98 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 191.

a further step by warning those who are in the present community about the consequences of leaving by highlighting the negative example of those who have left the historical community. This latter group is associated with the negative characters of the biblical text, while the positive interpretation of the text is available to those who, being members of the community, are saved by escaping to the land of the north (CD VII, 15).

2.2 Isaiah 7:17 in CD XIII

The column CD XIII is part of the *Laws* (CD IX–XVII) which contain a series of rather independent legislations to determine the functioning of the community. After listing several laws regarding individuals, the portion of the law that relates to ‘the whole encampment’, or ‘the congregation of the encampments for all descendants of Israel’ includes the quotation from Isa 7:17 (CD XIII, 20 XIV, 2).¹⁸ Even other instances in CD show a repeated legislation for the congregation of the encampments (CD XII, 32; XIV, 3; XIV, 9) and these might reflect the idea of continuity with the historical Israel claimed by the current community.

Due to the damaged state of the text of CD, scholars are only able to follow the basic idea of division within the community (of Israel) and the subsequent punishment, or reward. There is a contrast visible within the members of the community: those who are ‘not able to dwell in the land’ (CD XIII, 21), as opposed to those who ‘walk’ (in the prescriptions) (for the Instructor), and God’s covenant will protect them (CD XIII, 22). This difference in the fate of these two groups claims a biblical foundation. While the protection of the just ones does not warrant, or does not need any explanation, punishment is explained and justified by two related biblical quotations from Isa 7:17 and Prov 27:12.

The first part of the quoted verse Isa 7:17 has not been preserved and even the consideration of other fragments from Qumran (4Q266 9 III, 16–18; 4Q267 9 V, 2–3; 4Q269 10 II, 6–7) only leads to the conclusion that the quoted text must have been shorter than the current MT.¹⁹ Thus,

¹⁸ This reconstruction is enabled by combination of the fragments from Qumran and the medieval manuscript from Kairo: García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 573.

¹⁹ Joseph M. Baumgarten and Józef Tadeusz Milik, *The Damascus Document (4Q266-273)*, DJD, XVIII (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 70.109; Stephen J. Pfann, *Qumran Cave 4 Cryptic Texts*, DJD, XXXVI (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 204.

we can presume the reduction of the referent from v. 17a: the original threefold referent ‘upon you’ (עליך), ‘upon your people’ (על עמך), and ‘upon the house of your father’ (ועל בית אביך) must have been shortened (based on the available space). The author also adjusts the difficult expression לְמִיּוֹם to a more intelligible one מִיּוֹם. When it comes to the meaning of the verse, the author of CD clearly opts for its negative understanding and takes it as a prediction of punishment. He associates it directly with those who ‘will not be able to dwell in the land’ (CD XIII, 21) and subsequently talks about punishment, when he quotes from the book of Proverbs: ‘the naïve pay the penalty’ (CD XIV, 2).

The use of this quotation from Proverbs is made possible by a greater connection that the author finds between Isa 7 and CD XIII. Both texts contain a moment of decision or distinction between right and wrong. This decision might result in a punishment, but at the same time salvation is offered for those who walk, i.e. act according to the instructions (CD XIII, 22). The difference between those who lack knowledge and will be punished and those who will be saved is due to understanding and acting. The members of the community are given a time for keeping the instructions. It is a time of trial and testing and undergoing this period determines their fate. The naïve ones fail this test. It is a category of people who are not supposed to enter into or belong to the community (‘stupid, deranged, feeble-minded’ CD XV, 15) and thus they ‘will not be able to dwell in the land’ (CD XIII, 21).

Conclusion: The author of CD XIII works with the ambiguity of the biblical text, but our ability to understand his work is conditioned upon the state of preservation of the text. While attempting to clarify the formulations on the level of the biblical verse, the author goes further and attributes to the verse a negative meaning. The connection with his own context is found in the topics of distinction and decision. Walking according to the instructions gives hope and certitude. On the other hand, those who are condemned receive no hope for a change and are excluded from the country. The quotation from Isa 7:17 only confirms this pessimistic outlook.

Conclusion

The author of CD appears to use the text from Isa 7:17 in an immediate sense as a fulfillment quotation, without any further explanation. My analysis, however, demonstrates that the author intentionally works

with this biblical verse. The author is aware of the need to address the problems we have described above. The grammatical difficulty is easily resolved with the author omitting the reference to the king of Assyria, which might have been unintelligible or irrelevant in the new context. The author clearly favors the negative meaning of the verse and uses it in both instances in CD: once in the context of a warning and once in a legislative context. Both of these texts in CD contain the moment of decision making and it is here that the author of CD locates continuity with the episode of Isa 7 which also includes a moment of decision.

By considering each of these texts independently, the author overcomes, incorporates, or takes advantage of the ambiguity of the biblical text. Nevertheless, there is a significant difference between the two texts which is visible within the process of deciding between the positive and the negative characters. CD VII envisions the salvation of the positive characters with their escape into the land of the north. While departure from one's own country is envisioned, the possibility of a return remains open. On the other hand, CD XIII has the negative characters punished by expulsion from the country and their fate is permanent. Although the author of CD does not establish any explicit relationship between these two texts, we can conclude that the quotation from Isa 7:17 retains or rather acquires a new ambiguity similar to those found already in the original episode in Isa 7. The author of CD is able to associate this biblical verse with two different scenarios. This demonstrates that the author knew this biblical text not only as a fulfillment quotation, but considered the entire episode as well. He is aware of its ambiguity and the potential of the biblical text. While overcoming (or taking advantage of) the ambiguity, he creates a new one.

The biblical text is thus regarded by ancient authors not as an artefact to be preserved, but as a living treasure which requires an explanation. By doing so, the author of CD in particular enters into a long line of interpreters which begins within the book of Isaiah (re-reading) and continues through the intertestamental literature, Qumran, and the New Testament.

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THE RECEPTION OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH IN PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS*

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ABSTRACT

The Book of Isaiah clearly played a key role for Paul, especially when writing (or dictating) his Letter to the Romans, and especially with respect to two fundamental and mutually connected subjects: (i) the composition and unity of a Christian community composed of both Jew and Gentile. This unity and diversity are rooted in God's redeeming work in Christ, which because of the universal nature of sin applies to all people equally; (ii) God's faithfulness in saving Israel, and his plan to redeem all people, whether Jew or Gentile. As Paul's mission progresses, we detect in his letters, from 1 Thessalonians to the Romans, a growing interest in Isaiah and the increasing significance of the book for both his work and his theological reflection. This article summarises the significance of the quotations from the Book of Isaiah in the Letter to the Romans in three parts according to the structure of the letter (chapters 1–8; 9–11; 12–15). The exposition is concentrated only on 15 direct quotations from the Book of Isaiah.

Key words

Apostle Paul; Letter to the Romans; The Book of Isaiah; Interpretation of the Old Testament; Intertextuality

DOI: 10.14712/25365398.2020.8

There is little doubt that the Apostle Paul used the Scriptures as a key to discerning God's will and interpreting events. It is equally true, however, that had he not come to know Jesus as the Christ, the

* This article is supported by the Charles University Research Centre No. 204 052.

promised Messiah of the ends of the ages who legitimised his divinity and ministry by his resurrection, he would have used the very same Scriptures to argue against the new faith in God's redeeming work in Christ.¹ It might even have been his very knowledge of the Scriptures and the traditions of his ancestors (see Gal 1:14²) which played the central role in his persecution of the nascent church, just as it did in his proclamation of the gospel after his conversion.

Like any biblical scholar, Paul read and interpreted the Word of God from the perspective of his own experience and in light of whichever context or audience he was dealing with at the time. In other words, his interpretations were subjective and culturally and socially contextualised. He also used Scripture to support his ideas and legitimise his message, mission and status as an apostle. Like many of his contemporaries, he considered himself inspired, and believed he was interpreting the will of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (see also 1 Cor 7:40).

Nonetheless, when Paul uses biblical texts, he sometimes appears to make 'mistakes', or to change the text, and it is not always easy to determine the reason for these changes. Are they of his own invention or are they the product of an imperfect memory? Or did they already exist in whichever tradition he was calling upon or in the original text he was working with? Like the Hebrew text, the Greek text of Paul's day was yet to reach its final form, so his quotations could have been based on an earlier version of the LXX³ and do not necessarily represent a conscious deviation from the original.⁴ Stanley and some others

¹ Frankenmölle suggests that the application of theories of reception to the interpretation of biblical texts is a paradigm shift that has enabled a fresh understanding of Paul's writings. See Hubert Frankenmölle, "Wie geschrieben steht." Ist die paulinische Christologie schriftgemäß? in *Paderborner Universitätsreden*, ed. Peter Freese (Paderborn: Universität, 2004), 9.

² Although the Greek text was used as the principal source for this article, all Bible references and quotations use the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) unless otherwise stated. Where the LXX or MT references differ, these are added in brackets.

³ Wilk refers to a 'revised' edition of the LXX. See Florian Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); E. Earle Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 147–148.

⁴ Christopher Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture. Quotation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 43–45. Whitlock suggests that the quotations that display hebrizing tendencies might have been translated by Paul himself from a Hebrew original or at least 'corrected' according to it. See Jonathan Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration. Studien zur Vorstellung von inspirierter Schrift und inspirierter Schriftauslegung im*

feel it unlikely – other than with the odd exception – that Paul was quoting by heart,⁵ but an oral tradition founded in Antiquity and based on memorising cannot be completely ruled out.⁶ It is clear from the comment in 2 Timothy 4:13 that access to ‘parchments’ – and a codex – was a possibility even in the first century,⁷ but when we consider that within a single letter Paul quotes from texts of various types, we must assume that when he wrote or dictated his letters he generally worked without such aids. Tiwald and Ellis follow Stanley⁸ in suggesting that Paul probably carried his own hand-written collections of quotations which he extended over time and used in his letters, which may partly explain the variety of apparent originals; Whitlock suggests these collections might have been thematically organised ‘text-plots’.⁹ Nonetheless, Wilk believes that for the letter to the Romans at least, Paul had access to the Greek version of the book of Isaiah.

An equally important consideration is the perspective from which we judge Paul’s use of the Old Testament. Most scholars occupy themselves with Paul’s own viewpoint, while that of his audience, especially Gentiles, is very rarely considered. Some important questions must be addressed, however. What meaning did references to Scripture have for

antiken Judentum und in den paulinischen Schriften (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2002), 228–229. Shum even believes, and seeks to show through analysis of particular passages, that Paul was working with both Hebrew and Greek texts. See Shiu-Lun Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans: A Comparative Study of Paul’s Letter to the Romans and the Sibylline and Qumran Sectarian Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002). If we compare quotations from the Greek and Hebrew versions of Isaiah, however, it is clear, as Wilk shows, that Paul worked exclusively with the Greek. See Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 42. See also Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989).

⁵ Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 16–17, 69–70. Ellis considers it even less likely than was once believed. See Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 147.

⁶ Wagner stresses the practice of committing Bible passages to memory even when an author (Paul or someone else) had access to the written text (Vorlage), whether a complete a scroll of the relevant book or merely extracts (‘testimonia’ – collections of quotations from the Old Testament). Such memorisation enabled the author to draw on passages of Scripture while considering the wider context of the book. See J. Ross Wagner, *Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 20–28.

⁷ Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 233.

⁸ Markus Tiwald, *Hebräer von Hebräern. Paulus auf dem Hintergrund frühjüdischer Argumentation und biblischer Interpretation* (Freiburg: Herder, 2008), 19–21; Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, l.c.; Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture*, 53–54.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 232, citing C.H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures. The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Scribner, 1953). Such testimonia were taken in context rather than as isolated statements.

such audiences? Were they able to recognise an allusion to Scripture if it was not explicitly formulated as such? Much of the time we must assume not. We cannot be sure that everything we identify as an echo of an Old Testament text was intended as such by Paul.¹⁰ It might simply have been a natural figure of speech or part of the Jewish heritage with which Paul was working more or less intuitively. Such rootedness in the biblical idiom is disappearing from the modern world but was a more prominent feature of everyday language use in Paul's day. If as Paul says of himself in Galatians 1:14 he exceeded his contemporaries in his knowledge of the traditions of his ancestors, we can safely assume that the biblical mode of expression, in both form and content, came naturally to him and that not every statement that appears to be rooted in the Bible was necessarily intended as a reference to a particular passage of Scripture.

Another significant factor, the detail of which is not accessible to us beyond a few references in the epistles, is the extent to which Paul and other missionaries used the Old Testament in their day-to-day engagement with the communities – in their sermons, instructions, communications, and conversations. We cannot know for sure what Paul's addressees knew of the Scriptures and other traditions and should be careful before we draw conclusions about quotations and allusions and whether or how far the audience was able to identify them.¹¹ This is certainly true with respect to the Roman community, which Paul had not founded and did not know intimately. Communities such as the Roman church were predominantly from a Gentile background but did include Judeo-Christians who would have been able to share their knowledge and understanding of the most important and most frequently quoted Scriptures. It is possible that these believers could have helped whoever was delivering Paul's message to identify and interpret his references to Scripture, at least the explicit quotations. Four epistles (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians) contain large numbers of quotations from the Old Testament in addition to (especially in Romans) numerous

¹⁰ An 'echo' implies that the author was anchored in a certain tradition (in Paul's case Scripture) and as such is less intentional than an 'allusion' or 'quotation'.

¹¹ In *Paul and the Language of Scripture* (85–251), Stanley examines all the direct (easily identifiable) quotations in Paul's epistles and using a set of clearly defined criteria attempts to determine the source of all the 'deflections' in Paul's quotations. His remarkable and meticulous work must nonetheless be described as achieving a precise set of numbers from an imprecise base: interpretations of the many types of Biblical text used by Paul and with which Stanley works are at best highly arguable.

allusions and echoes. We can surmise that the number of Judeo-Christians in the communities to which these letters were addressed was higher than it was in those communities who received epistles with fewer such references. If implicit references were to be fully understood, some of the recipients would need to have least at the same level of education as Paul, as only such people would be able to decipher the references and interpret them for the rest of the community.¹² We know that Priscilla, Aquila, Apollos, and others of Paul's co-workers would have had the necessary knowledge; we must nonetheless concede that any hypothesis built on the foregoing argument should remain in the realm of speculation. Most recipients undoubtedly understood implicit references less well than clearly signalled quotations.¹⁵

It is no easy task to distinguish direct quotations from echoes, paraphrases, and allusions. Different scholars suggest different numbers for each and have different ways of defining their terms and doing their sums.¹⁴ What most would agree on is that readers with little or no religious background would have been able to recognise as 'biblical' only those statements that either are clearly identifiable by an introductory formula or reference to an Old Testament character or text or are in an obvious tension with their immediate syntactic context.¹⁵ This article limits itself to such cases, although the letter to the Romans contains many other verses inspired by the book of Isaiah, which was clearly a key source for Paul.

Paul differed little from his Jewish contemporaries in his method of working with sacred texts and in his way of approaching and

¹² Betham considers this not merely possible but probable. He also suggests that illiterate members of the community came to know the texts – from listening to and memorising them in their catechesis – well enough to be able to identify the allusions. Christopher Betham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 255–256. There is no evidence for this, however.

¹⁵ Because of the complexity of the matter and the limited scope of this article, the focus here is on explicit quotations from Isaiah.

¹⁴ Tiwald mentions 127 such quotations; Longenecker 77 (+ 6 in Eph and the pastoral letters); Whitlock (citing Koch) 88/89 or (citing Michel) 87 (omitting 1 Cor 9:10 and 15:33); Frankenmölle 88. See Markus Tiwald, *Hebräer von Hebräern*, 102; Richard Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 92–95; Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 20; Dietrich-Alex Koch, *Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr-Paul Siebeck, 1986); Otto Michel, *Paulus und seine Bibel* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972 (1929)); Frankenmölle, *Wie geschrieben steht*.

¹⁵ Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 37.

interpreting Scripture.¹⁶ Annette Steudel has shown similarities in interpretive technique between Paul (in Romans 9–11) and the Qumran (especially the Damascus Document)¹⁷ and suggests that both take a contemporising approach, interpreting texts in light of their own times and communities.¹⁸ Paul’s dual hermeneutical key – God’s definitive and redeeming work in Jesus Christ, and Paul’s own call to be an apostle to the Gentiles – together with his focus on the community certainly place him closer to the Qumranic scholars than to the rabbis, who occupied themselves mainly with the halakha.¹⁹

The letter to the Romans contains more quotations from Scripture than any of Paul’s other letters – almost half his epistolary total. Most of them appear in three passages (4:1–25; 9:6–11:36; and 15:1–12),²⁰ and most refer to God’s plan to draw his chosen people from among both Jews and Gentiles/Greeks. Some fifteen of the forty-two quotations are direct quotations from the book of Isaiah: eight of these are marked καθὼς γέγραπται (2:24; 3:10; 9:33; 10:15; 11:8; 11:26; 14:11 [here, γέγραπται γάρ]; and 15:21); a further five carry a direct reference to Isaiah (9:27: Ἡσαΐας δὲ κράζει; 9:29: καθὼς προείρηκεν Ἡσαΐας; 10:16: Ἡσαΐας γὰρ λέγει; 10:20–21: Ἡσαΐας δὲ ἀποτολμᾷ καὶ λέγει/ λέγει; 15:12: Ἡσαΐας λέγει); one carries a reference to ‘Scripture’ (10:11: λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή); and one almost literal quotation is without any reference (11:34, which together with the following verse forms a composite quotation; 11:35 is a free paraphrase of Job 41:11 [LXX 41:3]). Most of the quotations from Isaiah are to be found in chapters 9–11, where Paul discusses the fate and salvation of Israel. In some cases (3:10–18; 11:34–35), the quotations are composites from Isaiah and other books; some (9:33; 11:26) refer to more than one place in Isaiah.

¹⁶ Stanley and Ellis come to the same conclusion. Changing a phrase or a word, using a different context, making grammatical changes, adding words, or emphasising one’s own ideas were all common practice for authors working with texts in the first century, not only within Judaism but within Antiquity in general. In this context, Ellis refers to midrash.

¹⁷ Annette Steudel, ‘Die Texte aus Qumran als Horizont für Römer 9–11. Israel-Theologie, Geschichtsbetrachtung, Schriftauslegung’, in *Between Gospel and Election. Explorations in the Interpretation of Romans 9–11*, ed. Florian Wilk and J. Ross Wagner (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 111–120.

¹⁸ For example, they both (Rom 9–11 and 11Q 15) update or contemporise Is 52:7, although in different ways.

¹⁹ Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 237.

²⁰ Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture*, 142–143.

The quotations cover the whole of the book of Isaiah: eight are from first Isaiah, six from second Isaiah, and three from third Isaiah; two are composites: 9:33 (both from first Isaiah) and 11:26 (from third and first). According to Shum, Romans chapters 1–8 are strongly inspired by second or ‘Deutero’ Isaiah, especially the fourth Servant song,²¹ but the direct quotations refer to both Isaiah 52:5 and 59:7–8. It is impossible to agree with Shum’s interpretation, particularly his comments regarding the fourth song, because although elsewhere (10:16; 15:21) Paul does refer directly to the song, what is uppermost in his mind is not the fate of the Servant but the Gentiles’ acceptance of the gospel.

Typical of his time, Paul treats the quotations from Isaiah somewhat freely and sees the ‘inspiration’ of Scripture not in its literal accuracy but in its dynamic power: through a particular Scripture, and through Paul as his ‘inspired’ instrument, God speaks into the situation of the day.²² Filled with the Holy Spirit and chosen to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles, Paul feels called to interpret the Word of God, a calling he fulfils – unlike his Jewish rabbinic contemporaries – filled with the Spirit of Christ.

The quotations from Isaiah can be divided into three sections along the lines of the structure of the letter itself: chapters 1–8, chapters 9–11, and chapters 12–15.

Part I: Chapters 2 and 3

1. *Rom 2:24 (Is 52:5)*

The first quotation appears towards the end of Paul’s introductory remarks, where from 2:17 he has been highlighting the discrepancy between the teaching and practice of those who know and teach the law but fail to live according to its precepts. He thus establishes a negative ‘type’ of a Jewish teacher of the law or member of the Jewish community who is nonetheless a transgressor of that law. To support his argument that such behaviour can bring only destruction, Paul uses a modified quotation from Isaiah 52:5. Here, Isaiah is recounting the Lord’s word to the Jews in exile, in the diaspora, which is a result of their unfaithfulness and which leads to Israel, and also therefore the

²¹ Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 177–201.

²² Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 406.

name of the Lord, being held in contempt among the nations.²⁵ The original context is God's condemnation of those who oppress Jewish exiles, so the statement has an encouraging sense. Paul is speaking not about the Jewish diaspora, however, but about hypocritical behaviour, which he puts on the same level as bringing shame on the name of God.²⁴ He updates Isaiah's words by changing the prophet's statement of compassion on Israel into a judgement,²⁵ and does so in the sense of Ezekiel 36:20. There is no direct reference to Isaiah: Paul simply says, 'as it is written', which less knowledgeable readers might at least have understood as referring to a word of Scripture.

For Wilk, this quotation is key (*doppelt hervorgehobener*; double highlighted) as it enables Paul to prove from Scripture that the Jews stood in a state of sin and to show what that sin consisted of.²⁶

2. Rom 3:10–18 (Ps 14:1–3 [LXX 13:1–3]; Ps 5:9 [MT and LXX 5:10]; Ps 140:3 [MT 140:4; LXX 139:4]; Ps 10:7 [LXX 9:28]; Is 59:7–8; Ps 36:1 [MT 36:2; LXX 35:2])

This whole passage is one long quotation from Scripture (mostly laments from the Psalms); verses 15–17 are an adapted quotation from Isaiah 59:7–8, a reference to Israel's sin against the Lord. Paul's purpose here is to show the universal nature of sin – that it affects and infects both Jew and Gentile – and he carefully weaves together statements that paint a vivid picture of human wickedness and impurity. Unlike his predecessors, Paul removes any distinction between the 'righteous' and the 'unrighteous': human depravity is universal. A similarly critical perspective can be found in the Qumran Hodayot (see 1 QH 9:14–15), although here it is part of a prayer that issues from the conviction of having been chosen by God, which significantly changes the context.²⁷

Again, the passage is introduced with the general 'as it is written', which leads us to question the degree to which Paul's readers would

²⁵ Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer*, 4th ed. (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlaganstalt, 2012), 81.

²⁴ Paul uses the Greek text, which differs from the Hebrew. See Heinrich Schlier, *Der Römerbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1977), 87.

²⁵ Brendan Byrne, *Romans* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996), 101.

²⁶ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 391.

²⁷ Pollman describes Paul's approach to quoting Scripture as Dekontextualisierung. See Ines Pollman, *Gesetzeskritische Motive im Judentum und die Gesetzeskritik des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 198.

have been able to distinguish the various parts of this lengthy quotation and determine their provenance. Shum suggests that in chapters 1–8, Paul is drawing a parallel between the figure of Jesus and the suffering Servant of the Lord, especially in relation to his solidarity with the many.²⁸ Although there is no doubt that Paul knew these passages and knew how they were interpreted with respect to Christ, in Romans this is not his main idea. Romans 4:25 could be seen as a reference to Isaiah 53:6, but the relationship here is one of meaning not lexis;²⁹ Romans 5:6,8b (Is 53:8) and 5:19b (Is 53:11) could be viewed in a similar way. His audience is unlikely to have understood it as a reference to Isaiah; it was more likely taken as a traditional interpretation of the meaning of Jesus’ death on the cross.

A summary of the use of quotations from Isaiah in Romans chapters 1–8

The first part of Romans contains two quotations from Isaiah. Unlike the original texts, the quotations aim to show that Jew and Gentile stand in the same relation to God, that is, as sinners. Paul makes use of the critical potential of the book of Isaiah with respect to the chosen nation: its exile among the Gentiles and departure from God’s laws have catastrophic consequences. The universal nature of sin – which removes any distinction between the ‘righteous’ and the ‘unrighteous’ – creates a new arena for God’s redeeming work.⁵⁰

Part II: Chapters 9–11

Romans 9:27–33 forms a de facto whole and includes three quotations from the book of Isaiah. All are connected to the prophet Hosea, and all help Paul cement his argument regarding faith in God’s redeeming work in Christ, which he presents as the fulfilment of God’s promises and the only possible way to salvation.

²⁸ Ibid., 202.

²⁹ Partial literary agreement is only in the use of the verb *παραδίδωμι*.

⁵⁰ In my view, Shum’s insistence that Paul’s references to the universal nature of sin and the salvific role of Jesus’ death are an elaboration of Isaiah’s fourth Servant song is not sufficiently grounded.

3. *Rom 9:27–28 (Is 10:22–23; an echo of Is 28:22 is also possible*⁵¹)

The quotation from Isaiah follows one from Hosea (Rom 9:25–26), which is introduced with a clear reference to the prophet. Hosea's words 'my people' and 'not my people', originally intended to mean Israel, are taken up by Paul and applied to the Gentiles.⁵²

Paul introduces his reference to Isaiah (10:22–23) with an unusual formula: Isaiah is 'crying out'. A number of changes are made from the Greek of the original: 'people' is replaced by 'the number of sons'⁵³ (LXX; NRSV has 'children of Israel') and the end is shortened; 'God' is replaced by 'the Lord'; the reference to destruction and the righteous is omitted; and 'the whole land' is changed to 'on the earth' (possibly influenced by Is 28:22).

The message of Isaiah's original prophecy was both negative – or at least cautionary – and positive: it is not possible to build upon the multitude as it can be reduced to a minimum because of Israel's unbelief, but this 'minimum' will be saved by the Lord; punishment will thus result in justice and the fulfilment of God's plan. Paul uses the verses in a similar sense but interprets them Christologically. He does not develop the idea of the saved 'remnant' and the 'descendants' (Rom 9:29; NRSV has 'survivors') but emphasises the resolute nature of God's decision concerning the Gentiles, who together with the remnant of Israel will become God's people.

4. *Rom 9:29 (Is 1:9)*

Like the previous quotation, here we have the central concept of the 'remnant', the bearer of hope despite the punishment that has fallen upon Israel because of their unfaithfulness in not believing God in Jesus Christ. This remnant, to which he, Paul, also belongs, and through which Israel has the hope of salvation, has believed and been saved. Paul's use of the quotation corresponds to the original intention of the statement from Is 1:9, but he extends the interpretive context to include the Gentiles.

⁵¹ Because of the very different content, Shum suggests the verse is no more than a 'linguistic inspiration'. See Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 211.

⁵² See a similar treatment in 1 Peter 2:10.

⁵³ Shum suggests that Paul does so to avoid confusion with Hosea (where 'laos' applies to the Gentiles; in Isaiah it applies to Israel) or is quoting by heart. See Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 207.

Wilk considers the quotations from Romans 9:27–29 especially important (*mehrfach hervorgehobene*; highlighted multiple times) as they serve to emphasise the argument of 9:6–26 and prepare the way for the message of the verses that follow in 9:30–10:3. The salvation of the remnant ‘represents a temporary and limited fulfilment of [God’s] promise and guarantees its application to the whole of Israel’.⁵⁴

5. *Rom 9:33 (Is 28:16; 8:14)*

This verse is a composite of two passages from Isaiah with the common theme of ‘stone’; a similar passage can be found in 1 Peter 2:6–8. Some scholars (Koch and Dodd, for example) believe that the combination is a pre-Pauline tradition (Koch oral; Dodd written)⁵⁵ and that Paul is therefore quoting from Isaiah on the basis of an existing text; the quotation is introduced with the general ‘as it is written’. Shum is certain that Paul is quoting directly from a scroll of Isaiah he might have had access to in Corinth.⁵⁶ The passage concerns the rejection of human attempts to achieve their salvation without regard to God. It is not completely clear, however, if Isaiah’s stone was a reference to God or the temple:⁵⁷ in Isaiah 28:16, the prophet is speaking primarily about the foundation of a new temple; in 8:14 the ‘stone’ is the Lord God who dwells in the temple.

Paul is using the quotation to show that by trusting in its own efforts, Israel failed to fulfil all righteousness and so attain the goal of the Law: it rejected Jesus Christ, who is the culmination of the Law (see Rom 10:4), and therefore missed the will of God, while the Gentiles took hold of righteousness through faith. Jesus Christ is the

⁵⁴ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 393. Similarly, Zeller suggests that Paul’s argument opens the space for an unexpected work of God among his addressees. This work transcends all limitations and ends in the salvation of both Jew and Gentile. The quotations Paul used can be read in this light. See Dieter Zeller, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1985), 181–182. See also Wagner, *Isaiah and Paul*, 109–117. The remnant Paul refers to in relation to Isaiah is not only the consequence of God’s wrath, but also hope for Israel. Gentiles are, however, included in this hope (according to Hosea’s prophecy): ‘Paul located contemporary Israel in the same position as Isaiah’s audience, between desolation and hope. In the present time, Israel suffers under the wrath of God and desperately needs to hear the message of reconciliation and release proclaimed by Isaiah – and now by Paul himself’ (117).

⁵⁵ Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 214.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 215–216.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 221.

cornerstone; a stumbling block. This stone is a judge, but for believers it also provides firm ground and certainty.³⁸

The quotation is important because it highlights the fundamental role of God's redeeming work in Christ, which also has an 'ent-scheidenden [decisive] Charakter' for Israel.³⁹

Faith in God's work in Christ, in salvation through Christ, leads to attainment of the righteousness that was sought through the Law. Here, Paul is thinking of more than simply the fulfilment of the instructions of the Law or the state of being convinced of one's own strength and probity.

6. Rom 10:11 (Is 28:16)

Quoting directly from the LXX (which differs from the MT), Paul returns to Isaiah 28:16 to drive home his point that salvation comes through faith in God's redeeming work in Christ. The quotation is used in a different context from 9:33. No one who believes in Jesus and professes him as the resurrected Lord will ever be put to shame. The stone is no longer a judge but the resurrection of Jesus Christ and faith in that resurrection. The universal aspect of the statement is emphasised by the pronoun 'no one' (πῶς), which is missing from the quotation in Romans 9:33.

It is clear from both quotations that Paul is applying Isaiah's monotheistic statements both to God and to Christ, the Lord, who is co-sovereign and co-unique with God the Father.⁴⁰ This quotation, which like 9:33 is introduced by a general reference to Scripture, emphasises the role played by faith in God's redeeming work accomplished in the resurrection of Jesus. The verse from Isaiah corresponds to the unmarked quotation from Joel 2:32 (LXX 3:5) in Romans 10:13. By repeating the reference to Isaiah 28:16, and 'based on his commitment to the validity of the gospel for both Jew and Gentile',⁴¹ Paul is able to anchor in Scripture his fundamental criterion, which is faith (πίστις).

³⁸ See also Frank Schleritt, 'Das Gesetz der Gerechtigkeit. Zur Auslegung von Römer 9:30–33', in *Between Gospel and Election*, ed. Wilk and Wagner, 271–297 (in summary 296–297).

³⁹ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 392.

⁴⁰ Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 223.

⁴¹ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 390.

7. Rom 10:15 (Is 52:7)

The original context of Isaiah's prophecy is the salvation of Zion/Israel. It is a prelude to the fourth Servant song, which promises the people's return and the renewal and flourishing of Jerusalem. In Romans 2:24, Paul had already quoted – and slightly adapted and re-contextualised – a verse from the same chapter (Is 52:5). Here, after the universalist statement of the previous verses, and in the joyful tone of Isaiah, he describes the proclamation of the gospel as the source of joy, hope and salvation. Paul's preacher – the one who is 'sent' – is probably himself, and the quotation confirms his mission to proclaim this same joyful message of salvation. The passage does not specify who the preachers are to be sent by, but the use of the passive voice and the context of the quotation strongly suggest the sender is God. Verses 14 and 15 stress the role of those who preach the gospel, Paul included. Paul omits the second part of Isaiah's original statement, however, and goes on to criticise Israel. The positive message becomes one of judgement: despite the best efforts of the preachers, the message was rejected by the majority of the people (Israel). The promise of salvation in Isaiah 52:1–12 is followed by the fourth Servant song, which speaks of Israel's rejection of the chosen Servant. Again, we must assume that Paul knew this passage and was familiar with the contrast between the Lord's redeeming work in the Servant/Christ and those who did not accept him. It is clear from the following verse, however, that his main subject is the rejection of the joyful message. To sum up, the quotation, which is introduced by the general 'as it is written', emphasises the role of the gospel herald sent by God and the nature of the message that brings peace and joy.⁴²

8. Rom 10:16 (Is 53:1)

Paul introduces the quotation with a direct reference to the book of Isaiah. Although the verse is from the fourth Servant song, the main theme is not the Servant but the contrast between the unbelief of Israel and the faith of the Gentiles. Paul was undoubtedly aware of the parallel between the fate of the Lord's Servant and Jesus, and that it was difficult for Israel to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, but his main concern is faith – or the lack of it – and the disobedience of the Jews rather than

⁴² Unlike Wilk, who plays down its importance. See Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 389.

the fate of Jesus as such; he is once again emphasising the unbelief of (most of) Israel.⁴⁵

9. Rom 10:20–21 (Is 65:1–2)

By opening the quotation with Ἡσαΐας δὲ ἀποτολμᾷ καὶ λέγει (NRSV has ‘Isaiah is so bold as to say’), Paul emphasises not only the importance of the message of this verse but also Isaiah’s courage to speak the words God gave him.⁴⁴ Isaiah boldly delivers the Lord’s proclamation of the destruction of the chosen people – especially the leaders – and the salvation of those who had been on the periphery but are now those from whom he will create a new and obedient nation. The Greek text of Isaiah 65:1–2 plays with the difference between ἔθνος (Gentiles) and λαός, that is, between the ‘people’ (the nations) to whom the Lord God has revealed himself and the (chosen) people who are unfaithful and rebellious and do not respond to God’s pleas (‘all day long I have held out my hands’) and continue to follow the path of inequity.⁴⁵ Uppermost in Isaiah’s mind was the chosen people: his words are words of warning, announcing judgement, but at the same time they are words that promise a new reality and God’s faithfulness.

It is interesting that Paul does not quote here the part of the verse that contains a direct reference to the ‘ethnos’ (1b); he quotes only 65:1a and 65:2a. In every case, Paul reads this passage from Is 65:1–2 in light of God’s election of the Gentiles in contrast to the unbelief of the Jews, and prepares the ground for explaining the role of the Gentiles – and their relation to Israel – in the history of salvation.⁴⁶ The passage opens with a question concerning faith in the message that is being proclaimed (Rom 10:16; Is 53:1) and closes by stating that Israel ignored the joyful message of the gospel because of its ‘historically documented’ deafness to God’s call, God’s offers. Isaiah reproaches the people for their wrongdoing, idolatry and wickedness; Paul is not concerned about this, ‘only’ about the rejection of God’s offer in Christ, which, paradoxically, was taken up by the Gentiles.

⁴⁵ Wilk also notes the use of the first-person plural in the complaint about Israel. See *ibid.*, 391.

⁴⁴ Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 225.

⁴⁵ Shum interprets verse 1 in light of Dt 32:21. See Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 229–231. Paul quotes it in the previous verse but changes the repeated αὐτοῦς to ὑμᾶς.

⁴⁶ Throughout chapters 9–11, Paul refers to the Jewish people using the traditional and theologically significant ‘Israel’ or ‘Israelites’. The only exceptions are ἐξ Ἰουδαίων (9:24) and Ἰουδαίου (10:12), which are fixed phrases.

Romans chapter 10 is Paul's attempt to solve the mystery of why Israel ignored God's voice – the gospel – even though Christ is the goal of the very Law that Israel had itself so zealously sought to fulfil. They failed to attain true righteousness – full communion with God – because, preoccupied with a sense of their own righteousness, they did not hear God's new word, while the Gentiles heard and believed.

Wilk suggests that these quotations from Isaiah, and their relation to Deuteronomy 32:21, are of special importance because (a) they introduce Paul's mission (which some Judeo-Christians found so difficult to accept) to proclaim God's grace towards Israel and his redeeming work on their behalf, and (b) they create a bridge between Paul's arguments in Romans 10:1–24 and those in 11:1–24(27).⁴⁷

10. Rom 11:8 (Is 29:10)

The quotation is introduced with the general formula 'as it is written', but other than the central themes of 'a sluggish spirit' and 'eyes that would not see', very little remains of what Isaiah originally wrote. The quotation may also be an echo Deuteronomy 29:4,⁴⁸ which likewise speaks of God not giving Israel eyes to see and contains a reference to 'this day'.

Blind eyes, deaf ears, and hard hearts are popular themes in the Old and New Testaments (see also Mk 8:18 and parallel; Jn 12:40) and generally denote unfaithfulness towards God. The quotation from Isaiah 29:10 is part of a tirade against Israel which nonetheless concludes with a promise to the humble and the lost. Paul broadens the meaning of Isaiah's words – and of other possible references to the Old Testament – to explain why Israel did not accept the gospel and the Gentiles did. In the previous verse, however, in accordance with the continuation of Isaiah's prophecy into a promise to the humble and the lost, Paul states that although (most of) Israel failed to reach its desired goal, this goal was reached by those who were elect. By the 'elect', Paul is referring to those Jews, including Paul himself, who believed the gospel, and he quotes various examples and statements from Scripture to show that this 'remnant' was also designated, chosen, by God.

⁴⁷ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 393–394.

⁴⁸ See also Jer 5:21, Ez 12:2 and Is 6:9. The words of Dt 29:4 are addressed to those who were about to enter the promised land and are an appeal to be grateful to the Lord (the verse speaks of a lack of such gratitude and a lack of understanding concerning God's 'great wonders') and to observe the Law.

In both Isaiah and Romans, it is the Lord who stupefies the spirit and darkens the eyes of Israel; it is only the Lord, therefore, who can wake Israel from that same stupor. This is the thrust of what Paul is saying. It seems that the following quotation from Psalm 69:22–23 (LXX 68:22–23) is linked to the quotations from Deuteronomy and Isaiah mainly through the motif of eyes and the reference to God's acts.

Shum believes that Paul's focus is the verse from Deuteronomy (29:3), to which he added part of the verse from Isaiah (29:10).⁴⁹ Wilk sees the quotation as a composite, the specific purpose of which – especially the fragment from Isaiah – is to describe the situation and its consequences and create a basis for subsequent statements and explanations (Is 11:8c–10).⁵⁰ The loss of sight and hearing opens a space for God's work among the Gentiles and the consequent awakening of Israel through 'jealousy'.

11. Rom 11:26–27 (Is 59:20–21; 27:9)

These verses, a combination of two passages from Isaiah (59:20–21 and 27:9), are again introduced with the general 'as it is written'. Coming at the end of a long prophecy of judgement on Israel, the verses of Isaiah 59:20–21 bring the promise of salvation from the Lord, which will come despite the people's transgression. The Lord himself will come to Zion and re-establish justice; he will banish unrighteousness from Jacob. The initiative is all on the Lord's side, and this is a fulfilment of the covenant. Isaiah goes on to speak about the restoration of the glory and dignity of Israel/Jerusalem/Zion, the provider and guarantor of which is the Lord. The extra quotation from Isaiah 27:9 emphasises the forgiving of Jacob's sin. The context is similar: Jacob will be restored when he turns away from worshiping false gods. Both passages carry hints of eschatology.

In verse 26, Paul recalls the joyful vision of Jacob's restoration and addresses the question of the fate of all Israel, not only the elect remnant. In verse 27, he reflects on the forgiveness of sins as a fulfilment of the covenant. Although not stated explicitly, what is in view is acceptance of God's redeeming work in Christ Jesus. Christ is the fulfilment of the covenant; through him sin is removed from Israel and from all humanity.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 234.

⁵⁰ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 390.

⁵¹ From this perspective, it would seem appropriate to interpret Rom 10:4 in the sense that Jesus is the goal, the fulfilment of the Law. Romans chapters 9–11 are not about

Stanley suggests that the link between these two passages had been made before Paul, most likely in oral tradition;⁵² Shum sees the link as Paul's.⁵³ More significant than the question of origin is the change of preposition: the Lord will come ἔνεκεν (to) Zion in Isaiah 59:20, but ἐκ (from or out of) in Romans 11:26.⁵⁴ Stanley considers this shift also as pre-Pauline, even Judaic, and that it has to do with eschatological expectation – the expression ἐκ Σιών in connection with the awaited salvation from the Lord can be found elsewhere (Ps 14:7 [LXX 13:7]; 110:2 [LXX 109:2]; Jl 3:16 [LXX 4:16]; Am 1:2; Ob 21; Mi 4:2); Shum considers even this change Pauline.⁵⁵ Another fundamental question surrounds the significance that should be attributed to this quotation. Is it, as Shum believes, simply a 'proof-text', a quotation that confirms what had already been said, or does it represent a fundamental statement about the future salvation of Israel? In Isaiah, the saviour who comes to – or from – Zion is undoubtedly God himself. Some scholars understand the statement as referring to the salvation of Israel *in toto*, outside the gospel and by special intervention from God.⁵⁶ It is true that in chapter 11, Paul does not refer to salvation through Christ, but from what we know of his view of salvation, the existence of two paths is hardly acceptable – the parable of the olive tree in Romans 11:16–24 also speaks of a single path. It must be acknowledged, however, that a door is open: Paul's only certainty – and here he relies on Isaiah – is that all Israel will be saved. The composite quotation carries extra weight by coming at the end of a passage about the Gentiles and is clearly linked to the quotations in Romans 9:6–13, which speak of the coming of a saviour (9:9), and especially about Jacob (9:13). With this quotation and the comment that follows, Paul concludes his discourse on Israel's ambivalent relationship to salvation in Christ and God's plan to use Israel to benefit the Gentiles by stressing God's faithfulness, which will be manifested in the final salvation of all Israel. In

the opposition between Law and faith, but between the salvific role of the Law and salvation through Christ, that is, the rejection of God's saving work in Christ (the 'hardening' of Israel) and God's plan of salvation.

⁵² Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 170.

⁵³ Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 236.

⁵⁴ The Hebrew text uses the preposition preposition לְ (לְכִּיּוֹן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי). The preposition ἔνεκεν can be understood to mean 'because of'.

⁵⁵ For a discussion on this subject, see Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 238–239.

⁵⁶ For a list of works, see *ibid.*, 242; Pamela Eisenbaum's *Paul Was Not a Christian. The Original Message of a Misunderstood Apostle* (New York: HarperOne, 2009) could now be added to such a list.

the face of Gentile-Christian conceit (11:25a), Paul clearly shows that God's promise is the final word on the 'question of the fate of Israel' and by fulfilment of this promise, the election of Israel will reach its goal.⁵⁷ Any possible discussion concerning Israel's fate is then rounded off with the next quotation, which refers to the ungraspable nature of God's sovereignty.

12. Rom 11:34–35 (Is 40:13; Job 41:11 [MT and LXX 41:3])

The final three – rhetorical – questions address the subject of God's sovereignty. Without pointing it out, Paul quotes here almost word for word from Isaiah 40:13 – with a possible echo of Job 41:11 (LXX 41:3) – in a hymn-like doxology that expresses the greatness of God and the unsearchable nature of his ways. Paul is either quoting by heart from his great knowledge of Isaiah or using Isaiah's language automatically, naturally. This ability to quote at will enables him to adapt Scriptures according his purpose. Elsewhere, in Romans 11:35, he omits the end of Isaiah 40:13; in 1 Corinthians 2:16, he leaves out the middle section.

A summary of the use of Isaiah in Romans chapters 9–11

1. Paul uses a profusion of references to Isaiah; the whole book is clearly very familiar to him. Most of the quotations in this section announce God's judgement on Israel for its unfaithfulness. This is not merely rhetoric; it represents the transposition of judgement and accusation onto those Jewish contemporaries of Paul who rejected – or did not accept – the gospel.

2. Paul is also influenced by the promise and eschatological vision of the salvation of Israel as narrated in Isaiah and from these prophecies argues for the final salvation of Israel and proclaims the unchanging nature of God's election and sovereignty.

3. The book of Isaiah serves Paul not only as proof of his convictions but as a source of inspiration and a lens through which he seeks to tackle the tricky subject of the relationship between God's faithfulness to and election and salvation of Israel and the Gentiles' acceptance of God's redeeming work in Jesus.

⁵⁷ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 392.

Part III: Chapters 12–15

After a brief interlude, quotations from Isaiah re-appear in chapters 14 and 15.

13. Rom 14:11 (Is 45:23; 49:18?)

In this parenetic section of his letter, Paul uses Isaiah to support his comments concerning the conflict over dietary habits and observation of the religious calendar: the conflict between ‘the weak and the strong’. Here, Isaiah helps Paul emphasise that the Lord is the judge to whom all will be held accountable, and that we should be mindful of this in our relationships with others. There is no direct relation to the broader context of Isaiah chapter 45, only the emphasis on God’s sovereignty, which is to be respected because God, not man, is the Lord of all; God alone is the final judge of human conduct and all will answer to him for their deeds. Isaiah 45 concerns God’s sovereign and eschatological offer, which will ultimately be acknowledged by everybody: Israel and the Gentiles.

The opening “‘As I live,” says the Lord’, which follows Paul’s ‘it is written’, does not appear in the passage Paul is quoting but is widespread in the Old Testament (Is 49:18, for example).⁵⁸ Relationships in the community are under God’s (the Lord’s) authority: belonging to Christ, coming under his rule, is to be the defining criterion for considerate and respectful behaviour in a community of the weak and the strong.⁵⁹ In verse 9, Paul uses the name ‘Lord’ for Christ, and is clearly using it as a title for God, the Lord; because the quotation is introduced with the formula ‘it is written’, Paul must by ‘Lord’ mean God. The ambiguous use of titles began in verses 3 (‘God’) and 4 (‘Lord’) and re-appears in verses 6 and 8; verse 9 clearly ascribes the title ‘Lord’ to Christ; verses 10 and 12 speak of God’s judgement, from which we understand that the whole passage, including the quotation, is probably

⁵⁸ Koch, *Schrift als Zeuge*, 184–185. Koch suggests that the beginning of the quotation from Rom 14:11 was taken from Is 49:18. The first-person singular, ‘as I live, says the Lord’, appears often in Ezekiel, once only in Isaiah (49:18), and once in Jeremiah (22:24), Zephaniah (2:9) and Numbers (14:28). The third-person singular, ‘as the Lord lives’, is widespread in the Old Testament. Stuhlmacher sees this reference as an indication that Paul is quoting from memory. See Peter Stuhlmacher, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 200.

⁵⁹ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 389–390.

intentionally ambiguous.⁶⁰ We find a wholly Christocentric appropriation of Isaiah 45:23b in Philippians 2:10–11.

14. Rom 15:12 (Is 11:10)

This quotation from Isaiah follows the short series of quotations from the Psalms and Deuteronomy which begin in verse 9 and give praise to the Lord for his mercy. There is something of a discontinuity – an ideological shift – between the quotations from Psalms/Deuteronomy and the verse from Isaiah. From explicit praise of the Lord, attention moves to the ‘root of Jesse’, who is the hope of the Gentiles. From a focus on the problem of the weak and the strong in the community, Paul moves on to praise God’s generosity in Christ, who gave himself freely for all.

The quotations from Scripture culminate in the quotation from Isaiah 11:10, which is introduced by an explicit reference to the prophet. Paul’s aim is to show his readers the greatness of God’s offer in Jesus, the pinnacle and model of God’s love, so that they may be moved to a similar generosity. God’s positive move towards his people presupposes an appropriate response. The quotation from Isaiah seeks to emphasise what the readers have received as Gentiles. The promise to Israel applies also to them, so they should behave towards each other in an appropriate manner. The quotations provide a positive motivation for Paul’s readers: Jesus Christ is the promised shoot from the stump of Jesse, the Messiah, the sovereign Lord, the ruler over the nations and the hope of salvation for the Gentiles; he is the Christ who ‘did not please himself’ (verse 3), who unites all people. The community should therefore come together in praise of God. Paul is also preparing the way for the conclusion to the letter in 15:14–33.⁶¹

15. Rom 15:21 (Is 52:15)

Using the common formula ‘as it is written’, Paul quotes a verse from the fourth Servant song.⁶² Even here, however, his subject is not the Servant’s suffering applied to Jesus but the proclamation of the gos-

⁶⁰ Wilckens sees the intentional intermingling of Christocentrism and theocentrism as typical Pauline theology. See Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer III* (Zürich-Braunschweig, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benzinger Verlag, Neukirchener Verlag, 1989), 85.

⁶¹ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 394.

⁶² He has already quoted from it in 10:16.

pel by Paul himself in areas his mission is yet to reach. There is no doubt that the content of Paul's proclamation is God's redeeming work in the death and resurrection of Jesus (which corresponds to the fate of the Servant), and that this is something that should evoke wonder in believers, but what Paul has primarily in mind is his mission to those who are yet to hear the gospel. Any suggestion that he had the whole song in mind is purely speculative.⁶⁵

What is significant is the placing of the quotation towards the end of the parenetic part of the letter and its use in the context of Paul's apostolic ministry. Paul is anxious to legitimatise his missionary activity, including his plan to carry out a mission in Spain, and is at the same time seeking to open a door for himself to the Roman Christian community and to define his relationship to it.⁶⁴

A summary of the use of quotations from Isaiah in Romans chapters 14 and 15

In chapters 14 and 15, where he addresses the issue of 'the weak and the strong' in the Christian community, Paul uses passages from Isaiah to emphasise the unity of Christian believers, Jew and Gentile, a unity founded on God's redeeming work in Christ, the fulfilment of God's promises, and the attitude that follows from it: gratitude towards God (praising him together) and consideration towards one another (respecting each other's differences). Paul also seeks to legitimise his own mission, including his mission further west, and his standing among the Christian community in Rome.

Summary

Wilk distinguishes four main roles for the quotations from and allusions to Isaiah in Paul's letters.

1. *Situational*. They serve the apostle as reference points in difficult situations and help him explain the attitudes and behaviour appropriate to those who profess faith in Christ (Romans chapters 9–11).

2. *Compositional*. They provide structure to the letters (Rom 9:27–29; 15:12).

⁶⁵ Shum detects the influence of this song on the whole letter: 4:25; 5:1; 5:18–19; 8:32. See Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 256.

⁶⁴ Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 392.

3. *Argumentational.* At critical points, they crystallise Paul's thinking and help him move his argument forward (Rom 9:33; 10:16; 11:8; 15:21).

4. *Hermeneutical.* They provide an interpretive lens for other, related quotations from Scripture (Rom 11:8).⁶⁵

Any single quotation can fulfil more than one of these purposes, and it is in the letter to the Romans that the four aspects are applied to their fullest extent.

The book of Isaiah clearly played a key role for Paul, especially when writing (or dictating) his letter to the Romans, and especially with respect to two fundamental and mutually connected subjects: (i) the composition and unity of a Christian community composed of both Jew and Gentile. This unity and diversity are rooted in God's redeeming work in Christ, which because of the universal nature of sin applies to all people equally; (ii) God's faithfulness in saving Israel, and his plan to redeem all people, whether Jew or Gentile. Related to these themes is Paul's presentation of himself as a representative of the 'remnant' which already has a share in salvation, and of his mission to the Gentiles, through which he is carrying out God's work. As Paul's mission progresses, we detect in his letters, from 1 Thessalonians to Romans, a growing interest in Isaiah and the increasing significance of the book for both his work and his theological reflection: 'As the culmination of the Pauline reception of Isaiah, this letter also constitutes its sum.'⁶⁶ Paul regards himself not only as one who preaches redemption for Gentiles but also, in the cosmic drama of redemption, as a 'chosen instrument through whom God will provoke his own people to jealousy and so effect their salvation'.⁶⁷

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⁶⁵ Ibid., 399–401.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 404.

⁶⁷ Wagner, *Isaiah and Paul*, 359.

ISAIANIC VARIATIONS IN THE LETTER OF JAMES

J Ú L I U S P A V E L Č Í K

ABSTRACT

The article treats two short texts in the Letter of James, namely 5:4 and 1:10–11, relevant for an investigation of the possible allusions of this New Testament writing to the Greek version of the book of the prophet Isaiah. Comparing them with the corresponding Isaianic parallels leads to the conclusion that the author of the letter was well acquainted with them and used them in adapted form in his new theological and ethical-pragmatical context.

Key words

Letter of James; Isaiah; Sabaoth; Rich; Flower; Grass

DOI: 10.14712/25363598.2020.9

It is undeniable that the author of the Letter of James had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament. This is evident not only from the direct quotations from the Torah¹ and the biblical characters explicitly mentioned (Abraham, Rahab, Job, Elijah), but also from many other allusions, mainly to Old Testament prophetic and sapiential literature.² There is a consensus of scholars about the Old Testament quotations in the Letter of James being taken from the

¹ See below.

² See very good overviews in Joseph B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James. The Greek Text with Introduction Notes and Comments* (London: Macmillan and Co., Third Edition, 1910), cx–cxviii; Joseph Chaine, *L'épître de Saint Jacques* (Paris: J. Gabalda et Fils, 1927), XLI–LXIV.

Septuagint.⁵ Against this background, we are interested in the manner and the measure of the use of the Greek translation of the book of the prophet Isaiah by the author of this New Testament writing.

Beyond the relatively short notes in commentaries on the Letter of James, there is no special study of this problem except for Kenneth Fitzhugh Morris' dissertation,⁴ whose conclusion is that 'the composer of James was well-enough acquainted with the Septuagint of Isaiah that some of its striking phrases, e. g. ἄνθος χόρτου in Jas. 1:10 and εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου σαβαώθ in Jas. 5:4, clung to his memory, but his most intimate knowledge was of the Targum of Isaiah'.⁵ The topic is also attractive because of the fact that the editors in the monograph *Isaiah in the New Testament* did not intentionally include the chapter dedicated to the representation of this prophet in the Letter of James.⁶

This article does not claim to treat exhaustively all the possible allusions of James to the book of the prophet Isaiah.⁷ Some of them would surely be very interesting, but a careful, thorough, and comprehensive evaluation of their relevance would exceed the scope of a single academic study. Therefore, this article pursues just two loci of the Letter of James, namely 5:4 and 1:10–11, which can be considered highly relevant for the investigation of the author's acquaintance with the Isaianic thoughts. These two loci will be compared with the LXX texts of Isaiah 5:9 and 40:6–7 respectively as their possible quotation sources. The goal of this comparison is to establish the way in which the author of the letter uses the text of Isaiah to support his argument. I will catalogue and evaluate both the similarities and the differences between the verses in James and the corresponding verses of Isaiah. Attention

⁵ James Hardy Ropes, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), 25–26; Jean Cantinat, *Les épîtres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1973), 17; Rainer Metzner, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2017), 32–33; Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James* (New York/London/New Delhi/Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2013), 51–54.

⁴ Kenneth Fitzhugh Morris, *An Investigation of Several Linguistic Affinities between the Epistle of James and the Book of Isaiah* (A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, 1964).

⁵ Morris, *Investigation*, 253.

⁶ Cf. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, *Isaiah in the New Testament* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 5.

⁷ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Letter of James. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 358–359 lists more than 90 references to Isa. The most full-range discussion about this topic is presented in chapter 'The Evidence for Jacobean Affinities with Isaiah' in Morris, *Investigation*, 144–187.

will be especially paid not only to the wording but also to the context as well as to the purpose of the short texts in question.

In the first part of the article, I am going to present short commentaries of the phrases used by the author of the letter in order to introduce his Old Testament quotations explicitly. This is the starting point for further reflections based primarily on the fact that the 28th edition of Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece*⁸ italicises the two other phrases in the Letter of James as direct quotations from the Old Testament: Jas 5:4 (εἰς τὰ ὅτα κυρίου σαβαώθ) with reference to Isa 5:9 and Jas 5:5 (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς) with reference to Jer 12:3. However, in neither case can we find any introduction reminding the reader of the direct Old Testament quotation as in the other cases. Therefore, in the second part of this study I am going to seek the answer to the question about James' knowledge and deliberate use of these Isaianic words in Jas 5:4. In the third part, I am going to deal in a similar manner with the verses Jas 1:10–11, which show a striking similarity to the passage in Isa 40:6–7.

Part I

The starting point of the present analysis is to show the way the author of the letter deals with the Old Testament quotations:

1. *Jas 2:8 (Lev 19:18)*

Εἰ μέντοι νόμον τελεῖτε βασιλικὸν κατὰ τὴν γραφήν· ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτὸν, καλῶς ποιεῖτε

‘If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”, you are doing well.’⁹

Using the phrase κατὰ τὴν γραφήν – quite unique in the New Testament¹⁰ – the author of the letter clearly confirms his recognition of the authority of the commandment of Lev 19:18, yet in a specific way. The other direct Old Testament quotations in the Letter of James are

⁸ Barbara Aland et al., *Novum Testamentum Graece*. 28th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012).

⁹ Unless otherwise stated, all English translations of both the Hebrew Old Testament and of the New Testament are taken from the *English Standard Version* (2011) in BibleWorks 9.0.

¹⁰ In this form it can be found only in this verse. There is a similar phrasing in plural in the 1 Cor 15:3.4 κατὰ τὰς γραφάς.

introduced by various forms of the verb λέγειν, not by words with the root γραφ- (e.g., γραφή, γέγραπται), which is the usual occurrence in other New Testament writings. Furthermore, in two other verses the preposition κατά with accusative¹¹ is used with its lexical meaning ‘in line with, in accordance with, in keeping with’¹² (James 2:17; 3:9).¹³ Based on these facts, the phrase κατὰ τὴν γραφήν can be more aptly understood in the normative sense (‘if you really fulfill the royal law in accordance with the statement of the Scripture’), not as an introduction of the direct quotation (‘if you really fulfill the royal law which reads’).¹⁴

2. *Jas 2:11a (Deut 5:17-18, resp. Exod 20:13,15)*¹⁵

ὁ γὰρ εἰπὼν· μὴ μοιχεύσης, εἶπεν καί· μὴ φονεύσης.

‘For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, ‘Do not murder’.’

Deut 5:17–18 LXX (οὐ μοιχεύσεις οὐ φονεύσεις) is the closest parallel because of the prohibition of adultery which immediately precedes the prohibition of murder.¹⁶ Different forms¹⁷ would be indicative of an allusion of this Old Testament passage rather than their direct quotations.¹⁸ As for both the order of the commandments and the verbal forms, James’ wording is exactly identical to that of Luke 18:20. As regards the order, it coincides with Rom 13:9 (οὐ μοιχεύσεις οὐ φονεύσεις), the forms of which are identical with those of Deut 5:17–18 LXX. In Matt 19:18 (οὐ φονεύσεις οὐ μοιχεύσεις) and Mark 10:19 (μὴ φονεύσης, μὴ μοιχεύσης), the commandments are listed in reverse order compared to that of the Hebrew (Masoretic) version of Deut 5:17–18.¹⁹

¹¹ It is used with the genitive in James 3:14 and 5:9 (meaning ‘against’).

¹² Frederick William Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 188.

¹³ This basic meaning is naturally modified in English translations with regard to the English phraseology. ESV translates Jas 2:17: ‘So also, *faith by itself*, if it does not have works, is dead.’ Jas 3:9: ‘With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made *in the likeness of God*.’ (Italics are mine.)

¹⁴ Cf. Johnson, *Letter*, 231; Patrick J. Hartin, *James* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2003), 121.

¹⁵ Cf. Július Pavelčík, “‘Dokonalý zákon slobody’ (Jak 1,25). K chápaniu zákona v Jakubovom liste,” *Studia Biblica Slovaca* 3, no. 2 (2011): 207–208.

¹⁶ In Exod 20:13–15 the prohibition of the stealing is inserted in between: οὐ μοιχεύσεις οὐ κλέψεις οὐ φονεύσεις.

¹⁷ The aorist subjunctive expressing the negative imperative in James; the future indicative in Deuteronomy.

¹⁸ Cain H. Felder, ‘Partiality and God’s Law: An Exegesis of James 2:1–13,’ *Journal of Religious Thought* 39 (1982–83): 63–64.

¹⁹ Cf. Johnson, *Letter*, 233.

3. *Jas 2:23 (Gen 15:6)*

ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφή ἢ λέγουσα· ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην καὶ φίλος θεοῦ ἐκλήθη.

‘The Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” – and he was called a friend of God.’

Although the term φίλος θεοῦ applied to Abraham is quite common in Jewish literature, the verbatim wording is not found anywhere in the Septuagint.²⁰

4. *Jas 4:5 (?)*

ἢ γραφή λέγει· πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ κατώκισεν ἐν ἡμῖν.

‘Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”?’

There are some interpretive problems with Jas 4:5 connected both with the question whether the quoted sentence is really present in the Old Testament and with the interpretation of the noun πνεῦμα being the subject or the object of the verb ἐπιποθεῖ. The opinion considering the human spirit²¹ being the subject seems to be more convincing. In this case, the verse speaks about God, who ‘caused this spirit to dwell’ in us and its presence in us can be a source of jealousy. The assumption that it is human jealousy it is concerned with here is supported by the contextual affinity with Jas 3:14–4:10.

5. *Jas 4:6 (Prov 3:34)*

διὸ λέγει²²· ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν.

‘Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble”.’

²⁰ Morris, *An Investigation*, 150–151; cf. Mayor, *The Epistle*, 105.

²¹ Cf. Wiard Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001), 272; Christoph Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 174; Rinaldo Fabris, *Lettera di Giacomo: Introduzione, versione, commento* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 2004), 281; Allison, *Commentary*, 621. Other commentators hold the God spirit to be the subject of the verb ἐπιποθεῖω, for example, Jacqueline Assaël and Élian Cuvillier, *L'Épître de Jacques* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2013), 252; Scot McKnight, *Letter of James* (Grand Rapids, Michigan / Cambridge, U. K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2011), 337–338.

²² Because of the immediate connection with 4:5 the subject of λέγει is γραφή.

Part II

Jas 5:4

ἰδοὺ ὁ μισθὸς τῶν ἐργατῶν τῶν ἀμησάντων τὰς χώρας ὑμῶν ὁ ἀπεστερημένος ἀφ' ὑμῶν κράζει, καὶ αἱ βοαὶ τῶν θερισάντων εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου σαβαῶθ εἰσεληλύθασιν.

‘Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.’

*Isa 5:9 LXX*²⁵

ἠκούσθη γὰρ εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου σαβαῶθ ταῦτα ἐὰν γὰρ γένωνται οἰκίαί πολλαί εἰς ἔρημον ἔσονται μεγάλαι καὶ καλαί καὶ οὐκ ἔσονται οἱ ἐνοικοῦντες ἐν αὐταῖς

‘For these things were heard in the ears of the Lord Sabaoth; for if houses become many, large and beautiful ones shall be desolate, and there shall be no inhabitants.’

The phrase εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου σαβαῶθ in this full form occurs in the Septuagint only in the aforementioned verse of the book of the prophet Isaiah. The very title κύριος σαβαῶθ in the Septuagint is both the semi-transcription and the semi-translation of the Hebrew *יהוה צבאות*, therefore, it can be found only where it depends upon the Masoretic text. Out of 240²⁴ occurrences of the term *יהוה צבאות* in the Hebrew Bible, 144 are in Isaiah and Jeremiah. Its most frequent Greek translation in LXX is κύριος παντοκράτωρ, less frequent is κύριος σαβαῶθ, and rarely κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων.²⁵ ‘All of these translations describe Yahweh as a deity of great power, taking Zebaoth element as a personal name, as a plural of an appellative with the meaning “power”.²⁶ The usual English translation of the *יהוה צבאות* (the plural of *צבא*, ‘army’) is ‘Lord of

²⁵ The text of the Septuagint is from Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta. Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979). All English translations of the Septuagint are taken from the *Electronic Edition of the New English Translation of the Septuagint* available at <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition>.

²⁴ Hans-Jürgen Zobel, ‘*יהוה צבאות*,’ in ThWAT VI, 879; Adam S. van der Woude, ‘*צבא*,’ in *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament II*, ed. E. Jenni and C. Westermann (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag / Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1976), 499.

²⁵ See references in Zobel, ‘*יהוה צבאות*,’ 878.

²⁶ Trygve N. D. Mettinger, ‘Yahveh Zebaoth,’ in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel Van Der Toorn, Bob Becking, Pieter W. Van Der Horst, Second Extensively Revised Edition (Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill / Grand Rapids, Michigan / Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 920.

hosts'. Modern translations of the Septuagint version normally retain a transcription of the word σαβαώθ ('Lord Sabaoth';²⁷ 'Herr Sabaoth';²⁸ 'Pán Sabaóth'²⁹).

There are in principle four possibilities of specifying the precise meaning of the ἰσχυρῶν: (a) the armies of Israel, (cf. 1 Sam 17:45); (b) the heavenly hosts, whether the hosts of stars or the heavenly council of Yahweh (cf. Ps 89:9); (c) the "domesticated" mythical forces of nature in Canaan; or (d) all creatures on earth and in the heavens (cf. Gen 2:1).³⁰

There are 64 occurrences of the Greek phrase κύριος σαβαώθ in the LXX, most of which (52) unquestionably occur in the book of the prophet Isaiah.³¹ This fact can be therefore regarded as a strong, unique feature of the Greek translation of this prophetic book.

Isa 5:9 belongs to the microcontext of the verses in Isa 5:8–10,³² where the prophet speaks about unjust and unlawful hoarding of property (5:8) going to be destroyed (5:9b–10) after the intervention of 'the Lord Sabaoth', because these things were heard in His ears (5:9a).³³ Although the 'rich' are not explicitly mentioned, it is evident that the statement is directed against rich landowners depriving their neighbours not only of their property, but also of their dignity.³⁴ For this reason Hades is waiting for them, as we can read in Isa 5:14 LXX, where the rich are explicitly referred to in the additional words which have no support in the Hebrew original: καὶ ἐπλάτυνεν ὁ ἄδης τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ διήνοιξεν τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ τοῦ μὴ διαλιπεῖν καὶ καταβήσονται οἱ ἔνδοξοι καὶ

²⁷ NETS, ad locos.

²⁸ *Septuaginta Deutsch. Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung*, ed. Wolfgang Kraus and Martin Karrer (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2009), ad locos.

²⁹ Ivana Vlková and Jana Plátová, *Izaiáš. Komentovaný překlad řecké septuagintní verze* (Praha: Vyšehrad, 2018), ad locos.

³⁰ Mettinger, 'Yahveh,' 920; cf. Zobel, 'ἰσχυρῶν,' 880–881; Woude, 'ἰσχυρῶν,' 504–506.

³¹ According to the statistics of BibleWorks.

³² This is embedded into the broader context of the six 'woes' (NETS: 'Ah') of 5:8–24 pronounced against various kinds of injustice. The much broader context of these 'woes' is framed by the chapters Isa 1–12 proclaiming the words both of the judgment and the salvation of God's people. Cf. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York; London; Toronto; Sydney; Auckland: Doubleday, 2000), 171–174.

³³ The Hebrew original contains a different wording: לַיהוָה הָיָה הַשְׁמָעָה, 'The Lord of hosts has sworn in my hearing'. Man/prophet, and not God is the listener here.

³⁴ Cf. Rudolf Kilian, *Jesaja 1–12* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1986), 42.

οὶ μεγάλοι καὶ οἱ πλούσιοι⁵⁵ καὶ οἱ λοιμοὶ αὐτῆς. ‘And Hades has enlarged its appetite⁵⁶ and opened its mouth without ceasing; and her⁵⁷ glorious ones and her great and her rich and her pestilent shall go down.’

The ‘rich’ are explicitly mentioned in the pericope 5:1–6 of the Letter of James and, analogous to Isa 5:8⁵⁸, their antisocial behaviour is a source of criticism, but now the case is their withholding of and not paying fair wages to those who had harvested their field (Jas 5:4).

There are three points common to these two biblical texts: (i) the phrase εἰς τὰ ὄψα κυρίου σαβαωθ,⁵⁹ anthropomorphically expressing the belief that God turns his attention to the complaints of the oppressed and afflicted by any kind of unjust treatment;⁴⁰ (ii) the topic of increasing the misery of the poor on the part of the rich (by the distraint of property or not paying the due wage) which can be called ‘the sins that cry to heaven’⁴¹ because they reach ‘the ears of the Lord Sabaoth’; (iii) some punishments of the rich to be expected (Isa 5:9–10,14; Jas 5:1–3,5b) describing the annihilation of their property unjustly hoarded.

Based on these similarities, regarding both the very wording and the contextual setting, Isa 5:9 LXX – perhaps as the only one of possible Isaianic references in the Letter of James – can aspire to the title of ‘the direct quotation of the prophet Isaiah’.⁴²

The present investigation also cannot omit another interesting potential parallel of the Old Testament with a similar reading, i.e.,

⁵⁵ There are only five occurrences of the word πλούσιος within the Septuagint translation of Isa 5:14; 32:9,15; 35:20; 55:9.

⁵⁶ *Septuaginta Deutsch. Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament. Band II: Psalmen bis Daniel*, ed. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011), 2517: ‘φυγή steht hier für 𐤇𐤃 ‘Schlund’ im Sinne von Begierde.’

⁵⁷ *Septuaginta Deutsch. Übersetzung*, 1235 notes: ‘Gen. Fem. Sg., bezogen wohl auf Judäa bzw. Jerusalem.’ Similarly, NETS ad locum.

⁵⁸ ‘Ah, those who join house to house and bring field next to field so that they may take something from their neighbor! Will you dwell alone on the earth?’ (NETS).

⁵⁹ The only other occurrence of the κύριος σαβαωθ can be found in the New Testament in Romans 9:29, where Isa 1:9 is quoted directly (καὶ εἰ μὴ κύριος σαβαωθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα ὡς Σοδομα ἃν ἐγενήθημεν καὶ ὡς Γομορρα ἃν ὁμοιωθήμεν). We can almost certainly rule out any kind of dependence of Jas 5:4 on Romans 9:29 on the basis of wholly different wording and particularly of the different thematic context. Morris, *Investigation*, 153–154: ‘The context is so entirely other than that of Jas. 5:4 that it is impossible to believe that the composer of James could have derived his phraseology from it.’

⁴⁰ Cf. Feliks Gryglewicz, *Listy katolickie* (Poznań: Pallottinum, 1959), 125.

⁴¹ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1867 for this group of sins.

⁴² Morris, *Investigation*, 153: ‘The words of Jas. 5:4 find no parallel worthy of note in the remainder of the Jewish literature, the secular Hellenistic literature or the non-canonical early Christian writings.’

Psalm 17:7 LXX: καὶ ἐν τῷ θλίβεσθαί με ἐπεκαλεσάμην τὸν κύριον καὶ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν μου ἐκέκραξα ἤκουσεν ἐκ ναοῦ ἁγίου αὐτοῦ φωνῆς μου καὶ ἡ κραυγὴ μου ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὰ ὄτα αὐτοῦ (‘And when I was being afflicted, I called upon the Lord, and to my God I cried. From his holy shrine he heard my voice, and my cry before him will enter into his ears.’). On the one hand the titles ‘Lord’ and ‘God’ are without the attribute σαβαωθ in this verse and ‘Lord’ is in our treated phrase present only implicitly in the genitive of the 3rd person of the pronoun (αὐτοῦ). On the other hand, like in James, we find here the verb εἰσερχομαι.⁴⁵ In both cases, the subject is ‘a cry’, yet expressed with two different terms (βοαί; κραυγή⁴⁴). However, the circumstances of this cry are different in both texts. In Psalm 17 LXX, it is a part of the individual’s hymn of the Lord (‘David the servant of the Lord’) for being rescued from the hands of his enemies (v. 1; cf. vv. 8–51). By this action God responded to the Psalmist’s cry in his difficulties. The cries of the harvesters in Jas 5:4 who did not receive their wage are a part of the very fierce criticism of the rich.

The phrase εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου, but without the word σαβαωθ, can be found also in 1Rgns (= 1Sam) 8:21 LXX.⁴⁵ In Num 14:28⁴⁶ and 1Rgns (= 1Sam) 25:24⁴⁷ LXX, the Lord, or lord (i.e., David) is in this phrase clearly present in the dialogical form as the personal pronoun of the 1st, or 2nd person (μου, or σου) because of being previously explicitly mentioned in the first part of both verses. All three verses share the use of the verb λαλέω (ἐλάλησεν, λελαλήκατε, resp. λαλησάτω). Nevertheless, their wording and context do not have such force as to be seriously taken into account as relevant parallels with Jas 5:4.

The phrase εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου σαβαωθ in Jas 5:4 along with both the statistics and locations of the word σαβαωθ in the Septuagint and the similar context indicate that the author of the Letter of James had very good knowledge of the Greek version of the book of the prophet Isaiah and used its ideas in the formulations of his writing. In addition to the 5th chapter, as we can see below, the whole pericope of Jas 5:1–6

⁴⁵ In the form of the future tense, not perfect as in Jas.

⁴⁴ But it must be said that a ‘cry’ is also present at the end of Isa 5:7 LXX: ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι κρίσιν ἐποίησεν δὲ ἀνομίαν καὶ οὐ δικαιοσύνην ἀλλὰ κραυγὴν.

⁴⁵ καὶ ἤκουσεν Σαμουὴλ πάντας τοὺς λόγους τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἐλάλησεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου.

⁴⁶ εἰπὼν αὐτοῖς ζῶ ἐγὼ λέγει κύριος ἢ μὴν ὄν τρόπον λελαλήκατε εἰς τὰ ὄτα μου οὕτως ποιήσω ὑμῖν.

⁴⁷ ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν ἐν ἑμοί κύριέ μου ἡ ἀδικία λαλησάτω διὴ ἡ δούλη σου εἰς τὰ ὄτα σου καὶ ἄκουσον τῆς δούλης σου λόγον.

contains also other possible allusions to this prophetic book,⁴⁸ which can be used as supporting indirect arguments for the conclusion of this article.

II.1

Jas 5:2: ὁ πλοῦτος ὑμῶν σέσηπεν καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια ὑμῶν σητόβρωτα γέγονεν
‘Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten.’

Although the New Testament *hapax legomenon* σητόβρωτος (‘moth-eaten’) has its only verbatim parallel in the LXX in Job 13:28⁴⁹ and is even connected with the noun ἱμάτιον (ὁ παλαιοῦται ἴσα ἀσκή ἢ ὡσπερ ἱμάτιον σητόβρωτον),⁵⁰ the wording in Isa 51:8 LXX also presents a not insignificant parallel to James’ statement ὡσπερ γὰρ ἱμάτιον βρωθήσεται ὑπὸ χρόνου καὶ ὡς ἔρια βρωθήσεται ὑπὸ σητός ἢ δὲ δικαιοσύνη μου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἔσται τὸ δὲ σωτήριόν μου εἰς γενεὰς γενεῶν.⁵¹ On the other hand, it must be mentioned that the very image of corruptive activity of moths can be found in other places of the Septuagint too, for example, Proverbs 25:20; Sir 42:13; Isa 33:1; 50:9,⁵² and also in the New Testament in Matt 6:19–20.⁵³ However, none of these texts contain the same or a similar connection with the wealth of the rich as in the Letter of James. Both this fact as well as similar terminology and wording suggest a narrower dependence of Jas 5:2 on Job and Isaiah. However, the traditionally widespread image of destruction, perishableness, and transience, appearing after all also in Jesus’ teaching,⁵⁴ could to a certain degree weaken this relation.

⁴⁸ It is absolutely unquestionable that this pericope, containing accusation and warning, is very similar to the Old Testament prophetic proclamations of doom. See McKnight, *James*, 381; Hubert Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus. Kapitel 2–5* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994), 646.

⁴⁹ It is the Septuagint hapax legomenon too. Frankemölle, *Brief, 2–5*, 648 ponders on the dependence of Jas 5:2 only on Job 13:28: ‘Dürfte Ijob 13,28 als Tradition für Jak 5,2b feststehen, falls Jakobus – da dort und hier das Bild anders verwendet wird (Ijob bzw. der Mensch wird alt wie ein von Motten zerfressenes Kleid) – nicht sprachschöpferisch aus eigener Intention das Bild in 5,2 formuliert hat.’

⁵⁰ ‘A worn out thing, like a skin, I am, or like a moth-eaten garment.’

⁵¹ ‘For just as a garment it will be devoured by time, and like wool it will be devoured by a moth, but my righteousness will be forever and my salvation for generations of generations.’

⁵² Cf. Johnson, *Letter*, 299.

⁵³ Frankemölle, *Brief, 2–5*, 648: ‘Die traditionsgeschichtliche Vorlagen des Jakobus lassen sich unschwer festmachen, mögen auch einzelne Motive in der prophetischen und weisheitlichen wie auch in der synoptischen Tradition vielfach belegt sein.’

⁵⁴ Gerhard Maier, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Witten: SCM R. Brockhaus / Giessen: Brunnen Verlag, 22009), 203, for example, maintains the dependence on Jesus’ tradition: ‘Hier

There are some possible terminological connections with the text of the writings of the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah as well which will be referred to in the following two subsections.

II.2

Jas 5:1: κλαύσατε ὀλολύζοντες ἐπὶ ταῖς ταλαιπωρίας ὑμῶν ταῖς ἐπερχομέναις ‘Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.’

The word that interests us in Jas 5:1 is another New Testament *hapax legomenon*, namely the verb ὀλολύζω, ‘howl, lament’.⁵⁵ In the Septuagint, it occurs, only in the prophetic books and always in the negative sense,⁵⁶ a total of 21 times, of which 13 are found in Isaiah and 3 in Jeremiah. It is typical of the Greek translation of the book of Isaiah to use the present imperative 2nd pers. pl. pres. or aor. (10:10; 13:6; 14:31; 15:2,3; 23:1,6,14; 24:11; 52:5).⁵⁷

In the Old Testament prophecies, this verb is related primarily to the enemies of the chosen people⁵⁸ who will be punished with various disasters in the day of the Lord’s judgment⁵⁹ and the howling and lamenting will be their only response to this, as, for example, Isa 13:6 says: ὀλολύζετε ἐγγυὸς γὰρ ἡ ἡμέρα κυρίου καὶ συντριβὴ παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἦξει⁶⁰ (cf. Isa 14:31; 15:2–4; 23:1; Jer 31(48):20; Amos 8:3 LXX; Joel 2:1). Against this Old Testament background, it can be concluded that James treats the rich as enemies who should howl and lament over their behaviour until punishment would come.⁶¹

II.3

Jas 5:5

ἐτροφήσατε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐσπαταλήσατε, ἐθρέψατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς

lässt sich mit guten Gründen vermuten, dass Jakobus auf die dortige [in Matt 6:19f.; Luke 12:33, JP] Jesustradition rekurriert.’

⁵⁵ Danker, *Lexicon*, 250 characterises it as a ‘cry with a loud voice’, ‘most often exultantly’.

⁵⁶ Cf. Hartin, James, 226; Johnson, *Letter*, 298–299.

⁵⁷ In the Greek book of Jeremiah, the only impr. pres. 2. pers. pl. is in Jer 31:31.

⁵⁸ Chaine, *L'épître*, 114: ‘Il est d’un usage fréquent dans les invectives: Isaïe contre Babylone, les Philistins, Moab, Tyr (XIII,6; XIV,31; XV,2,3; XXIII,1), Jérémie contre Moab (XXXI [hébr. XLVIII],20), Amos contre les riches (VIII,3).’

⁵⁹ Cf. Frankemölle, *Brief*, 2–5, 646; Johnson, *Letter*, 299.

⁶⁰ ‘Wail, for the day of the Lord is near and a destruction will come from God!’

⁶¹ Cf. Gryglewicz, *Listy*, 122.

‘You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.’

The phrase *ἡμέρα σφαγῆς* can be found in LXX only in Jer 12:3. Here in connection with verses 1-2 the prophet Jeremiah asks Lord for ‘purify[ing] for a day of their slaughter’ (ἄγνισον αὐτοὺς εἰς ἡμέραν σφαγῆς αὐτῶν) the impious (ἄσεβῶν) who commit acts of faithlessness (οἱ ἀθετοῦντες ἀθετήματα) (see v. 1).⁶²

The expression ‘a day of slaughter’ in Jas 5:5 evokes prophetic pronouncements⁶³ – mostly in Isa and Jer – depicting God’s judgment over pagan nations or Jerusalem as a battle full of bloodshed and slaughtering of enemies (e.g., Jer LXX 32:34⁶⁴ (= 25:34); 27:27 (= 50:27); 12:3; 15:3; 28:40 (= 51:40); Ezek 21:15; Isa 30:25;⁶⁵ 34:2,6; 65:12).⁶⁶ For them, as well as for the rich from Jas 5:1-6 who have become – with their misconduct – the actual enemies of Lord, the only Judge (Jas 4:12; cf. 5:9), ‘a day of slaughter’ is a day of judgment when their fate will be like the fate of sheep led to the slaughter (cf. Psalm 43:23 LXX; Zech 11:4,7; Isa 53:7; Jer 28:40 LXX).⁶⁷

The verb *τροφᾶω* should not be left unnoticed here⁶⁸ because of its being New Testament *hapax legomenon* in Jas 5:5 and its occurrence only in three places in LXX, one of which is in Isa. But unlike the two other verses, Nehemiah 9:25 and Sir 14:4, in Isa 66:11b⁶⁹ it is used

⁶² Allison, *Commentary*, 683 gives the possible reasons of the alterations in James’ text against Jeremiah’s version.

⁶³ Johnson, *Letter*, 303–304: ‘This image is itself complex. It builds on the ordinary method of providing food in an agricultural context, namely by slaughtering animals (see Ps. 43:23; Prov 7:22; Isa 53:7). But in the prophets, this quotidian and ritual activity became the image for divine judgment on evildoers (see Zech 11:4,7; Isa 34:2,6; 65:12; Jer 15:3; 19:6; 32:34).’

⁶⁴ ἀλαλάξατε ποιμένες καὶ κεκράξατε καὶ κόπτεσθε οἱ κριοὶ τῶν προβάτων ὅτι ἐπληρώθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι ὑμῶν εἰς σφαγὴν καὶ πεσεῖσθε ὡσπερ οἱ κριοὶ οἱ ἐκλεκτοί. This verse is interesting also for the reason that with the verb ἀλαλάξατε (impr. aor. 2. pers.) it translates the Hebrew לָּי just like ὀλολύζετε in Isa 13:6 (see above).

⁶⁵ Interestingly in the Hebrew version of Isa 30:25 we find a phrase ‘the day of the great slaughter’ (יַד יָרֵחַ מִיָּד) not being translated in LXX with the expected *ἡμέρα σφαγῆς*, but with the periphrasis ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ὅταν ἀπόλωνται πολλοί. *Septuaginta Deutsch II*, 2585 characterizes it as ‘freie, aber sinngemäße Übersetzung’. Vlková and Plátová, *Izaiáš*, 192 surprisingly omits any comment on this verse.

⁶⁶ Cf. Chaine, *Lépitre*, 118; McKnight, *Letter*, 395; Hartin, *James*, 230.

⁶⁷ Maier, *Brief*, 208: ‘[die Reichen] selbst das göttliche Gericht erleiden. Aber bis unmittelbar dahin, “noch am Schlachttag”, haben sie ihr gottloses Leben fortgesetzt und sich nicht um ihre Rettung gekümmert.’

⁶⁸ Danker, *Lexicon*, 357: ‘live in luxury’.

⁶⁹ ἵνα ἐκθηλάσαντες τροφήσητε ἀπὸ εἰσόδου δόξης αὐτῆς.

in a positive meaning connected with the rejoicing of Jerusalem (cf. 66:10).⁷⁰

Part III

Jas 1:10–11

[⁹ Καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ,] ¹⁰ ὁ δὲ πλούσιος ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται. ¹¹ ἀνέτειλεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν τῷ καύσῳνι καὶ ἐξήρανεν τὸν χόρτον καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν καὶ ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπόλετο· οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλούσιος ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ μαρανθήσεται.

‘[⁹ Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation,] ¹⁰ and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.’

Isa 40:6–7

⁶ φωνὴ λέγοντος βόησον καὶ εἶπα τί βοήσω πᾶσα σὰρξ χόρτος καὶ πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου ⁷ ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσεν [⁸ τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα]

‘⁶ A voice of one saying, ‘Cry out!’ And I said, ‘What shall I cry?’ All flesh is grass; all the glory of man is like the flower of grass. ⁷ The grass has withered, and the flower has fallen, [⁸ but the word of our God remains forever.]’

The rich man in Jas 1:10b is in his perishableness compared to ‘a flower of the grass’. Although the motif of the transience of grass and flower also appears in other places of prophetic and wisdom literature,⁷¹ the image as further developed in Jas 1:11 reminds us of the formulation from Isa 40:6–7. In the book of the prophet Isaiah, there is in this way expressed an ephemerality of all living creatures⁷² and

⁷⁰ Cf. Chaine, *L'épître*, 117.

⁷¹ See John Goldingay and David Payne, *Isaiah 40-55*. Volume I (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 82. Frankemölle, *Brief 1*, 248: ‘Auch in Qumran ist der Topos der Vergänglichkeit im Kontext einer Auslegung von Ps 37 belegt (...), aber auch in der vorqumranischen, aber in Qumran verwendeten weisheitlichen Mahnrede 4 Q 185 unter deutlicher Verwendung von Jes 40,6–8; Ps 90,5–6; 102,15–16; Ijob 14,1f.’

⁷² Cf. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 185.

especially of human glory,⁷³ being contrasted with the eternity of God's word in 40:8 (τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα).⁷⁴ According to Isaiah, all humankind (and also its power structures, especially those of Babylon) is by its nature transient.⁷⁵ This special state is now attributed to the rich by the author of the Letter of James.⁷⁶ 'By using the words of the prophet Isaiah, James is in effect indicating that what the prophet had foretold now comes to fulfilment in the lives of the rich.'⁷⁷

The Isaiah passage is explicitly cited in the New Testament by 1 Peter 1:24f.⁷⁸ with its original sense fully preserved,⁷⁹ intending through the image of the withering grass 'to stress the concept of the enduring nature of the word of God'.⁸⁰ Encouragement about the permanent validity of God's word is here denoted as the Gospel message is valid not only in the past, but also in the present time for the addressees of the letter.⁸¹ The question here is whether the author of the Letter of James took his Isaianic material from 1 Peter. 'A comparison of Jas. 1:10–11 and I Pet. 1:24 makes it seem to be impossible that this could be true in the present case.'⁸² The fact that 1 Peter quotes the Isaianic words

⁷³ The LXX version does not contain the words of the Hebrew כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה וְכַל־תִּסְתָּהּ בְּכַל־הַיּוֹם, 'all its beauty is like the flower of the field' (v. 6d) and בְּכֵן הַצִּיץ הַשָּׂדֶה וְכֵן הָאָדָם וְכֵן הָאֱמָלָה וְכֵן הָאֱרֶץ, 'when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass' (v. 7bc). These words in v. 7 of LXX could be omitted by haplography (Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55*, 178; Vlková and Plátová, *Izaiáš*, 254). There are also other possible English translations of the word תִּסְתָּהּ here, for example, Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah*, 82: 'commitment', and Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55*, 178: 'splendour'.

⁷⁴ Hubert Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus. Kapitel 1* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994), 249: 'Das Aussehen und die Existenz alles Irdischen ist relativ. So sicher ist diese Erfahrung immer wieder in der Natur bestätigt, so sicher 'wird' sich die Hinfälligkeit der menschlichen Existenz einstellen. (...) Dies ist ebenso sicher wie das Bleiben des Wortes Gottes in Ewigkeit nach Jes 40,8 (vgl. Jak 1,12c).'

⁷⁵ Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55*, 183–184: 'But the message is not vague, moralizing statement about human frailty, as the combination 'grass' and 'flower' might suggest (cf. Ps 37:2; 90:5–6; 103:15), and even less is it a lament for the helpless situation of the Babylonian diaspora from which the seer is speaking. It takes aim at the Neo-Babylonian Empire, then under terminal threat from the victorious progress of Cyrus II.' Cf. Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah*, 81.

⁷⁶ Cf. Chaîne, *L'épître*, LIX and 15; Maier, *Brief*, 68; Frankemölle, *Brief 1*, 248.

⁷⁷ Hartin, *James*, 63.

⁷⁸ ²⁴ διότι πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῆς ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου· ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσεν.²⁵ τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν τὸ ῥῆμα τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν εἰς ὑμᾶς

⁷⁹ Cf. Chaîne, *L'épître*, LIX.

⁸⁰ Hartin, *James*, 63.

⁸¹ Cf. Jan A. Dus, *První list Petrův* (Praha: Centrum biblických studií and Česká biblická společnost, 2017), 91.

⁸² Morris, *Investigation*, 149.

suggests that they could have been a part of Christian teaching before the letters of James and Peter were written.⁸⁵

James does not explicitly refer to the book of the prophet Isaiah, but an allusion to some segments of Isa 40:6–7 seems to be quite clear.⁸⁴

First of all, the phrase ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου from Jas 1:10b occurs in this form in LXX only in Isa 40:6b.⁸⁵ In the next verse of the two biblical writings we find both words ἄνθος and χόρτος along with the same form of the aorist act. sg. 3rd pers. of the verb ἐκπίπτω and with the aorist (act. and pass. respectively) of the verb ξηραίνω:

Jas 1:11a:	ἐξήρανεν	τὸν χόρτον ⁸⁶	καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ	ἐξέπεσεν,
Isa 40:7:	ἐξηράνηθη	ὁ χόρτος	καὶ τὸ ἄνθος	ἐξέπεσεν ⁸⁷ .

Therefore, it can be said that as far as this verse is concerned, the author of the Letter of James not only knew the quoted septuagintal Isaianic phrase, but he also used it explicitly as a scriptural quotation without introducing it as such.⁸⁸ Instead of using the words ἄνθος ἀγροῦ ('the flower of the field'), the Septuagint seems to uniquely⁸⁹ translate the Hebrew phrase as הַדְּשָׁה רִיחַ ('the flower of grass')⁹⁰ here and the Letter of James has used this translation.⁹¹ This is also confirmed by

⁸⁵ Cf. Craig L. Blomberg and Mariam J. Kamell, *James* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2008), 64.

⁸⁴ Cf. Blomberg and Kamell, *James*, 63; Gryglewicz, *Listy*, 59.

⁸⁵ Allison, *Commentary*, 206: 'Although the use of plants to represent a short-lived existence was common enough, ἄνθος χόρτου – not a traditional Greek expression but a Semitism, the equivalent of הַדְּשָׁה רִיחַ – comes from Isa 40.6.'

⁸⁶ Isaiah attributes the withering to the wind, not to the sun, or rather the sun's scorching heat, which is James' addition. Cf. Allison, *Commentary*, 208; McKnight, *Letter*, 101, n. 166.

⁸⁷ McKnight, *Letter*, 102, n. 174: 'Isa 40:7 has 'fade' or 'droop' (navel); James picks up the LXX translation here. In light of what James will make of the 'rich' at the end of v. 11, 'falls' is more devastating than dropping or fading.'

⁸⁸ Cf. Hartin, *James*, 63 and 83; Johnson, *Letter*, 191.

⁸⁹ Morris, *Investigation*, 145: 'χόρτος is used here as the equivalent of πῦν, i.e. "field", but normally means "grass, hay". χόρτος is a quite common word in both Biblical and non-Biblical Greek, but nowhere else in Biblical Greek does it have the meaning "field" forced upon it. There is no other instance of its having been used to translate πῦν. As early as the fifth century B. C., χόρτος is found in Pindar and Homer with reference to any sort of a "feeding-ground", which could carry the connotation, of course of a "field". But no evidence is available of its continued employment in the latter sense in any area of Greek.'

⁹⁰ Allison, *Commentary*, 206 n. 81: 'That is, we have here synecdoche.'

⁹¹ McKnight, *Letter*, 101, n. 167: 'The LXX rendering of Isa 40:6cd ("all flesh is grass [hatsir], all its goodnes like flowers [tsits] of the field [sadeh])" shows an irregularity

the fact that the literal translation of the Hebrew term $\text{קָדְשׁוֹתַי כְּצִבְעוֹת שָׂדֵה}$ with the words ἄνθος τοῦ ἀγροῦ can be found in the thematically close Psalm 102:15 LXX:⁹² $\text{ἄνθρωπος ὡσεὶ χόρτος αἱ ἡμέραι αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ἄνθος τοῦ ἀγροῦ οὕτως ἐξανθήσει}$. ‘As for man, his days are like grass; like a flower of the field, so it will bloom.’ The usage of the noun χόρτος in the Septuagint testifies that it refers ‘not just to grass but to any greenery, just as the flower refers to any flower that grows in the meadow’.⁹³

In addition to the aforementioned terminological connections, Isa 40:2–9 and Jas 1:9–11 still share further lexical resemblances:⁹⁴ ταπεινώσις (Isa 40:2), ταπεινωθήσεται (40:4) – ταπεινός (Jas 1:9), ταπεινώσει (1:10); ὑψηλόν , ὑψωσον , ὑψώσατε (Isa 40:9) – ὑψηλ (Jas 1:9).

These similarities can also support the conclusion that in spite of the large circulation of the image of a withering herb used for the expression of the passing character of earthly existence, the author of the Letter of James in his verses 1:10–11 knew, used, and with regard to his intention slightly adjusted the 40th chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah LXX,⁹⁵ with their verbal proximity remaining the main argument.⁹⁶

Conclusion

In summary of our observations, it can be stated that the author of the Letter of James did not allude to the two Isaianic texts in a vague way or somehow *en passant*. These short texts from the letter dealt with

that James picks up, which confuses the interpretation: LXX renders both hatsir and sadeh with χόρτος (“grass”). If the LXX translation is considered as little more than a poetic reuse of one term, then it becomes possible to see a more obvious analogy: comparison is made with the wildflowers and meadow flowers, like the anemone.’

⁹² Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983), 77 argues against any dependence of Jas 1:9–11 only on Isa 40:6–7 referring to its same closeness to Psalm 102:15–16 LXX. His opinion was convincingly disproved by Allison, *Commentary*, 197.

⁹⁵ Hartin, *James*, 63. Cf. Allison, *Commentary*, 206, n. 81; Chaine, *L'épître*, 14–15.

⁹⁴ Cf. Allison, *Commentary*, 197–198. On page 199 he also adds an interesting ‘final remark concerning Jas 1.9–11 and Isa 40. The theme of the latter is preparing the “way” (ὁδός) of the Lord, and there is a second use of “way” (ὁδός) in Isa 40.4 [3JP!]. So one wonders whether the use of “way” (ὁδός) at the end of Jas 1.8 played its part in the process that led our author to Isa 40.’

⁹⁵ Ralph P. Martin, *James* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1988), 23 suggests a certain possibility of an allusion of James to Mark 4:6, which seems to be its closest parallel. But Allison, *Commentary*, 210 presents four arguments, which make this opinion hardly convincing.

⁹⁶ Frankemölle, *Brief 1*, 247.

herein testify not only to the author's familiar knowledge of the book of the prophet Isaiah in the Greek translation of the Septuagint but also to the fact that in writing his letter he was influenced by it and he used and adjusted it in accordance with his purposes.⁹⁷ This conclusion is based primarily on both verbal agreements and a certain similarity of the contexts in Jas 5:4 and Isa 5:9, and other terminological similarities in Jas 5:10–11 and Isa 40:6–7.

All direct quotations in the Letter of James come mostly from the Pentateuch (2:8,11,23) or from wisdom literature (4:6). The Isaianic phrasing in Jas 5:4 (and also the Jeremianic one in Jas 5:2) demonstrates that its author quotes explicitly also from the prophetic books of the Greek Bible. All of these facts also confirm the well-known suggestion that the author of the letter is not just well acquainted with the Old Testament, but, much more, he is permeated with it.

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⁹⁷ We dare to presume that an analysis of other possible connections mostly in the form of indirect allusions between Jas and Isa would only support and confirm this conclusion.

VARIA

THE ISSUE OF POLITICISATION OF MYSTICISM IN THE THEOLOGY OF DOROTHEE SÖLLE

K A T E Ř I N A M A J E R O V Á

ABSTRACT

The German Protestant theologian Dorothee Sölle, who came with the central ideas of relationship and reciprocity in the context of feminist liberation theology, accentuates what is known as the mysticism democratisation project. Within the framework of the project of the democratisation of mysticism, mystical sensitivity as a human constant that all people have without difference is thematised. In order to emphasise the equality and relationship between man and God as well as between man and others, she perceives mysticism as resistance: resistance against injustice and oppression in the world. According to Sölle, mysticism cannot be an elitist matter for a few people, nor should it be solely aimed at contemplation; it is necessarily related to the social, everyday reality of people, where the connection with God can be found. However, mysticism in terms of resistance against injustice and oppression is subject to objections because of the consequent politicisation and instrumentalisation of mysticism, which in turn may result in the secularisation of the mystical experience.

Key words

Mysticism; Resistance; Politics; Reciprocity; Responsibility

DOI: 10.14712/23563598.2020.10

The German Protestant theologian Dorothee Sölle realised her theological considerations in the context of the feminist theology of liberation. In accordance with its perspective, the process of liberation emphasises the values of relationship and reciprocity in everyday

life.¹ Like the feminist theology of liberation, Sölle sees the necessity to declare the relationship and coherence of everything at the level of creation, which has its starting point in gender equality and must be realised within theory and practice.² It is then the experience, especially the experience of women, their emotions, sexuality, and spirituality, together with their daily activities, which are at the centre of feminist liberation theology and Dorothee Sölle's theology.

Against the background of the disruption of the dichotomies between body and soul, nature³ and culture, Sölle also discusses the existential relationship between man and God, between man and nature, and between people since it is a relationship on the Me and You⁴ level, reflecting the essence of love – the gospel message of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, who is perceived as the liberator from patriarchal structures overcoming inequalities in the perspective of the feminist theology of liberation, is a reference to the reciprocity that underlies all relationships at the level of creation.⁵ Relationships within creation, everyday human experience, and the experience of oppression and liberation thus form the theological reflection of Dorothee Sölle. Every person is urged to follow the pattern of Jesus Christ and to continue the dynamic process of liberation, participating in that which happens here and now; this is a reference to hope in the context of everyday life. Like other theologies of liberation, the theological reflection of Sölle relates to the needs of people. In other words, she seeks God in the faces of the poor and marginalised in order to bring hope for liberation and

¹ Dorothee Sölle, *Gott denken: Ein führung in die Theologie* (Stuttgart: Kreuz Verlag, 1992).

² Rosemary Radford Ruether, 'The emergence of Christian feminist theology,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, ed. Susan Frank Parsons (Cambridge University press, 2004), 3–22.

³ The feminist theology of liberation discusses ecological overlaps associated with an ecofeminist perspective. From this perspective, they see a parallel between the devastation of nature and the historical oppression of women. See Karen J. Warren, *Ecofeminist Philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It is and Why It matters* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000). The ecological perspective of theology emphasises the goodness of the creation that must be protected and cared for as it is an integral part of the love of neighbours. See Sallie McFague, 'The Ethic of God as Mother, Lover and Friend,' in *Feminist Theology a Reader*, ed. Ann Loades (Luisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 255–274.

⁴ In the context of this relationship, the feminist theology of liberation refers to the thesis of Martin Buber. See Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 2010).

⁵ Dorothee Sölle, *Lieben und arbeiten: Eine Theologie der Schöpfung* (Stuttgart: Kreuz-Verlag, 1985).

to create a new life.⁶ Love for neighbours, interest in others, which neglects ignorance and blindness to the misery of neighbours, in other words, interest in the everyday reality of people, is also reflected in Dorothee Sölle's theology of mysticism, which primarily focuses on man, Earth, and the everyday.

1. Mysticism in Everyday Life

It is in the everydayness where Dorothee Sölle finds God. In the perspective of Sölle, God is not an isolated sovereign⁷, but through a panentheistic vision, a 'far away, but nearby'⁸ partner and friend, who is not dominated by the world, but who is in a dialogical relationship of mutual need.⁹ According to Sölle, the relationship between man and God cannot be based on an unequal power relationship through blind obedience but on reciprocal love that stems from the liberated imagination.¹⁰

In Sölle's view, transcendence is a radical immanence; God is present in everyday life, not isolated from the needy, but He exists here and now as a response to the desire and call for him.¹¹ To see God in the faces of the sufferers, in the everyday routine, according to Sölle, is a real mystical life, a living experience that reflects the unity and completeness of life, the interconnection of everything with everything.¹² It means seeing God shattered in the poor and the rich, up and down, in the healthy and the sick, in the weak and powerful – that is a mystical life.¹³

⁶ Timothy Noble, 'Liberation Theology Today – Challenges and Changes,' in *Mezinárodní symposium o teologii osvobození*, ed. Michal Cáb, Roman Míčka, Marek Pelech (České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita, 2007), 22–36.

⁷ Sölle criticises the view of God as a powerful man-father, who would be a symbol of oppressive social structures that, as a result, view the relationship between man and God on the mighty-powerless plane. See Nancy Hawkins, 'Dorothee Soelle: Radical Christian and Mystic,' *The Way: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, 44, no. 3 (2005): 89.

⁸ In this point, Sölle creates her ideas on the basis of the mystery of Marguerite Poréte and her vision of God as the far-near one. Dorothee Sölle, *The Silent Cry: Mysticism and resistance* (Minneapolis: Fortress press, 2001), 106.

⁹ Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 106.

¹⁰ Dorothee Sölle, *Phantasie und Gehorsam: Überlegungen zu einer künftigen christlichen Ethik* (Stuttgart: Kreuz-Verlag, 1968).

¹¹ Sölle, *Gott denken*, 249.

¹² Dorothee Sölle, *Mystik des Todes* (Stuttgart: Kreuz Verlag, 2003).

¹³ Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 283.

The view of God as a partner in dialogue, not isolated from everyday life, is closely related to the positionality of Dorothee Sölle, shaped by the German and North American context of the 1960s and 1970s, anchored in liberation theology emphasising a ‘starvation’ for God as well as the desire to rediscover him everywhere in the world, in everyone’s life.¹⁴ It is thus the feminist and liberation theology in which Sölle found the basis of her reflections which dealt with the questions of God’s death and the atheistic belief in him. According to Sölle, God empowers man through Christ to be active and responsible for himself, the world, and others.¹⁵ Thus, through the events of World War II, Sölle came to the theology after the death of God, emphasising the need for a different speech and reflection on God in a secularised world. In other words, Sölle emphasises the immanent view of God, with the intention of targeting everyday life and transforming social reality.¹⁶

Everyday life as a mystical life, open to anyone, is not an exclusive affair of several people, but to a great extent leads the traditional *unio mystica*, the unification of the soul with God which is a consequence of the emphasis on a person and his or her everyday life with God.¹⁷ Sölle underlines that all people are mystics and each person possesses a mystical sensitivity which is a constant and which needs to be discovered and developed.¹⁸ So it can be said that Sölle refuses to perceive mysticism as the elitist, private affair of several individuals. For her, it is an integral life experience that any person can attain and participate in. Mystics are then ordinary people of different occupations for every person can achieve the rapprochement and the unification with God that happens in everyday life. Especially through the love of oneself, others, God and creation, this connection can take place. Against the background of the declaration of trust in a human being, in his or her good potential, which eliminates anthropological pessimism,¹⁹ Sölle emphasises a non-

¹⁴ Luise Schottruff, ‘Come, Read with My Eyes,’ Dorothee Soelle’s Biblical hermeneutics of Liberation, in *The Theology of Dorothee Soelle*, ed. Sarah Pinnock (Trinity Press International, 2005), 45–47.

¹⁵ Dorothee Sölle, *Christ the Representative: An Essay in Theology after the ‘Death of God’* (London: S.C.M.Press, 1967), 24–25.

¹⁶ Horst Georg Pöhlmann, *Abriss der Dogmatik: Ein Kompendium* (München: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2002), 136.

¹⁷ Peter Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2015), 193–194.

¹⁸ Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 17–19.

¹⁹ For Sölle, humans are not powerless, but free beings made in the image of God. They are called to be co-creators with God in redeeming creation from sin. See Rosemary

authoritative view of God and mysticism, emphasising the creation of everyone in the image of God and the creation of love:²⁰ 'In a preliminary way, I can simply say that what I want to live, understand and make me known is the love for God ... One rarely hears that this process can be truly experienced only when such love, like every genuine love, is mutual. That humans love, protect, renew, and save God sounds to most people like megalomania or even madness. But the madness of this love is exactly what mystics live on.'²¹

Mysticism, according to Sölle is the desire for God; thus it is a true fulfilment of the unity of life where a person loves God and God loves him or her reciprocally, through a relationship. Against the background of this relationship, Sölle accentuates the project of democratising mysticism, which opens up the space to experience God and make him accessible to everyone. In other words, it is a project of democratising mysticism that abstracts the limits and hierarchies of creation and perceives each person in the light of God's image. The aim is then to open the mystical experience to every person, without distinction.²² All people, as God's friends, can experience the presence and love of God, for God is common to all people, he does not divide but unites in his love.²³ Thus, through the view of God as inseparable from creation, Sölle also rehabilitates that everydayness that incorporates the mystery of God and thus accentuates the trivialisation of life as the most powerful anti-systemic force.²⁴

By rejecting the notion of trivial everydayness, along with moving away from seeing God as totally isolated from creation and human life, which entails breaking the boundary between man and God and confirming good human potential, Sölle comes to see mysticism in terms of resistance. Mysticism as a resistance, closely related to ethics, is a necessary prerequisite and consequence of the democratisation of mysticism, which opens up the space for every person not only to participate in the love of God but also to participate in creation through the defiance of injustice and ignorance. Through the existential combination

Radford Ruether, 'The Feminist Liberation Theology of Dorothee Soelle,' in *The Theology of Dorothee Soelle*, ed. Sarah Pinnock (Trinity Press International, 2005), 214.

²⁰ Dorothee Sölle, *Lieben und arbeiten: Eine Theologie der Schöpfung* (Stuttgart: Kreuz-Verlag, 1985).

²¹ Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 1–2.

²² *Ibid.*, 12.

²³ *Ibid.*, 18–19.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

of mysticism, the mystical sensitivity of every human being with the transformation of inequalities at the level of creation, Sölle arrives at a certain vision of political mysticism and related criticism of the capitalist tendencies of society.²⁵

2. Political Mysticism as a Paradigm of the Theology of Dorothee Sölle

The starting point of Dorothee Sölle in the context of mysticism is the fact that it is directed not only to itself but towards the whole, to the social reality. By comparing mysticism with resistance and highlighting that ‘mysticism is a resistance’, Sölle strictly defines everything which restricts and destroys the creation or dignity of each person. As Nancy Hawkins points out, ‘mystical sensibility is an act of resistance for Dorothee Sölle. She cannot separate her understanding of mysticism from her social and political commitment.’²⁶ It is thus defiant conscious, active, inextricably linked to everyday oppression, which must be resisted.²⁷ The danger that Sölle sees in the individualistic tendencies of society, in technocracy, violence and terror, in ignorance and selfishness towards the needs of others is at the very heart of a vision of mysticism as a resistance that recognises the spreading danger of capitalism and sexism²⁸ as well as the trivialisation of life.²⁹

According to Zimmerling, ‘her book is a “silent cry” against the screaming injustice in the world: both injustice in the Western states, which are the culprit of society itself, and against injustice committed by Western governments and economic cartels in the other two-thirds of the world’.³⁰ The mysticism of Dorothee Sölle is basically a political

²⁵ Ibid., 191–193.

²⁶ Hawkins, ‘Dorothee Soelle: Radical Christian and Mystic,’ 93.

²⁷ See Anne Llewellyn Barstow, ‘Dorothee Soelle: Mystic/Activist,’ in *The Theology of Dorothee Soelle*, ed. Sarah Pinnock (Trinity Press International, 2003), 189–201.

²⁸ In the context of criticism of capitalism and sexism, Sölle also dissociates herself from the tendency to view sexuality, especially female sexuality, in terms of buying and selling, i.e. the tendency of society to regard anything as buyable. In the context of sexuality, it defines itself against the objectivisation of the female body and its use for capitalist and consumerist purposes, which imposes the idea of the female body as a means of achieving the goal of something that can be bought. See Dorothee Sölle, *Lieben und arbeiten: Eine Theologie der Schöpfung* (Stuttgart: Kreuz-Verlag, 1985), 156–160.

²⁹ Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 192–193.

³⁰ ‘Die Autorin erhebt in ihrem Buch “ein stilles Geschrei” gegen das schreiende Unrecht in der Welt: zum einen gegen das selbst verschuldete Unrecht in den westli-

mysticism, in which she tries to highlight the goodness of Creation, which needs to be protected. Through rethinking the phases of mysticism and by following the mysticism of Master Eckhart, she emphasises the abandonment of and liberation from our selfish, egocentric self towards the transformation of self and society.⁵¹ In her political mysticism, Sölle is eager to show a connection with God in today's world, where individualising tendencies obscure service and compassion for others. The political basis and implication of mysticism can be attributed to Sölle's experience of its reflections dated to the political situation after World War II. The view of mysticism as a defiance with explicit political implications is reflected back in the theology of creation and in an attempt to break the strict boundary of the relationship between God and man. In particular, the aim is to enable and remind a person of his or her co-responsibility for the world, to encourage him or her to perform an activity instead of passively waiting for the help of God.⁵²

Based on the mysticism of resistance, Sölle accentuates the mysticism of the open eyes – the mysticism of the poor, which is based on the theses of liberation theology in order to transform social inequalities. 'In the sense of theology that liberates, the soul that is united with God sees the world with God's eyes. That soul, like God, sees what otherwise is rendered invisible and irrelevant,'⁵³ she comments. In other words, we can say that the spiritual resistance contained in mysticism, in Sölle's perspective, is an expression of the strict rejection of those elements in the Church, in society, and in the political dimension, which devalue human beings, deny justice, and use force and human activity in an exploitative, oppressive manner.⁵⁴

3. Between Action and Contemplation

From the point of view of mysticism as an active resistance, the efforts of Dorothee Sölle to emphasise engagement in society and responsibility for the world, which is, in her view, an essential part of

chen Staaten, zum ändern gegen das Unrecht, das von den westlichen Regierungen und Wirtschaftskartellen in den Ländern der Zweidrittelwelt angerichtet wird.' See Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 192–195.

⁵¹ Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 59–60.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 61–62.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 285.

⁵⁴ Hawkins, 'Dorothee Soelle: Radical Christian and Mystic,' 95.

mysticism, are evident. It stands in contrast to the general notion of mysticism as Zimmerling observes: 'A common objection to mysticism is that it neglects engagement for society and for the fellow in favour of focusing on caring for one's own piety.'⁵⁵ However, in Dorothee Sölle's perspective, mysticism, viewed as resistance, limits the private focus to one's piety and refers to the necessity of action here and now, in a particular place, in other words, to conscious cooperation to transform social reality.

In the context of emphasising activity by Sölle, she reflects on the gospel story of two sisters, Mary and Martha (Lk 10:38–42), and explicitly follows the theses of Master Eckhart and Theresa of Avila by discussing *via activa* and contemplative principles which traditionally stand in contrast. Sölle consistently rejects the tendency to hierarchically order these two forces of life as well as the need to choose one. The reason is that, in the complex view of man, both forces are inter-related similarly to theory and practice.⁵⁶ In other words, against the background of the story of Mary and Martha, Sölle declares the necessity of collaboration between activity and contemplation, where neither of them must be eliminated.

However, in the context of accentuating mysticism in resistance – especially political mysticism, the thesis of Sölle faces criticism of the tendency to target the outside world instead of focusing on inwardness and contemplation. According to Zimmerling, 'more insidious is the danger that politics and defiance of faith and its mystical experience will engulf God. Out of the fear that internal engagement is not forgotten about engaging in the world, the inalienable right of faith to a contemplative dimension is neglected.'⁵⁷ With regard to the criticism of the politicisation, instrumentalisation, and functionalisation of mysticism, among others by Peter Zimmerling,⁵⁸ the response can be found in Sölle's call to life 'without why'. Despite the fact that Sölle undeniably

⁵⁵ 'Ein häufig vorgebrachter Vorwurf gegenüber der Mystik lautet: Sie vernachlässige das Engagement für die Gessellschaft un den Nächsten auf Kosten der Konzentration auf die Pflege der eigenen Frömmigkeit.' See Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 241.

⁵⁶ Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 199–203

⁵⁷ 'Virulenter ist die umgekehrte Gefahr, dass Politik und Widerstand den Glauben mit-samt der mystischen Gotteserfahrung aufsaugen. Vor lauter Angst, über der religiösen Erfahrung das Engagement in der Welt zu vergessen, bleibt das unverzichtbare Eigenrecht der kontemplativen Dimension des Galubens auf der Strecke.' See Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 242–243.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 241–243.

associates mysticism with everyday reality and with human activity, contemplation – turning to ourselves and God through prayer within the context of mysticism – is also essential. In the context of prayer, where one, in Sölle’s perspective, finds a friend and love in God and declares the transformation of a power relationship into a loving and close relationship, one also learns prayer and experience, the existence of *sunder warumbe*, without why³⁹.

Following Master Eckhart’s thoughts, Sölle considers life and prayer without why as a true hearing and answer to God’s call. The principle of living without why is at the heart of mystical experience and refers to a spiritual practice that lives without intention, purpose, and power, and aims to live in the present moment. Life without why, contained in prayer itself, appreciates the beauty of creation and life itself, does not desire success or calculation of benefit; it is a principle that practically leads to resistance.⁴⁰ As Hawkins writes, ‘such a person is truly free to respond to God’s grace as it influences their life’.⁴¹

It can therefore be said that, within the mysticism of Sölle, although she identifies it with resistance, she finds her origin in the purposeless prayer, in turning to ourselves, which is the result of the choice of life without why: ‘If there is a verb for the life of mysticism, it is praying. This superfluous activity, this unproductive waste of time happens *sunder warumbe*, (without any why or wherefore). It is as free of ulterior motives as it is indispensable. Prayer is its own end and not a means to obtain a particular goal. The question “what did it achieve?” must fall silent in face of the reality of prayer.’⁴²

In the context of mysticism as a resistance, prayer and political responsibility have a crucial place; one cannot exist without the other. The interdependence of activity and passivity as well as the need for both of them thus replace the dependency model and simultaneously express freedom, which opens up the space to realise the coexistence, reciprocity, and participation of all in the gift of God.⁴³ Therefore, in Sölle’s perspective, through mystical unification the relationship to God does not change, but the relationship to the world does. Through the ‘senses of God’, man sees the world with humility and respect. Accord-

³⁹ Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 294–295.

⁴⁰ Hawkins, ‘Dorothee Soelle: Radical Christian and Mystic,’ 88–89.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁴² Sölle, *Mysticism and resistance*, 294.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 294–295.

ing to Nancy Hawkins this means ‘to enter willingly into a relationship with God through prayer that will challenge, chase and disturb us’.⁴⁴

4. Secularisation as the Cause and Effect of Dorothee Sölle’s Mysticism?

It is thus a certain ‘displacement’ of God which is criticised in the mysticism of resistance since it evokes a certain secularisation of mysticism along with a secular view of sin.⁴⁵ As Zimmerling writes, ‘sin for Sölle apparently has no ontological quality. There is only a political, secular sin for her.’⁴⁶ This criticism therefore appears to be justified in view of the anchoring of the position of Sölle within the immanent, political eschatology, typical of liberation theologies.⁴⁷ It is then the theological effort to reflect the everyday experience of oppression, suffering, and injustice, together with a call for engagement in the world, which can be discussed as a positive turning point in theology but with a certain risk of a one-sided conception of God. In order to include in the theological reflection the daily experience of oppression, which Sölle reflects largely globally and contextually indefinitely⁴⁸, underestimates the unification of man and God and its overlap. In other words, in an attempt to empower a person and make him or her resist, Sölle does not consistently reflect on God’s grace and His transcendence although her reflection takes place through prayer and a response to God’s call.⁴⁹

However, through the view of transcendence as a radical immanence that brings man closer to God, Sölle does not discuss the need not to separate but to distinguish God and as a result does not perceive God

⁴⁴ Hawkins, ‘Dorothee Soelle: Radical Christian and Mystic,’ 89.

⁴⁵ Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 200.

⁴⁶ ‘Sünde scheint für sie keine ontologische Qualität zu besitzen. Letztlich existiert nur politische, d.h. säkulare Sünde.’ Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 199.

⁴⁷ Pöhlmann, *Abriss der Dogmatik*, 360–361.

⁴⁸ Contextual impartiality, the ignoring of the context referred to, is one of the fundamental criticisms of the post-colonial feminist theology of liberation theology. Post-colonial feminist theology considers it necessary to discuss its position and location, which shapes the research interest, and, on the basis of this location, to define and specifically discuss the context that they thematise, especially to prevent false universalisation and generalisation. See Eleanor Tiplady Higgs, ‘Postcolonial Feminist Theology,’ in *Gender: God*, ed. Sian M. Hawthorne (Macmillan Reference USA, 2017), 79–95. It is then that the ignorance of the context, the everyday reality of the poor, of which Sölle reports, is criticised because of the absence of her personal experience in this context. See Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 190.

⁴⁹ Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 197–198.

as static and dynamic, as among others the Old and New Testament reminds man.⁵⁰ By violating God's omnipotence with the intention of inducing man to actively participate and transform social reality, Sölle does not accentuate the depth and, to a large extent, the 'mysterium unio mystica', the union of the soul with God. In the context of Sölle's tendency to reduce mysticism to resistance in particular, Peter Zimmerling's criticism appears to recall that, although a mystic committed to the world and social reality is a substantial counterbalance to earlier tendencies, it cannot remain a resistance only. It should also include what remains largely near and far, known and unknown.⁵¹

Conclusion

In her approach to mysticism, Dorothee Sölle combines the visions of the feminist theology of liberation, in particular the declaration of values of relationship and reciprocity, together with her own location, anchored and influenced by the socio-political discourse of the 1960s and 1970s. In mysticism, Sölle sees resistance connected with political awareness, social, and environmental responsibility, to which prayer and a life of the so-called *sunder warumbe* – without why – necessarily lead. Thus, in the context of mysticism, Sölle proclaims action along with contemplation, which is a prerequisite of mysticism, i.e. one needs the other. Thus, mysticism as a resistance, of which ethics is an essential part, is reached through a project of democratisation of mysticism, which opens up the space for every man because God is common and belongs to everyone.

Through the perception of mysticism as a non-authoritarian, non-elitist relationship to God which is anchored in the theology of creation and in the disruption of the strict separation between God and man, each person is regarded as a mystic as her or she possesses an essential mystical sensitivity that enables everyone to unite with God. The view of mysticism as a resistance, in which Sölle reduces to some extent God's omnipotence, is subject of multilateral criticism along with her theologically inadequate reflection of *unio mystica*, for example by Peter Zimmerling.

⁵⁰ Pöhlmann, *Abriss der Dogmatik*, 152–153.

⁵¹ Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik*, 200–201.

It is through the reduction of God's omnipotence and a focus on God's immanence in particular that Sölle outlines a certain trivialisation, a simplification of transcendence, together, as Zimmerling noted, with a certain trivialisation of *unio mystica*. It is possible to say, that Sölle declares the necessity of *unio mystica* in the relationship of man to God, man to others and to himself. That means, in connection with God, one can achieve transformation of oneself in the form of self-liberation as well as transformation of everyday reality, to which the mysticism of resistance relates. Mysticism as a resistance can thus be perceived as a call for social responsibility and a declaration of positive human potential that will enable one to accentuate relationship and reciprocity within creation more consistently.

Although the mysticism of Dorothee Sölle can be seen as an attempt to emphasise social, political, and environmental awareness, it also entails the loss of the inwardness and indescribability of *unio mystica* together with the author's rejection of extreme individualism. It is then *unio mystica*, a connection with God, which refers to the mystery of transcendence. Although Sölle calls for a view of transcendence in conjunction with immanence in the context of the theology of creation, in the context of mysticism, this tension between transcendence and immanence borne out by the life and actions of Jesus Christ is inconsistently obscured. Thus, the idea of the mystic of resistance can be seen as an adequate effort to bring man closer to God in response to the secularised, anthropocentric tendencies of society. However, in the question of politicising mysticism and focusing on immanence, seems to be a fundamental reminder of Pöhlman's remark – the world is still created by God, who empowers a person for social engagement and activity.⁵²

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⁵² Pöhlmann, *Abriss der Dogmatik*, 153.

DIE PSALMENÜBERSCHRIFT:
ΤΩΙ ΔΑΥΙΔ ALS GRUNDLAGE
FÜR AUGUSTINUS' CHRISTLICHE
INTERPRETATION VON PSALMEN

ROBERT HORKA

ABSTRACT

**The Psalm Heading: τῷ Δαυὶδ as the Basis
for Augustine's Christian Interpretation of Psalms**

In his Psalm commentary (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*) and especially in his interpretation of the Psalm headings, Augustine presents the complete theology of the Christian reading of the Psalms. Of course, Augustine uses the text of the Psalms translated from LXX to Latin. The interpretations of the headings form a very important and comprehensive part of his comments so that it becomes obvious that it is definitely an extensive subject. The Greek heading: τῷ Δαυὶδ (*ipsi David*) is in 57 psalms of the LXX, so it is a very common mention. Augustine considers king David to be above all a model (*typus*) of Christ. Furthermore, through the grammatical analysis of these headings – namely the objective and subjective meaning of the dative – he forms a complete exegesis and theology of the Psalms for Christians. This view was a basis for the further generations of Christians, especially in the Middle Ages and for the monks, to consider the Psalms as Christian literature.

Key words

Augustine; Commentary on Psalms; David; Dative Syntax; Figural Exegesis; Psalm Inscriptions; Type of Christ

DOI: 10.14712/23363398.2020.11

In der entstehenden Kirche gewannen die Psalmen unter allen Texten des Alten Testaments bald eine einzigartige Stellung. Auch die neutestamentarischen Verfasser der Bibel unterstrichen, dass es sich um das am meisten zitierte biblische Buch im ganzen

Neuen Testament handelt.¹ Die Psalmen werden von Christus,² Maria³ und Zacharias⁴ in ihren Lobgesängen oder von den Aposteln Petrus⁵ und Paulus⁶ zitiert. Sogar die Stimme Gottes vom Himmel zitiert einen Psalmvers bei der Taufe Jesu.⁷ Diese Psalmzitationen sind selbstverständlich alle griechisch und stammen meistens aus der Septuaginta.⁸ Die Psalmen spielten also schon bei der Geburtsstunde des Christentums eine große Rolle und begleiteten es auch weiter.

Literarische Quellen bezeugen, dass sie auch bei der Entstehung der christlichen Liturgie an sich präsent waren. Schon im Jahre 111 beschreibt Plinius der Jüngere dem Kaiser Trajan den christlichen Gottesdienst mit den Worten, dass die Christen daran gewöhnt sind, Christus als Gott ein Lied zu singen.⁹ Später wurde der Psalmengesang zum festen Bestandteil liturgischer Zeremonien im oströmischen Reich und nach dem Zeugnis Augustinus¹⁰ nach 386 auch im christlichen Westen:

Damals wurde das Singen von Hymnen und Psalmen nach der Weise der Ostkirche eingeführt, um die Ermattung des Volkes durch Trauer und Überdruß zu verhindern. Seither hat sich der Brauch etabliert und ist von vielen, ja den meisten Kirchgemeinden der Welt übernommen worden und bis heute erhalten.¹⁰

Die Psalmen, wohlgemerkt, es waren griechische Psalmen, begleiteten also die frühe Kirche seit ihrer Entstehung. Als schließlich

¹ S. Moyise und M. Menken, *The Psalms in the New Testament* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 2.

² Mt 21, 16. 42, 26, 64; 27, 46; Mk 12, 10–11. 36; 14, 62; 15, 34; Lk 13, 35; 20, 17. 42–45; Joh 10, 34; 15, 18; 15, 25.

³ Lk 1, 50–54.

⁴ Lk 1, 68–69. 71–72.

⁵ Apg 1, 25–27. 30. 34–35; 4, 11. 25–26.

⁶ Apg 13, 22. 26. 33. 35. 41.

⁷ Mt 3, 17; Mk 1, 11; Lk 3, 22.

⁸ S. Moyise, *Jesus and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 1–5.

⁹ Plin. Min., *ep.* X, 96, 7. LCL 59, 288: „Affirmabant autem hanc fuisse summam vel culpae suae vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta ne latrocinia ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent.“

¹⁰ Aug., *conf.* IX, 7, 15. CCL 27, 142: „Tunc hymni et psalmi ut canerentur secundum morem orientalium partium, ne populus maeroris taedio contabesceret, institutum est: ex illo in hodiernum retentum multis iam ac paene omnibus gregibus tuis et per caetera orbis imitantibus.“

Hieronymus die erste offizielle Übersetzung von Psalmen ins Lateinische verfasste, die wir heute als *Psalterium Romanum* bezeichnen,¹¹ benutzte er im Jahre 384, ganz selbstverständlich, den Text der Septuaginta. Zwei Jahre später, im Jahre 386, war es der gleiche griechische Text den Hieronymus bereits aus der Origens *Hexapla* entnahm und diese vor allem in Gallien verwendete Übersetzung, bekam den Namen *Psalterium Gallicanum*.¹² Seine dritte Übersetzung aus dem Hebräischen *Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*¹⁵ aus dem Jahr 391 setzte sich in der Kirche aus diversen Gründen nicht durch.

Die Psalmen wurden in der Kirche also sowohl im Osten als auch im Westen so gesungen, wie sie von den *Septuaginta interpretes* ins Griechische übersetzt worden waren. Und die Psalmen wurden nicht nur gesungen, sie mussten auch interpretiert werden. Davon war zumindest der Bischof der afrikanischen Stadt Hippo Regius, Aurelius Augustinus, überzeugt. Der Gesang allein, ohne das Verständnis seines Textes, festigt nämlich seiner Meinung nach die singende Gemeinschaft nicht ausreichend. Der Gesang sei zwar schön und angenehm, aber für die spirituelle Entwicklung nicht genügend. In seinen *Bekenntnissen* schreibt er: „Wenn es mir jedoch zustößt, dass mich der Gesang mehr als die gesungene Sache bewegt, dann bekenne ich mich einer Sünde schuldig und würde den Sänger lieber nicht hören.“¹⁴ Augustinus wollte also aus den Psalmen mehr als nur ein Erlebnis machen. Er sah in ihnen für die Entwicklung der Kommunität ein riesiges verborgenes Potenzial. Damit die Psalmen also nicht nur angenehm, sondern auch verständlich waren, und dem geistlichen Fortschritt der Gläubigen

¹¹ Hier., *praef. Ps. iuxta LXX*. PL 29, 117: „Psalterium Romae dudum positus emendam (sc. versio prior illa), et iuxta Septuaginta interpretes, licet cursim, magna illud ex parte correxeram (sc. versio vero altera, de qua infra).“

¹² Hier., *praef. Ps. iuxta LXX*. PL 29, 119: „Et ubicumque viderit virgulam praecedentem, ab ea usque ad duo puncta, quae impressimus, sciat in Septuaginta translatoribus plus haberi. Ubi autem stellae similitudinem perspexerit, de Hebraeis voluminibus additum noverit, aequae usque ad duo puncta, iuxta Theodotionis dumtaxat editionem, cui simplicitate sermonis a Septuaginta interpretibus non discordat.“

¹⁵ Hier., *praef. Ps. iuxta Hebr.* PL 28, 1125: „In quibus psalmis in superscriptionibus eorum obulus iacet, haec solos Septuaginta inferuntur. Neque vero apud caeteros interpretes inveniuntur. Quanta adiacentia in Hebraico et apud caeteros, non sunt inventa penes Septuaginta et Theodotionem, adiecimus cum asteriscis: quanta vero apud LXX aut Theodotionem invenimus. Neque autem Hebraeo, neque apud caeteros, obolo supposimus.“

¹⁴ Aug., *conf. X*, 33, 50. CCL 27, 182: „Tamen cum mihi accedit, ut me amplius cantus quam res, quae canitur, moveat, poenaliter me peccare confiteor et tunc malle non audire cantantem.“

dienten, legte er sie systematisch aus. Während der nächsten dreißig Jahre seiner Pastoralstätigkeit stellte er allmählich die Auslegung des ganzen Psalters zusammen.¹⁵ Diese kennen wir heute unter dem von Erasmus von Rotterdam gegebenen Namen: *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.¹⁶

Augustinus aber legte nicht nur den Psalmentext aus. Große Aufmerksamkeit widmete er auch der Interpretation von Psalmenüberschriften.¹⁷ Diese Deutungen bilden einen nicht zu vernachlässigenden Bestandteil seiner Psalmenauslegungen. Der Psalmenüberschrift des 33. Psalms widmete er sogar eine ganze Predigt.¹⁸ Die Interpretation von Psalmenüberschriften war für ihn deswegen so immens wichtig, weil er sie für den Interpretationsschlüssel zum Psalmentext selbst hielt. Deshalb erlauben wir ihm, seine Sichtweise so darzulegen:

Wenn wir beabsichtigen, ein Haus zu betreten, entnehmen wir aus der Anschrift, wem es gehört, damit wir vielleicht ohne Einladung nicht irgendwo hineinstürmen, wohin wir gar nicht sollten, oder aber, damit wir uns nicht weigern, das zu betreten, wohin wir gehen sollten. Wenn wir also lesen, dass dieser Bau dem und dem gehört, so haben wir auch die Anschrift auf dem Schild dieses Psalms.¹⁹

So gelang es Augustinus, mit Hilfe von Übersetzung und Auslegung der griechischen Psalmenüberschriften eine selbständige und komplexe Theorie der christlichen Perzeption und Interpretation des Psalters zu bilden. Als ehemaliger Grammatiklehrer konnte er sich solche grammatischen Übungen erlauben und sich ihnen mit Begeisterung widmen. Gerade die präzise Analyse der Grammatik und Syntax ermöglichte ihm die Übersetzung des Psalters ins Griechische und

¹⁵ Aug., *en. Ps.* 118, proem. CSEL 94/2, 69: „Statui autem per sermones id agere (sc. exponere), qui proferantur in populis, quas Graeci ὁμιλίαις vocant. Hoc enim iustius esse arbitror, ut conventus ecclesiastici non fraudentur etiam psalmi huius intelligentia, cuius, ut aliorum, delectari assolent cantilena.“

¹⁶ C. Weidmann, „Praefatio,“ in *Enarrationes in psalmos 1–32*, ed. C. Weidmann (Wien: ÖAW, 2003), 8.

¹⁷ R. Horka, „Meaning and Interpretation of Psalm titles in Augustine’s Commentary on Psalms *Enarrationes in Psalmos*,“ *Studia Biblica Slovaca* 5, Num. 2 (2013), 155–177. (In Slowakische Sprache).

¹⁸ Aug., *en. Ps.* 33/I, 1–11. CCL 38, 273–281.

¹⁹ Aug., *en. Ps.* 55, 1. CSEL 94/1, 181: „Sicut aliquam domum intraturi cuius sit et ad quem pertineat in titulo inspicimus, ne forte importune irruamus quo non oportet neque rursus timiditate revocemur ab eo quo oportet intrare, tamquam ergo si legerimus in his praediis ‚illius‘ aut ‚illius‘, ita in superliminari psalmi huius habemus inscriptum.“

nachfolgend ins Lateinische. Erst die Transformation des hebräischen Textes in eine Sprache mit relativ genauer und theoretisch klar ausgearbeiteter Grammatik, die das Griechische in der hellenistischen Zeit zweifelsohne darstellte, ermöglichte es ihm, dem qualifizierten Grammatiker und Rhetor, Beziehungen zwischen den Subjekten und Objekten in den Psalmentexten ausführlich zu analysieren.

Ich will Ihnen in meinem Beitrag kurz die Art und Weise vorstellen, auf die der Bischof von Hippo, Augustinus, die Psalmenüberschriften interpretierte, die den Namen des Königs David beinhalten. Dabei wird besonderes Augenmerk auf die in diesen Psalmüberschriften benutzte griechische dativische Syntax, gelegt.²⁰

Es ist gar kein Zufall, dass der ganze Psalter von vielen christlichen und jüdischen Autoren manchmal als Davids Psalmen (*psalterium Davidicum*)²¹ bezeichnet wird. Augustinus selbst benutzte diesen Ausdruck²² und bezeugte dadurch, dass auch er von der Widmung dieses ganzen biblischen Buches an König David überzeugt war. Insgesamt 86 Psalmen von der Gesamtzahl 150 beinhalten in der Überschrift diesen Namen.²³ Den König David als die mit Psalmen verbundene Person *par excellence* interpretierte Augustinus immer christologisch. Im Sinne dieser Identifikation übersetzte er seinen Namen ins Lateinische. In einem zeitgenössischen *Onomasticon* unbekannt²⁴ Ursprungs erfuhr er zwei mögliche Übersetzungen des Namens David,²⁵ nach der Form, die im hebräischen Text benutzt wurde:

²⁰ Es gibt verschiedene Handbücher, die die Beziehungen zwischen lateinische und griechische Syntax des Dativs interpretieren. Vor allem dieschon alte aber immer noch gültige Studie Landgrafs: G. Landgraf, „Der *Dativus commodi* und der *Dativus finalis* mit ihren Abarten,“ in *Archiv für Lateinische Lexikographie und Grammatik* 8 (Leipzig: G. B. Teubner, 1893), 39–76. Folgend eine reiche Auswahl an Publikation über die Dativsyntax in verschiedenen Sprachen: W. van Belle und W. van Langendock, eds. *The Dative. Volume 1: Descriptive studies* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1996), wo Willy Van Hoecke ein Kapitel über den Lateinischen Dativ eingefügt hat (S. 5–38). Schließlich soll eine interessante Reihe von Philip Baldi und Pierluigi Cuzzolin erwähnt werden (P. Baldi und P. Cuzzolin, eds., *New Perspectives on Historical Latin Syntax. Volume 1: Syntax of the Sentence* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), wo Gualtiero Calboli die Beziehung zwischen dem Dativ im Griechischen und Lateinischen auf den Seiten 96–106 systematisch auslegt.

²¹ Apg 1, 16; 4, 25. Talmud Bavli, *Pesachim* X, 117a.

²² Aug., en. Ps. 56, 5. CSEL 94/1, S. 227. Aug., *conf.* X, 33, 50. CCL 27, S. 182.

²³ Nach *Enarrationes in Psalmos* gibt es bei Psalmen: 3–40, 42, 50–64, 67–70, 85, 90, 92–98, 100, 102, 103, 107–109, 130, 132, 136–144.

²⁴ B. Altaner, „Augustinus und die biblischen Onomastica,“ in *Berthold Altaner: Kleine patristische Schriften*, ed. G. Glockmann (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1967), 312.

²⁵ Z. B. Hier., *nom. hebr.* 53. PL 23, 857.

- die Form $\eta\eta$ ²⁶ wird als *Gottes Geliebter* übersetzt,
- die weniger häufige Form $\eta\eta\eta$ ²⁷ wird als *der mit der starken Hand* übersetzt.

Beide Namensformen des israelischen Königs legte Augustinus immer christologisch aus. Zum Beispiel im Kommentar zum 34. Psalm sagte er:

Es geht um den Psalm über die starke Hand und den Geliebten, der unseren Tod besiegte und uns das Leben versprach. Denn in dem, dass er unseren Tod vernichtete, ist seine Hand mächtig und Geliebter ist er deswegen, weil er uns das ewige Leben versprach. Doch, welche Hand ist mächtiger als die, die das Bett berührte und der Tote sogleich aufstand? Gibt es eine mächtigere Hand als die, die die ganze Welt besiegte, nicht mit Schwert gerüstet, sondern am Holz angenagelt? Und übersteigt etwas die Sehnsucht der Märtyrer, die sich nach jemandem sehnten, den sie nicht einmal gesehen hatten und doch nicht zögerten, nur deswegen zu sterben, damit sie zu ihm kommen können?²⁸

Bei der Auslegung des Psalms repräsentiert also David für Augustinus keinen Eigennamen, sondern es geht vordergründig um einen der alttestamentarischen Titel Christi im Sinne einer Periphrase. In diesem Sinne griff Augustinus das Thema seiner Auslegung auf.

Die echte grammatische Arbeit begann jedoch erst bei den möglichen Lesungen der griechischen dativischen Konstruktion $\tau\tilde{\omega}$ $\Delta\alpha\upsilon\iota\delta$, mit der die Autoren der Septuaginta offensichtlich nicht zufällig die hebräische präpositionale Konstruktion $\eta\eta\eta$ übersetzten, mit der Absicht, eine breitere Palette der Auslegungen zu ermöglichen, als nur der einfache possessive Dativ bietet. Möglicherweise sahen sie weitere Möglichkeiten dieser Art auch im hebräischen Urtext und wollten auch ihre Übersetzung nicht nur auf den Hauptsinn des sog. hebräischen

²⁶ Volle Bücher: Rut, 1–2 Sam; 1–2 Kön (außer 1Kön 3, 14; 11, 4. 36), Ps; Spr; Koh; Jes; Jer. Auch in: 1 Chr 13, 6; Esra 34, 24; 37, 24–25 (insgesamt 790 Mal).

²⁷ Volle Bücher: Sach; 1–2 Chr (außer 1Chr 13, 6); Esra; Neh. Auch: Am 6, 5; 9, 11; Hos 3, 5; Ez 34, 23; 1 Kön 3, 14; 11, 4. 36; Hld 4, 4 (insgesamt 276 Mal).

²⁸ Aug., *en. Ps. 34*, 1. CCL 38, 300: „Psalmus ergo ipsi David; David interpretatur fortis manu, vel desiderabilis. Psalmus ergo manu forti et desiderabili, qui nostram mortem vicit, qui nobis vitam promisit; in hoc enim manu fortis, quia mortem nostram vicit; in hoc desiderabilis, quia vitam aeternam promisit. Quid enim fortius manu hac, quae tetigit loculum, et mortuus resurrexit? Quid fortius manu hac, quae mundum vicit, non ferro armata, sed ligno transfixa? Quid autem desiderabilius eo, quem non videntes martyres, mori voluerunt, ut ad illum pervenire mererentur?“

ℓ *auctoris* beschränken. Augustinus als ehemaliger Grammatiklehrer erkannte diese zusätzlichen Ebenen, beschrieb sie und benutzte sie für seine christliche Psalmenauslegung. In unserer Forschung haben wir festgestellt, dass Augustinus die ursprüngliche Syntax des griechischen sog. freien Dativs τῷ Δαυιδ, die ins Lateinische ebenso mit Dativ *ipsi David* übersetzt wurde, auf vielfältigen Bedeutungsebenen las.

Als erster ist der *dativus auctoris* zu erwähnen. So wird *ipsi David* traditionell in der großen Mehrzahl der gegenwärtigen Bibelausgaben interpretiert.²⁹ Also ist der Psalm von David selbst, denn er stammt von ihm, er ist sein Verfasser.³⁰ Es ist nämlich *David's Psalm*. Augustinus nahm diese Bedeutungsebene offensichtlich wahr und legte deshalb mit der Verwendung des christologischen Paradigmas, das bereits beschrieben wurde, die Psalmenüberschrift als *dativus auctoris* aus:

Dieser Psalm lässt diejenigen in Ruhe, die nicht gefallen sind, aber er will nicht diejenigen in der Verzweiflung lassen, die gefallen sind. Jeder unter euch, der gesündigt hat, aber wegen des Verlustes der Hoffnung auf die Erlösung zögert, ob er überhaupt Buße für seine Sünde tun soll, soll Davids Klage hören. Zu dir aber wurde der Prophet Nathan nicht geschickt. Der demütige König gehorchte zwar dem Propheten, aber das demütige Volk soll Christus selbst hören.³¹

Es wäre möglich mehrere ähnliche Beispiele zu finden, wo Augustinus die griechische dativische Konstruktion τῷ Δαυιδ als *dativus auctoris* versteht. Deshalb kann man bei Augustinus solches Autorenverständnis des benutzten Dativs, sowohl des griechischen: τῷ Δαυιδ (αἰνεῖν ἐστιν) als auch des lateinischen: *ipsi David (canere est)* eindeutig bestätigen. Außerdem ist zu erwähnen, dass einige Psalmen in ihrer Überschrift auch die genitivische Konstruktion ψαλμος τοῦ Δαυιδ³² haben, die direkt andeutet, dass es sich um Davids Psalm handelt, d.h., dass er sein Autor ist.

²⁹ Z. B. Einheitsübersetzung: *ein Psalm Davids*.

³⁰ Z. B. bei der Psalm 51, 55, 59, u. a. Vgl. B. Hroboň, ed., *Žalmy 51–75* (Trnava: Dobrá kniha, 2017), 57, 159, 248 u. a.

³¹ Aug., *en. Ps.* 50, 5. CCL 38, 602: „Iste ergo psalmus, sicut cautos facit eos qui non ceciderunt, sic desperatos esse non vult qui ceciderunt. Quisquis peccasti, et dubitas agere poenitentiam pro peccato tuo desperando salutem tuam, audi David gementem. Ad te Nathan propheta non est missus. ... Rex sublimis Prophetam audivit; plebs eius humilis Christum audiat.“

³² Ps 16, 25, 26, 27, 36.

Die andere nächste Ebene des Begriffs offenbart sich, wenn wir diese Phrase als *dativus commodi* (Dativ der Beteiligung) annehmen:⁵⁵ τῷ Δαυιδ (τοῦ αἰνεῖν), *ipsi David (ad canendum)*. Der Psalm also gehört dem verkörperten Christus, weil er der wahre Interpret des Psalters ist. Durch Augustinus' eigene Worte:

Er (Jesus) stammt nämlich aus dem Geschlecht Davids, aber nicht als Gott, denn so ist er Davids Schöpfer, sondern nach dem Leib. Die Prophezeiung ist nämlich gewöhnt, ihn David zu nennen. Deshalb nimm es bis zum Ende so wahr, dass der Psalm Davids selbst gesungen wird. Höre die Stimme seines Körpers und werde auch selbst zu einem Teil seines Körpers.⁵⁴

Aber dieser Dativ in der Psalmenüberschrift ist nach Augustinus auch als Dativ des Mittels zu verstehen (vorheriger griechischer Instrumental). Es geht also um den Psalm τῷ Δαυιδ, denn er ist David gewidmet, er ist der Anlass, weswegen der Psalm gesungen wird.⁵⁵ Hier deckt sich nach Augustinus die Psalmenüberschrift *ipsi David* mit anderer häufiger Überschrift griechischer Psalmen, die als Beziehungsakkusativ gilt. Das griechische εἰς τὸ τέλος und lateinische *in finem* drückt die gleiche Konstruktion wie *dativus relationis* (Dativ des Standpunktes) aus: (ἀνατεταλκός) τῷ Δαυιδ, *ipsi David (ortus)*. Auch diese Überschrift legt Augustinus christologisch aus und weist darauf hin, dass beide Überschriften die gleiche Bedeutung haben:

Über das Ende, also über Christus. Denn Christus ist das Ende des Gesetzes und jeder, der an ihn glaubt, wird gerecht. Und David selbst dürfen wir auch nicht anders verstehen. Nur so, dass er aus dem Geschlecht Davids stammte und zum Menschen unter den Menschen wurde, damit er die Menschen den Engeln gleich macht.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Sieh in rabbinischem Kommentar im: Hroboň, ed., *Žalmy 51–75*, 58.

⁵⁴ Aug., *en. Ps.* 139, 3. CSEL 95/4, 168: „(Iesus) ex semine David non secundum divinitatem, qua creator est ipsius David, sed secundum carnem David dignatus est vocari in prophetia: in ipsum finem intende, quia ipsi David psalmus canitur; et corporis eius vocem audi, et esto in corpore eius.“

⁵⁵ Z. B. der Psalm 52. Vgl. Hroboň, ed., *Žalmy 51–75*, 110.

⁵⁶ Aug., *en. Ps.* 60, 1. CSEL 94/1, 410: „In finem: utique in Christum – finis enim legis Christus ad iustitiam omni credenti –; et ipsi David non alium quam ipsum accipere debemus qui venit ex semine David, ut esset homo inter homines et aequales angelis faceret homines.“

Wieder ist die Ansicht des Bischofs von Hippo über diese Psalmenüberschrift kein Einzelbeispiel. Auch an anderen Stellen seines *Kommentares zu den Psalmen* benutzt Augustinus bei dem Namen Davids sein christologisches Paradigma und liest in ihm die Psalmenüberschrift als *dativus relationis*:

Die Psalmenüberschrift wird zu einem gewissen Verkünder des ganzen Psalms. Als ob er sagen würde: Seht, wer kommt! Über ihn will ich sprechen, über Christus werde ich singen. Deshalb auch die Worte: *den David selbst* kann ich nur so verstehen, dass es sich um denjenigen handelt, der aus dem Geschlecht Davids stammt.³⁷

Für Augustinus ist es kein Problem, die beiden angeführten Bedeutungen des Dativs, des Autorendativs und des Dativs des Standpunktes, in eine gemeinsame Aussage zu verbinden. Er liest denselben Text gleichzeitig in zwei unterschiedlichen Kontexten und er spielt mit unterschiedlichen Bedeutungen des griechischen und lateinischen Dativs:

Suchen wir also auch in diesem Psalm unseren Herrn und Erlöser Jesus Christus, wie er durch diese Prophezeiung sich selbst und auch das verkündet, was in dieser Zeit geschehen muss, durch Dinge, die schon vor langer Zeit geschehen sind. Doch auch durch Propheten verkündete er sich selbst, denn er ist Gottes Wort. Und sie konnten etwas Solches sagen, nur wenn sie voll von Gottes Wort waren. Sie also verkündeten den Christus erfüllt von Christus.³⁸

Im umfangreichen Psalmentraktat des Bischofs von Hippo wären bestimmt auch mehrere solche Beispiele zu finden. Man kann also eindeutig bestätigen, dass Augustinus den David – Christus für den Autor, für den Grund und das Ziel des Psalmengesangs hielt. So wird Christus nicht nur zum Verfasser, sondern auch zum Anlass und

³⁷ Aug., *en. Ps.* 139, 3. CSEL 95/4, 168: „Tamquam enim preco psalmi est titulus psalmi, veluti dicens: Ecce veniet: inde dicturus sum, de Christo cantaturus. Nam et ipsi David non intellego nisi ipsum, qui factus est ex semine David secundum carnem.“

³⁸ Aug., *en. Ps.* 142, 2. CSEL 95/5, 51: „Quaeramus ergo in hoc psalmo Dominum et Salvatorem nostrum Iesum Christum praenuntiantem se per hanc prophetiam, et quid futurum esset in hoc tempore, per ea quae pridem facta sunt praedicantem. Ipse enim se in Prophetis praedicabat; quoniam ipse est Verbum Dei; nec illi tale aliquid dicebant, nisi pleni Verbo Dei. Annuntiabant ergo Christum, pleni Christo.“

Thema des Psalms. Augustinus äußert es direkt in einer kurzen Bemerkung zum 22. (in MT 23.) Psalm: „*Psalm dem David selbst*. Die Kirche sagt über Christus: *Der Herr hütet mich, nichts wird mir fehlen*. Herr Jesus Christus solle mein Hirte sein und nichts wird mir fehlen.“³⁹

Aber in einem bestimmten abgeleiteten Sinne des Dativs des Mittels bedeutet es im Prinzip, dass David – Christus auch zum Psalmeninhalt wird,⁴⁰ wie es der *dativus instrumenti* (im Latein ersetzt mit *ablativus instrumenti*) andeutet: τῷ Δαυιδ ψαλλεῖν, *ipso David canere*. Da es sich um die Psalmen zu seiner Ehre handelt, wird es gewiss auch bei dem Psalmentext um ihn gehen. Er ist doch selbst das Wort Gottes. Auch diese Bedeutungsebene wird von Augustinus nicht übergangen:

Es ist sein Psalm: ihn soll unser Herz, ihn soll unsere Zunge besingen. Und es geht nur dann, wenn er selbst uns das schenkt, womit wir ihn besingen sollen. Denn niemand würde ihn gut besingen, wenn er von ihm nicht das bekäme, womit er ihn besingen soll. Schließlich auch das, was wir jetzt singen, sagte sein Geist durch den Propheten mit den Worten, in denen wir ihn selbst erkennen.⁴¹

So nahm Augustinus den König David – Typus Christi mittels des *dativus auctoris*, als den Verfasser des Psalmentextes und bei dem *dativus commodi* den primären Interpreten des Psalmenvortrags und mittels des *dativus relationis* als den Anlass des Psalms wahr, d.h., dass er gleichzeitig das Thema und der Inhalt des Psalms nach den *dativus instrumenti* war.

Eine Möglichkeit der Interpretation des Dativs haben wir aber bis jetzt noch nicht erwähnt: es geht um den *dativus possessivus* (Pertinenzdativ), der den Empfänger oder Besitzer einer Sache ausdrückt. Und falls der Psalm die Überschrift τῷ Δαυιδ (ἐστίν), *ipsi David (est)*, in einigen Fällen auch τοῦ Δαυιδ hat, kann man ihn legitimer Weise auch als possessiven Dativ oder Genitiv betrachten. So sind die Psalmen

³⁹ Aug., en. Ps. 22, 1. CSEL 93/1A, 331–333: „Ecclesia loquitur de Christo: Dominus pascit me, et nihil mihi deerit. Dominus Iesus pastor meus est, et nihil mihi deerit.“

⁴⁰ Z. B. im Psalm 70. Hroboň, ed., *Žalmy 51–75*, 539.

⁴¹ Aug., en. Ps. 34, 1. CCL 38, 300: „Ergo psalmus illi; illi cor nostrum, illi lingua nostra digna cantet; si tamen ipse dignabitur donare quod cantet. Nemo illi cantat digna, nisi qui ab illo acceperit quod cantare possit. Denique hoc quod modo cantamus, Spiritu eius dictum est per prophetam eius et in verbis ubi nos agnoscimus et ipsum.“

auch für David als Empfänger verfasst.⁴² Für ihn sind sie bestimmt und sie gehören ihm deshalb unwiderruflich. Zum Beispiel:

Die ganze Überschrift lautet: dem David selbst. Sehen wir uns also an, was dem David selbst gehört: *Ich will dir danken aus ganzem Herzen*. Die Psalmenüberschrift deutet uns gewöhnlich an, was darin geschieht. In diesem Fall aber, da hier nur das angedeutet wird, wem man singen soll, verkündet erst der erste Psalmenvers, was weiter geschehen wird. *Ich will dir danken aus ganzem Herzen*.⁴³

Auch diese syntaktische Struktur also entging der Aufmerksamkeit Augustinus' nicht, schließlich kann man sie in seinen Psalmenauslegungen sogar für die häufigste halten. Hier aber erweitert Augustinus sein Verständnis Davids nicht nur auf Christus, sondern auch auf seinen Körper – die Kirche. Christus stammte nämlich nach dem Leib aus dem Geschlecht Davids und so ist der echte David sein Körper auf der Erde – die Kirche. So ist David das Vorbild Christi und gleichzeitig jenes der Kirche. Diese gilt als wahre und rechthältige Anwenderin des Psalms. Durch den Dativ der Art und Weise (*dativus modi*) äußert Augustinus also, dass der τῷ Δαυιδ geschriebene Psalm nur durch die Kirche ausgeübt werden soll: ψαλλεῖν (ἐν) τῷ Δαυιδ, (*in*) *ipso David psallere*.⁴⁴ So ändert sich in diesem Punkt Augustinus' christologisches Paradigma zu einem christologisch – ekklesiologischen. Wieder führen wir einige Beispiele für die Auslegung dieser Psalmenüberschrift im Sinne des Dativs der Art und Weise an:

Die Überschrift dieses Psalms ist kurz und einfach. Sie hält uns kaum auf, denn wir wissen schon, wessen Vorbild David war und wir erkennen in ihm auch uns selbst, denn auch wir sind die Glieder seines Körpers. Erkennen wir also in ihm die Stimme der Kirche und freuen uns gleichzeitig darüber, dass wir ein Bestandteil dessen sein dürfen, wessen Stimme

⁴² Siehe in dem rabbinischen Kommentar in: Hroboň, ed., *Žalmy 51–75*, 58.

⁴³ Aug., *en. Ps.* 137, 1–2. CSEL 95/4, 104: „Totus titulus est ipsi David. Videamus ergo quid ipsi David. Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde meo. Solet nobis psalmi titulus indicare quid agitur intus; hic autem quoniam titulus non hoc indicat, sed tantum cui cantetur indicat, quid agitur in toto psalmo primus versus indicat: Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde meo.“

⁴⁴ B. Fischer, *Die Psalmen als Stimme der Kirche. Gesammelte Studien zur christlichen Psalmenfrommigkeit* (Trier: Paulinus Verlag, 1882), 15–35.

wir singen hörten. Die ganze Überschrift lautet: dem David selbst. Sehen wir uns also das an, was David selbst gehört.⁴⁵

An anderer Stelle: „Dem David selbst. Dies soll man nicht dem Vermittler der Menschen – Jesus Christus zuerkennen, sondern der ganzen Kirche, wenn sie erst im Frieden Christi vollkommen sein wird.“⁴⁶

So vollendete der possessive Dativ und Dativ des Artes die ganze grammatische Analyse der Psalmenüberschrift: τῷ Δαυιδ. Mittels dieser Untersuchungen den auf den König David als das christologische Vorbild angepassten Kasussyntax schuf Bischof Augustinus zugleich auch eine dynamische Struktur, in der der ganze Psalm lebt. Der Dativ seines Namens, der in den griechischen Psalmenüberschriften erscheint und der ins Lateinische mit der gleichen dativischen Konstruktion übersetzt wurde, ermöglichte dem Grammatiker und Rhetor Augustinus den ganzen Psalter neu christologisch zu reinterpreten. Für Augustinus spielte sich nämlich der ganze Psalm in David – Christus ab:

- Als Gott ist David – Christus der Verfasser des Psalms, wie es uns der *dativus auctoris* verrät,
- als verkörperter Christus übte er auch den Autorenvortrag aus, wie es der *dativus commodi* bezeichnet.
- Als Gott ist David – Christus der Grund und der Anlass des Psalms, wie es der *dativus relationis* beschreibt,
- als verkörperter Christus ist sein messianisches Werk der Inhalt und der Text der Psalmen, wie es der *dativus instrumenti* verrät.
- Als Gott und Kopf des Körpers ist David – Christus der Endrezipient der Psalmen, wie es der *dativus possessivus* andeutet,
- als sein Körper ist die Kirche im Auftrag von Christus die rechtgültige Anwenderin und Behüterin von Psalmen, wie es der *dativus modi* ausdrücken könnte.

Aus diesen Gründen fühlte sich auch Augustinus als christlicher Bischof berechtigt und berufen, die Psalmen im christlichen Sinne auszulegen. In seinen Auslegungen bildete er aus den Psalmen rein

⁴⁵ Aug., *en. Ps.* 137, 1. CSEL 95/4, 104: „Titulus psalmi huius brevis et simplex est, qui non tenet scientes cuius figuram portaverit David, et in eo etiam nos ipsos agnoscentes, quia et nos membra illius corporis sumus. Agnoscamus ergo hinc vocem ecclesiae, simulque gaudeamus quod in ea esse meruimus, cuius vocem cantantis audivimus. Totus titulus est: ipsi David. Videamus ergo quid ipsi David.“

⁴⁶ Aug., *en. Ps.* 25, 1. CSEL 93/1A, 355: „Ipsi David non mediatori homini Christo Iesu, sed homini ecclesiae iam perfecte in Christo stabilito attribui potest.“

christliche Lieder, die von dem alttestamentarischen Volk nur sekundär aufbewahrt und gesungen worden waren,⁴⁷ bis Christus und die Kirche als ihre wahren Anwender ankamen.⁴⁸

Die griechische Übersetzung des Psalters ermöglichte Augustinus also die vollständige christliche Psalmentheologie zu bilden, denn die Syntax des griechischen Dativs erlaubte ihm, die Gestalt des Königs David als das Vorbild Christi in allen Beziehungsvarianten zu sehen, die der griechische Dativ bietet. So wurden schließlich alle vielfältigen Interpretationen des griechischen Dativs in einer einzigen Person des Verfassers, Interpreten, Inhalts und Empfängers vereinigt,⁴⁹ wodurch diese Syntax in diesem konkreten Fall eine ganz neue Einheit gewann. Doch wie auch immer der Christ ihn auslegen wird, immer muss er zu Christus kommen, wie es auch der große afrikanische Theologe herrlich äußert:

Die Überschrift des Psalms ist: *Dem David selbst, als sein Land wieder erneut wurde.* All dieses beziehen wir auf Christus, wenn wir uns auf dem Weg der wahren Erkenntnis halten wollen. Entfernen wir uns nicht von diesem Eckstein, damit unsere Erkenntnis nicht zerbricht. ... Wenn dem Menschen nach der Lesung des Wortes Gottes irgendein Zweifel befällt, soll er sich nicht von Christus entfernen. Denn erst wenn ihm in diesen Worten Christus erscheint, versteht er das, was zu verstehen ist. Bis er nicht zur Erkenntnis von Christus kommt, soll er sich nicht einbilden, etwas verstanden zu haben.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ M. Fiedorowicz, „General introduction,“ in *St. Augustine: Expositions of the Psalms 1–32*, ed. J. Rotelle (New York: New City Press, 2000), 23–24.

⁴⁸ Aug., *en. Ps.* 143, 2. CSEL 95/5, 77: „Denique iste David, scilicet Christus caput et corpus, tempore revelationis Novi Testamenti, tempore insinuandae et commendandae gratiae Dei, quid fecit? Arma posuit, quinque lapides tulit: arma, ut diximus, onerantia posuit; ergo sacramenta Legis, sacramenta illa Legis, quae non sunt imposita Gentibus, posuit, quae non observamus. Quinque enim lapides quinque libros Moysi significant. ... Erant ergo in flumine, tamquam in populo illo primo, lapides; illic erant inutiles, vacabant, nihil proderant, transibant super inutiles. Quid fecit David, ut Lex ipsa utilis esset? Accepit gratiam.“

⁴⁹ L. Scheffczyk, „Vox Christi ad Patrem – vox Ecclesiae ad Christum. Christologische Hintergründe der beiden Grundtypen christlichen Psalmengebets und ihre spirituellen Konsequenzen,“ in *Liturgie und Dichtung. Ein interdisziplinäres Compendium*, Bd. II., ed. H. Becker und R. Kaczynski (St. Ottilien: EOS, 1983), 579–614.

⁵⁰ Aug., *en. Ps.* 96, 2. CCL 39, 1354–1355: „Inscribitur psalmus: ipsi David, cum terra eius restituta est. Totum ad Christum revocemus, si volumus iter rectae intelligentiae tenere; non recedamus a lapide angulari, ne intellectus noster ruinam faciat. ... Quidquid dubitationis habet homo in animo auditis scripturis Dei, a Christo non recedat; cum

Mit diesem kurzen Abschnitt wollen wir bestätigen, dass das Spiel mit der Grammatik Augustinus dazu diene, eine komplexe christliche Psalmentheologie entstehen zulassen. Deshalb ist es, unserer Meinung nach wichtig, sich auch weiterhin der Analyse der Psalmenüberschriften im Augustinus' *Psalmenkommentar* zu widmen.

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ei fuerit in illis verbis Christus revelatus, intellegat se intellexisse; antequam autem perveniat ad Christi intellectum, non se praesumat intellexisse.“

REVIEWS & NEWS

Edita Miriam Mendelová OP.

Abba Dorotheos Duchovní poučení užitečná pro duši.

Praha: Triton 2017, 136 s. ISBN: 978-80-7553-446-0

VÁCLAV VENTURA

Nakladatelství Triton připravilo skutečně milé překvapení. Z dílny etnoložky a teoložky sestry Edity Miriam Mendelové OP vychází monografie Abba Dorotheos z Gazy, Duchovní poučení užitečná pro duši. Kniha přináší zasvěcenou studii o životě, díle a myšlení mnišského autora ze šestého století Dorothea z Gazy. Byl žákem neméně významných duchovních autorit eremitů Barsanufia a Jana, posléze igumenem, představeným kláštera a nakonec zakladatelem nového kláštera v blízkosti Gazy.

Biografie Dorotheova je erudovaně zarámovaná do historického a duchovního kontextu. Jsme seznámeni s tradicí pouštních otců, specifiky palestinského mnišství, s životem a naukou jeho velkých učitelů Barsanufia a Jana. Z Dorotheova literárního a duchovního odkazu jsou nejznámější jeho Různá poučení pro duši. Jsou v nich představena témata mnišské pouštní duchovní tradice propracovaná s intelektuální filosofickou erudicí.

Pro pochopení duchovní nauky Dorotheovy je klíčová kapitola Duchovní život ve spisech abba Dorothea: rozbor a duchovní učení v nich obsažené. Otevírá se před námi prostor duchovních zápasů s vášněmi, základní stavební kameny mnišského a křesťanského života: pokora, bázeň Boží, láska, poslušnost, modlitba, mlčení a pokoj. Zkušenost Dorotheova ze šestého století se tu ukazuje ve své aktuálnosti a smysluplnosti pro náš život. Lze říci, že tato kapitola může sloužit jako slabikář duchovního života pro ty, kteří jsou zváni na cestu radikálního křesťanství.

Autorka nezapře své filologické dovednosti a v závěrečné kapitole se zabývá rukopisnou tradicí, vydáními a překlady Dorotheových spisů a jeho vlivem na další autory. K serióznosti práce patří i výkladový slovníček a ukázka dvou textů z Duchovních poučení. Práce je pro čtenáře upravenou rigorózní prací Edity Mendelové na Husitské teologické fakultě UK v rámci jejího studia na Ústavu východního křesťanství. Jen tak mimochodem je ukázkou plodné spolupráce různých akcentů křesťanské tradice. Autorka tuto knížku chápe jako uvedení do duchovního světa Dorotheova. Intenzivně pracuje na překladu jeho Poučení. Ta jistě obohatí naši překladovou patristickou literaturu o živý duchovní pramen a poslouží k prohloubení křesťanského života z osvědčených zdrojů křesťanské tradice.

doi: 10.14712/23363398.2020.12

Conference Report: 'The Evangelical Prophet Isaiah Prophesied' (7 December 2018, Catholic Theological Faculty, Charles University, Prague)

JAROSLAV BROŽ

On December 7, 2018, an international biblical conference was held at the Catholic Theological Faculty on the textological, literary, and theological questions of the Book of the prophet Isaiah with the title 'The Evangelical Prophet Isaiah Prophesied' (Prorok evangelický Isaiáš prorokoval).

Among the distinct guests from abroad were Libor Marek, a lecturer at the Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit (USA), and Peter Dubovský, a professor at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome (Italy). L. Marek gave a presentation on 'Reception of Isaiah 7:17 in Qumran: The Use of Ambiguity of the Biblical Text,' in which he explained some approaches to the reception of the biblical text in the community of Qumran. In his keynote lecture 'Isaiah and Assyria', P. Dubovský discussed the historical context of the first part of Isaiah's book and the Assyrian politics of that time.

Other conference papers on the programme were by the biblical scholars from the Czech Republic. Július Pavelčík (Theological Faculty, University of South Bohemia, České Budějovice) spoke on 'Isaian Variations in the Letter of James'. The paper presented by Martin Prudký (Protestant Theological Faculty, Charles University, Praha) focused on 'Poetic and Rhetorical Means in the Prophecy of Isaiah: An Example of Isa. 5:1–7'. The combination of linguistic, exegetical, and historical approach was introduced by Jaroslav Brož (Catholic Theological Faculty, Charles University, Prague) entitled 'Almāh and Parthenos in Isa. 7:14 and Matth. 1:23: The Case of J.L. Isenbiehl from Today's Perspective'. An example of early-modern Catholic exegesis was presented by Tomáš Matějec (Catholic Theological Faculty, Charles University, Prague) with his contribution 'As on the day of Midian: Typological Interpretation of Isa. 9:3 at Cornelius a Lapide'.

The conference also became an exceptional opportunity to present two recent translations of the Book of the prophet Isaiah into Czech. Gabriela Vlková and Jana Plátová (Sts Cyril and Methodius Faculty of Theology, Palacký University, Olomouc) presented their work in a series of commented translation of the Septuagint into Czech: *Knihy Izajáš. Komentovaný překlad řecké septuagintní verze*, Praha: Vyšehrad, 2018. The second book presented was a new translation of Isaiah intended for liturgical use in the Roman Catholic Church, accompanied by an introduction and detailed exegetical notes written by Josef Hřebík, Jaroslav Brož (Catholic Theological Faculty, Charles University, Prague) and

Pavel Jartym: *Kniha proroka Izaiáše. Český katolický překlad*, Praha: Česká biblická společnost, 2018. The conference could be held thanks to the support of the authorities of the Catholic Theological Faculty and sponsorship of the Czech Bible Society.

The conference was funded by the Charles University project PROGRES Q01 'Theology as a way of interpreting history, traditions and contemporary society'.

doi: 10.14712/23363398.2020.13

**Conference Report: ‘John Henry Newman –
a Theologian and Saint’ (31 October 2019, Catholic
Theological Faculty, Charles University, Prague)**

ZUZANA MATISOVSKÁ

Regarding the recent canonisation of Cardinal John Henry Newman in October 2019, the Department of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of the Catholic Theological Faculty organised a small conference exploring his person and work on the 31st October 2019. Six speakers representing four Czech and Slovak faculties presented their 20-minute papers, each followed by a short discussion manifesting multiple aspects of this significant theologian and saint.

The meeting was opened by the keynote lecture given by the Slovak systematic theologian, Benedictine and Ph.D. graduate of the Catholic University of America Ján Dolný, OSB. Reflecting on *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1895), he described how Newman’s personal inquiry established the necessary context of living faith for his thoughts and theological insight. His obedience to the recognised truth, peculiar sensibility for the importance of development, and pastoral character of theology had driven him to the realisation that the main mark of the Church is life itself, and therefore the understanding of doctrine must deepen and new features of the faith must be brought up to stay authentic and fruitful in every era.

Daniel Soukup, a literary scholar and translator of various works of Newman, focused in his talk on *The Idea of University* (first part published in 1852, whole book in 1973). Aiming to explain Newman’s vision of the relationship between theology and other sciences as well as its relevance for the current discussion on university education, Soukup analysed the basic definition of university as a place of teaching universal knowledge. He proposed that, even though there is a great difference between what Newman was actually saying and what intellectuals nowadays tend to adopt, what is remarkable is not only the content but also the form of his ideas and the fact that Newman’s personality itself illustrates the meaning of universal education, which underlines his credibility and makes him an inspiring figure even today.

František Štech, completing the first part of the conference, examined Newman’s idea of development in the context of Christian revelation – the reality which is fully alive and active in the present became clear in the Incarnation but has preserved the mystery, calling one to answer by taking on a journey of evolution.

The second half of the session belonged to the three theologians from the University of South Bohemia. Tomáš Machula, the rector of USB, evaluated

the Anglican concept of *via media* in dialogue with Newman's religious journey, approaching it more as a formal principle in contrast with Aristotle's concept of virtue. Jaroslav Vokoun, concerned with ecumenical dialogue and the dynamics of traditions, focused on the content of the *via media* concept; he claimed that it can always serve as an instrument for discerning various types of churches as well as assorted positions within communities. The final lecture of the afternoon was given by Július Pavelčík, who used an analogy between the theologian John Henry Newman and the philosopher Maurice Blondel to demonstrate their mutual emphasis on the active aspect of tradition, an interest in the movement from the implicit to the explicit, and an effort to reach a balanced view of the relationship between intellect, faith, history, and doctrine.

The life and work of John Henry Newman was formed by 'a hidden experience of fight for a wide heart and open ears for the calling of God'.¹ His personal struggles bore fruit for the whole Church as it is with the life of every saint, and his honest dialogue with particular historical circumstances contributed to the general renewal of theology. Reflections presented during the conference served as the examples of enriching communication between this man of the 19th century and current affairs.

doi: 10.14712/25365398.2020.14

¹ Roman A. Siebenrock, 'John Henry Newman (1801–1890). Být křesťanem v dnešním světě – model,' *Teologické texty* 22, no. 1 (2011).

Zpráva z konference: „Jako muže a ženu je stvořil (Gen 1,27)“ (7. listopadu 2019, Katolická teologická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova, Praha)

DAVID BOUMA

Dne 7. listopadu 2019 proběhla na Katolické teologické fakultě Univerzity Karlovy konference odkazující v názvu na 1. knihu Mojžíšovu s podtitulem Definice, polarita a komplementarita muže a ženy z filozofické a teologické perspektivy. Akci organizovala Katedra systematické teologie a filozofie a z tohoto pracoviště vzešli též všichni referující. Jakkoli bylo datum konání konference pro většinu referujících ještě poněkud obtížené resentimenty, od začátku příprav listopadového setkání bylo jasné, že v žádném případě nepůjde o pokus zaujmout nějakou pozici u barikády revolučního tématu gender či genderové teorie, ba právě naopak – že se pokusíme vnést do rozjitřené atmosféry jak v katolické církvi, tak ve společnosti pozitivní impulsy stran utváření struktury lidského světa. Konferenci zahájil vedoucí katedry doc. David Vopřada, který též moderoval první blok programu. První příspěvek přednesl hlavní organizátor konference dr. David Bouma, který nastínil hlavní teze vatikánského dokumentu věnovanému dialogu v otázce genderové výchovy („Male and Female He Created them“ Towards a Path of Dialogue on the Question of Gender Theory in Education). Text Kongregace pro katolickou výchovu z 2. února 2019 určený především pro recepci ve vzdělávacích institucích ocenil referující jako vyvážený text, který vychází z *auditus temporis*, pokračuje racionální argumentací a vrcholí pokusem o pozitivní vizi člověka zakotveného v rodině a společnosti. Dokument se přimlouvá za jakousi kulturu lidské blízkosti, jež omezuje izolaci člověka v atomizovaném světě a vede k jeho komplexnímu – tělesně duševnímu rozvoji. Vychovatel má být pak schopen vnímat výzvy současnosti jako příležitosti a vést svěřené osoby navzdory jistým ideologickým a banalizačním tlakům k utváření života do podoby sebedarování až k jeho vrcholu v manželství. Referující upozornil na skutečnost, že cílem vatikánského dokumentu je připomenout, že církev se těší ze svého evangeliem inspirovaného pohledu na člověka a chce nabízet jeho objevení prostřednictvím křesťanské pedagogiky. Doprovázení mladého člověka – deklaruje text – se má dít v atmosféře otevřenosti, respektu a vřidnosti, bez jakékoliv diskriminace. Závěr dikasterního poselství povzbuzuje vychovatele k lásce k mladým lidem a vyjadřuje vděčnost těm, kdo „učí mladé lidi otevřenosti k druhým jakožto tváři, k osobě, jako k bratru a sestře, kdo je poznávají a respektují s jejich vlastním příběhem, zásluhami a nedostatky, přednostmi a limity. Výzvou je spolupracovat s mladými lidmi a učit je, aby byli otevření realitě, jež je obklopuje, a byli schopni péče a něhy.“

Následovaly příspěvky prvního bloku konference, ve kterých zazněly inspirace z děl Jacquese Maritaina (dr. Lukáš Fošum), Pavla Jevdokimova (doc. Karel Sládek) a pohled na rovnost muže a ženy z perspektivy sakramentální teologie (Benedikt Mohelník, OP). Po živé diskusi a následné přestávce převzal moderování druhého bloku konference David Bouma a uvedl referáty týkající se filozofických pojetí rovnosti pohlaví (doc. David Svoboda a dr. Prokop Sousedík), genderové spravedlnosti (dr. Petr Štica) tzv. nového feminismu (dr. Barbora Šmejdová). Hojně navštívenou a živou diskusi prostoupenou konferencí uzavíral patristickým impulsem vedoucí katedry systematické teologie a filozofie doc. David Vopřada. Na závěr bych chtěl jako organizátor konference vyjádřit svou radost z nadšených ohlasů účastníků a uspokojení, že se i ke kontroverznímu a citlivému tématu, jež si konference „Jako muž a ženu je stvořil“ zvolila, dá hovořit věcně, kompetentně, umírněně a pozitivně.

doi: 10.14712/23363398.2020.15

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS CAROLINAE
THEOLOGICA 2019, Vol. 9, No. 2

Charles University
Karolinum Press
Ovocný trh 560/5, 116 56 Praha 1
Czech Republic
www.karolinum.cz
Typeset and printed by Karolinum Press

Published twice a year

ISSN 1804-5588 (Print)
ISSN 2336-3398 (Online)
MK ČR E 19775