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VON DER ÖKONOMISCHEN ZU EINER THEOLOGISCHEN WIRTSCHAFTS- UND UNTERNEHMENSETHIK

ANTON BURGER*

Zusammenfassung: Die sog. „ökonomische“ Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik geht von der regulativen Idee der „Besserstellung aller“ aus und legt den Fokus auf die Gestaltung der Rahmenordnung; dort liegt bei ihr der Ort der Moral. In diesem Beitrag wird die Notwendigkeit eines weitergehenden Handlungsethos v. a. mit dem Reparaturcharakter einer realen Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung begründet. Eine theologische Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik baut auf dieser Kritik und am Auftrag zur Gestaltung der zeitlichen Ordnungen auf, arbeitet das christliche Handlungsethos auf Makro- und Mikroebene heraus und führt zur Erarbeitung konkreter Maßnahmen z. B. zur Führung von Mitarbeitern oder zur Gestaltung der Unternehmenskultur.

Schlagworte: Bundesdenken, ökonomische Ethik, Eigeninteresse, Rahmenordnung, Ex-post-Reparatur, Transaktionskosten, Handlungs-, Ordnungs- und Diskursverantwortung, Personwürde, Personalisation.

1. Problemstellung

Ethik als „philosophische Reflexion auf Moral“¹, als kritisches Nachdenken über Moral, gibt Antworten auf die Frage „*Was tun?*“. Während eine „Allgemeine Ethik“ nicht auf konkrete Probleme eines Lebensbereichs, sondern auf meta-ethische, d. h. logische, erkenntnistheoretische und semantische Fragen sowie auf ethische Theorien und auf zentrale Begriffe wie Gerechtigkeit, Menschenrechte etc. fokussiert, ist eine „*Angewandte Ethik*“ eine Bereichsethik für eine konkrete Lebenswirklichkeit eines Menschen; Beispiele sind Medizin-, Tier-, Rechts-, Medien, Wirtschafts-, Unternehmens-

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¹ J. FISCHER, S. GRUDEN, IMHOF, J.-D. STRUB, *Grundkurs Ethik. Grundbegriffe philosophischer und theologischer Ethik*, Stuttgart, 2007, 74.

ethik usw.² Letztere ist dann *deskriptiver Art*, wenn sie vorhandenes Wertebewusstsein beschreibt und untersucht, wenn sie über die Sphäre der faktischen Werte reflektiert, eine reflektierte Orientierung innerhalb der Wertewelt gibt, wenn sie moralisches Orientierungswissen gibt; normative Urteile qua Ethik stellt sie nicht auf.³ Deskriptive ethische Urteile sind konditionaler Natur, also als „Wenn-Dann-Sätze“ formuliert: Die Wenn-Komponente nennt die sittliche Orientierung, die Dann-Komponente die Schlussfolgerung.⁴

Normativer Art ist eine Angewandte Ethik dann, wenn sie evaluative Prinzipien und Kriterienkataloge enthält, also zu Beurteilungen kommt, was richtig, was gut, was moralische geboten ist. Beispielsweise geht die sog. „ökonomische Ethik“ davon aus, dass das zentrale normative Prinzip, das auch als „*regulative Idee*“ einer normativen Ethik bezeichnet wird, in der „Besserstellung aller“ liegt. Eine Handlung gilt dann als ethisch korrekt, wenn sie der Besserstellung aller dient.⁵

Eine „*(christlich)-theologische Ethik*“ baut auf dem christlichen Ethos auf, sie macht in der Wenn-Komponente ihrer Aussagen das christliche Ethos deutlich. Deshalb ist sie eine deskriptive Ethik, die konditionale Aussagen in der Weise formuliert: „Wenn man vom christlichen Ethos ausgeht, dann ...“ Im gesellschaftlichen Diskurs, in den derartige Aussagen aktiv eingebracht werden, ist die moralische Basis mithin offen gelegt. Da das christliche Ethos allerdings für viele Fragen konkreter Lebensbereiche eine Antwort nicht unmittelbar bereithält, ist es für die jeweiligen Kontexte in einem gewissen Grad erst zu erschließen; insofern weist die theologische Ethik auch normative Züge auf.⁶

Eine „*theologische Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik*“ betrifft die Lebenswirklichkeiten Wirtschaft und Unternehmen. Ihre Aufgabe liegt erstens in der Erarbeitung des christlichen Ethos und seiner Orientierungsmarken für diese Lebensbereiche und zweitens in der Formulierung von Schlussfolgerun-

² FISCHER et al., 84 ff.

³ A. PIEPER, *Einführung in die Ethik*, Tübingen, 2003, 238 ff.

⁴ Ein Beispiel in Bezug auf die Armutsbekämpfung: „Wenn das Problem der weltweiten Armut vom Gedanken der Menschenwürde her beurteilt wird, dann gilt, dass es eine moralische Pflicht zur Armutsbekämpfung und ein Recht auf menschenwürdige Lebensumstände gibt.“ FISCHER et al., 77–78., Hervorhebungen im Original.

⁵ A. SUCHANEK, *Ökonomische Ethik*, Tübingen, 2007, 41 ff.

⁶ A. BURGER, *Unternehmensethik und Erstes Testament. Eine bundestheologische Analyse unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der positiven Emotionalität*, Berlin, 2010, 4.

gen und Handlungsempfehlungen für ihre Gestaltung.⁷ So wie jede angewandte Ethik ist auch sie deshalb interdisziplinärer Art, als sie v. a. die wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen der Theologie und der Wirtschaftswissenschaften verbindet.⁸

Der folgende Beitrag geht vom State of the Art der „ökonomischen Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik“ aus.⁹ Nach einer kurzen Skizzierung der regulativen Idee der „Besserstellung aller“ und der Bedeutung der Institution „Rahmenordnung“, wo dieser Konzeption nach der *Ort der Moral* liegt, erörtern wir zentrale *Schwachstellen* einer derartigen Fassung von Ethik für Wirtschaft und Unternehmen. Auf diese Weise wollen wir die Notwendigkeit eines Ethos begründen, das über das Postulat des rationalen, eigeninteressierten wirtschaftlichen Akteurs hinausgeht, und zwar sowohl auf der Makroebene der Wirtschaft als auch auf der Mikroebene des Unternehmens.

Anschließend streichen wir den (christlichen) Auftrag zur *Gestaltung* der zeitlichen Ordnungen heraus, der z. B. in der aktiven Teilnahme am *gesellschaftlichen Diskurs* zur Gestaltung der Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft bestehen kann. Aufbauend auf der Kritik der ökonomischen Ethik und dem Auftrag zur Gestaltung auch der Lebensbereiche Wirtschaft und Unternehmen im Sinne des christlichen Ethos entwickeln wir eine „theologische Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik“. Ihre Aufgaben sehen wir erstens in der Herausarbeitung des *christlichen Handlungsethos* auf Makro- und Mikroebene und zweitens in der Erarbeitung konkreter *Maßnahmen der Gestaltung*, wie z. B. zur Einbindung von Stakeholdergruppen oder zum Umgang der Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft „Unternehmen“ untereinander.

Gesellschaftstheoretische Grundlage ist hierbei das sog. *Bundesdenken*, das auf dem im Ersten Testament grundgelegten Einen Bund Gottes mit den Menschen und der Welt aufbaut, in dem die Menschen die unverbrüchliche Liebe und Treue Gottes zu den Menschen und der Welt erfahren.¹⁰ Die Bundeserfahrung des Menschen und die Bundesbotschaft des Ersten und Zweiten Testaments bedingen ein spezifisches *Selbst-, Menschen- und Weltbild* und rufen zu einem Handeln entsprechend diesem Verständnis sowohl in der

⁷ J. GERLACH, *Ethik und Wirtschaftstheorie. Modelle ökonomischer Wirtschaftsethik in theologischer Analyse*, Gütersloh, 2002, 26 ff.

⁸ Zum interdisziplinären Charakter jeder „angewandten Ethik“ vgl. FISCHER et al., 84 ff.

⁹ Zur „ökonomischen Ethik“ vgl. insbesondere SUCHANEK.

¹⁰ J. Kardinal RATZINGER, *Die Vielfalt der Religionen und der Eine Bund*, Bad Tölz, 2005.; ferner R. AHLERS, *Der „Bund Gottes“ mit den Menschen. Zum Verhältnis von Christen und Juden*, Theologische Texte und Studien, 11, Hildesheim u. a., 2004; BURGER, 86 ff.; E. ZENGER (Hgg.), *Der Neue Bund im Alten. Zur Bundestheologie der beiden Testamente*, Freiburg u. a., 1993.

horizontalen als auch in der vertikalen Dimension auf. Das Bundesdenken auf unsere Gesellschaft zu übertragen bedeutet, zwischen dem *Einen göttlichen Bund*, der in unterschiedlichen Kontexten erneuert wurde,¹¹ und den *zahlreichen weltlichen Bündeln*, die Gemeinschaften von Menschen in kooperativer Selbstverpflichtung darstellen, zu unterscheiden. Die menschliche Gesellschaft ist verstehbar als „System über- und nebeneinander befindlicher Bünde“¹². „Unternehmen“ verkörpern demnach einen weltlichen Bund, in dem Menschen arbeitsteilig auf einen gemeinsamen Zweck hin kooperieren.¹³

2. Zum engen Fokus der „ökonomischen Ethik“

2.1. Zum engen Fokus der „ökonomischen Wirtschaftsethik“

Das Augenmerk der sog. „ökonomischen Wirtschaftsethik“¹⁴ liegt auf der *Rahmenordnung* des wirtschaftlichen Handelns. Diese Rahmenordnung besteht aus formalen und aus informalen Regeln. *Formale Regeln* sind die von hoheitlichen Einrichtungen gesetzten Normen, von internationalen und nationalen Rechtsnormen bis zu einzelfallbezogenen Bescheiden; ferner hierzu zählen auch Regeln, zu deren Einhaltung sich Unternehmen im Sinne einer Selbstverpflichtung bekennen. Diese formalen Regeln sind in der Regel schriftlich festgehalten, sie sind nachvollziehbar und in funktionierenden Rechtsstaaten auch durchsetzbar, d. h. die Nichteinhaltung von Normen führt zu negativen Sanktionen.

Zu *informalen Regeln* der Rahmenordnung können alle Überzeugungen und Handlungsweisen gezählt werden, die in einer Gesellschaft oder Gemeinschaft mehr oder weniger allgemein anerkannt sind. Auch sie beeinflussen das Verhalten der Akteure, verbessern die Vorhersehbarkeit des Handelns anderer Akteure und vermindern letztlich die Transaktionskosten der Kooperation.

Die Möglichkeiten, (wirtschaftliche) Handlungen zu setzen, werden durch diese Rahmenordnung begrenzt. Die *ökonomische Wirtschaftsethik* beschäftigt sich mit diesen Regeln, und zwar mit ihrem Inhalt und mit ihrer Imple-

¹¹ V. KESSLER, *Gottes große Angebote. Vom Noahbund zum Neuen Bund*, Wuppertal, 2003, 25 ff.

¹² BURGER, 133.

¹³ J. FETZER, *Verantwortung der Unternehmung. Eine wirtschaftsethische Rekonstruktion und ihre theologischen Konsequenzen*, Göttingen, 2003, 87.

¹⁴ Zu einem umfassenden Überblick zur „ökonomischen Ethik“ vgl. vornehmlich SUCHANEK, 41 ff.

mentierung. In abstrakter Sicht geht es bei der Rahmenordnung um die *Beherrschung und Einrichtung von Dilemmastrukturen*.¹⁵

- In Bezug auf Tauschhandlungen zwischen wirtschaftlichen Akteuren gilt es, Dilemmaverhältnisse zu überwinden, damit diese Transaktionen überhaupt zustande kommen, damit Transaktionspartner nicht übervorteilt werden etc. Diese *Überwindung von Dilemmastrukturen* soll verhindern, dass durch die Verfolgung von eigenen Interessen das Ziel der Gesellschaft – die „Besserstellung aller“ – nicht erreicht wird.
- In Bezug auf wirtschaftliche Handlungen gilt es, innerhalb der Gruppe der Anbieter (Verkäufer) und der Nachfrager (Käufer) jeweils *Wettbewerb als Dilemmastruktur* einzurichten. Die (marktwirtschaftliche) Rahmenordnung enthält Normen, mit denen Leistungswettbewerb im Interesse der „Besserstellung aller“ bewusst eingerichtet wird.

Die Rahmenordnung für das wirtschaftliche Handeln dient der regulativen Idee in Gestalt der „allgemeinen Wohlfahrt“ oder der „Besserstellung aller“. Der grundlegende Mechanismus besteht hierbei darin, dass die wirtschaftlichen Akteure (Menschen, Unternehmen) unter den Vorgaben der Rahmenordnung ihre Entscheidungen *rational* im Sinne einer Mittel-Zweck-Rationalität treffen, d. h. sie verfolgen unter den gegebenen Regeln ihr Eigeninteresse, indem sie nach einem *Vorteils-Nachteils-Kalküls* handeln.

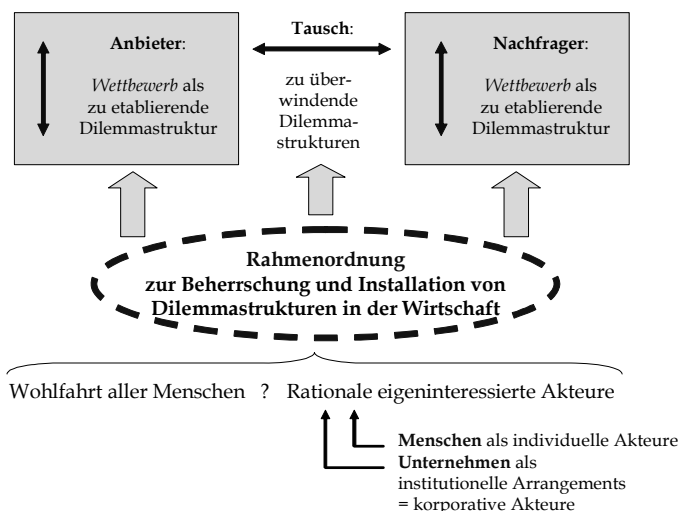


Abbildung 1: Fokus der „ökonomischen Wirtschaftsethik“¹⁶

¹⁵ Zur Einrichtung und Überwindung dieser Dilemmastrukturen vgl. K. HOMANN, A. SUCHANEK, *Ökonomik. Eine Einführung*, Tübingen, 2000, Tübingen ²2005, 244.

Die Antwort der „ökonomischen Ethik“ auf die Frage „*Was tun?*“ liegt in der *Rahmenordnung*, die Regeln für wirtschaftliches Handeln bereithält, die Dilemmastrukturen zur Besserstellung aller zum einen einrichtet und zum anderen überwindet. Die ökonomische Ethik legt ihren Fokus also auf die *Gestaltung und Weiterentwicklung jener Bedingungen*, unter denen Menschen und Unternehmen im Eigeninteresse handeln.

Die „ökonomische Ethik“ postuliert

– die „Besserstellung aller“ als regulative Idee und

– den rationalen, eigeninteressierten Akteur („homo oeconomicus“¹⁷),

sie hinterfragt allerdings diese beiden Säulen der Argumentation nicht weiter. Abbildung 1 gibt einen *Überblick über die zentralen Elemente der ökonomischen Wirtschaftsethik*.

2.2. Zum engen Fokus der „ökonomischen Unternehmensethik“

Die Wirtschafts-Ethik betrachtet das makroökonomische Geschehen, insbesondere wirtschaftliche Handlungen zwischen Akteuren und ökonomische Wirkungen auf gesellschaftlicher Ebene. Die Unternehmens-Ethik legt ihren Fokus auf den korporativen Akteur „*Unternehmen*“ und geht von zwei Voraussetzungen aus:

– es liegt eine wirtschaftliche Rahmenordnung mit formalen und informalen Regeln vor;

– der korporative Akteur „*Unternehmen*“ handelt rational und eigeninteressiert.

Ein „Schlüsselbegriff“¹⁸ der ökonomischen Unternehmensethik liegt in der – inhaltlich sehr weit gefassten – „*Investition*“. Das sind Projekte, bei denen aktuell Ressourcen aufgewendet werden, um sich dadurch in der Zukunft besser zu stellen, d. h. den Einsatz in späteren Perioden mehr als kompensiert zu erhalten.¹⁹ Der Bogen reicht hier von Investitionen in maschinelle Anlagen bis zu Investitionen in Reputation.

Im Zentrum der ökonomischen Unternehmensethik steht die „*Verantwortung von Unternehmen*“, die in drei Kategorien aufgespaltet werden kann.²⁰

¹⁶ BURGER, 191.

¹⁷ SUCHANEK, 177 ff.

¹⁸ SUCHANEK, 50.

¹⁹ SUCHANEK, 50–51.

²⁰ Zu diesen Kategorien der Unternehmensverantwortung vgl. K. HOMANN, „Unternehmensethik im globalen Wettbewerb“, in VBW, VBM, BAYME (Hgg.): *Einsichten schaffen Aussichten: Die Zukunft der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft, Festschrift für R. Rodenstock*, Köln, 2008, 52 ff.

- Handlungsverantwortung,
- Ordnungsverantwortung,
- Diskursverantwortung.

„Handlungsverantwortung“ wahrzunehmen bedeutet, Handlungen bzw. Wirkungen von Handlungen zugerechnet zu erhalten und für sie durch die Übernahme negativer Sanktionen eintreten zu müssen. „Unternehmen“ gelten hierbei als *kollektive Verantwortungssubjekte*, ungeachtet des Umstands, dass in der Folge u. U. auch Mitarbeiter/innen eines Unternehmens eine individuelle Verantwortung zu übernehmen haben.

Grundlage der Handlungsverantwortung ist die wirtschaftliche Rahmenordnung, so dass sie primär auf die *Einhaltung von Normen* für wirtschaftliches Handeln gerichtet ist. Diese Regeln betreffen die gesamte Palette an unternehmerischen Handlungen: Entwicklung, Beschaffung, Produktion, Absatz, Werbung, Investition und Finanzierung, Informationsgewinnung, Einhaltung von Verträgen etc.

Eine „erweiterte Handlungsverantwortung“ realisieren Unternehmen z. B. dann, wenn sie Projekte tragen, die über ihre unmittelbaren ökonomischen Handlungen hinausgehen.²¹ Dabei kann es sich um die Unterstützung von Alphabetisierungs- und Schulprojekten, um den Aufbau von Krankenhäusern und weiterer Infrastruktur, um die Bekämpfung von Alkohol- und Drogensucht etc. handeln. Derartige Aktivitäten werden heute mit Termini wie „*Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)*“²², „*Corporate Citizenship*“²³, *Corporate Volunteering*“²⁴ usw. bezeichnet. Der Logik der ökonomischen Ethik folgend werden auch solche Handlungen (Investitionen) nur dann vorgenommen, wenn sie zumindest im allgemeinen Unternehmensinteresse liegen.

„Ordnungsverantwortung“ ist auf den Einfluss von Unternehmen auf die wirtschaftliche Rahmenordnung der Gesellschaft gerichtet. Der Fokus liegt hierbei sowohl auf dem nationalen Kontext sowie auf internationalen Zusammenhängen, wie z. B. auf den Ebenen der Europäischen Union oder auch der Weltgesellschaft. Ordnungsverantwortung wird auch als Antwort auf ein

²¹ HOMANN, 57.

²² Vgl. z. B. M. MÜNSTERMANN, *Corporate Social Responsibility. Ausgestaltung und Steuerung von CSR-Aktivitäten*, Wiesbaden, 2007.

²³ Vgl. z. B. A. HABISCH, R. SCHMIDPETER, M. NEUREITER (Hgg.), *Handbuch Corporate Citizenship: Corporate Social Responsibility für Manager*, Berlin, 2007.

²⁴ Vgl. z. B. A. HABISCH, „Corporate Volunteering als Element des Positive Organizational Scholarship“, in M. RINGLSTETTER, S. KAISER, G. MÜLLER-SEITZ (Hgg.): *Positives Management. Zentrale Konzepte und Ideen des Positive Organizational Scholarship*, Wiesbaden, 2006, 221 – 236.

„Versagen der Politik“ gesehen.²⁵ Zwar sind heute die nationalen Rahmenordnungen in der Regel sehr weit gediehen, für die *globalisierte Wirtschaft* fehlt es allerdings weitgehend an einer Rahmenordnung, die diesen Namen verdient.²⁶ Ein zentrales Problem im Kontext der Ordnungsverantwortung kann im Lobbyismus erkannt werden, also in der eigen- und nicht gemeinwohlinteressierten Beeinflussung der Rahmenordnung durch Unternehmen.

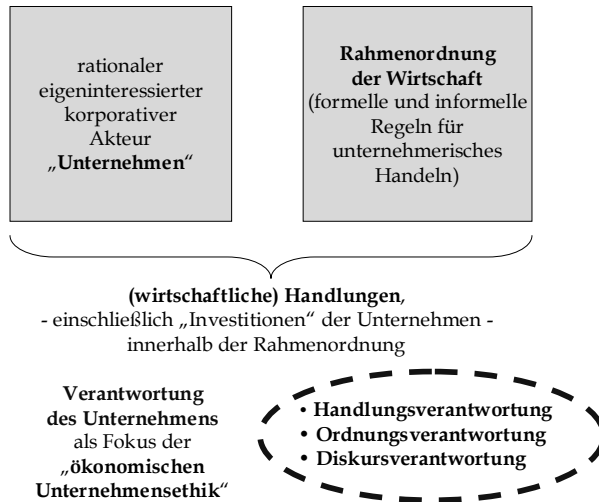


Abbildung 2: Fokus der „ökonomischen Unternehmensethik“²⁷

„*Diskursverantwortung*“ von Unternehmen betrifft das Sich-Einbringen in gesellschaftliche Diskurse vornehmlich zu ökonomischen Fragestellungen. Dabei geht es um Aufklärungsarbeit zu wirtschaftlichen Zusammenhängen, um die aktive Teilnahme an Diskussionen, um die Mitarbeit in einschlägigen Gremien etc. Dabei entsteht u. U. eine Verbindung zur Ordnungsverantwortung. Auch die Diskursverantwortung wird ein Unternehmen – im Lichte der

²⁵ H. STEINMANN, „Betriebswirtschaftslehre und Unternehmensethik: Ein Ausblick“, in A.G. Scherer, M. Patzer (Hrsg.), *Betriebswirtschaftslehre und Unternehmensethik*, Wiesbaden, 2008, 339.

²⁶ HOMANN, *Unternehmensethik*, 57: „Nun haben wir eine globalisierte Wirtschaft, aber keine globale Ordnung.“ R. MARX, *Das Kapital. Ein Plädoyer für den Menschen*, München, 2008, 164 ff., wo er von einer „neuen sozialen Frage“ in der globalisierten Wirtschaft spricht, und 270 ff., wo er eine Weltwirtschaftsordnung fordert, die am sog. „Weltgemeinwohl“, das auch im Konzilsdokument *Gaudium et spes* grundgelegt ist, fordert, und die eine „Globalisierung von Gerechtigkeit und Solidarität“ gewährleisten soll.

²⁷ BURGER, 193.

ökonomischen Ethik – nur dann wahrnehmen, wenn diese Investitionen adäquate künftige Vorteile versprechen.

Als „eng“ kann der Fokus der ökonomischen Unternehmensethik deshalb bezeichnet werden, weil der von einem *deterministischen Handeln* ausgeht: Unternehmen handeln rational und eigeninteressiert, sie finden eine Rahmenordnung vor und sie bewegen sich mit ihren wirtschaftlichen Handlungen und darüber hinaus gehenden Aktivitäten zur Veränderung der Rahmenordnung und zum gesellschaftlichen Diskurs in den vorgefundenen Freiräumen. Der Fokus liegt allerdings erstens nicht auf der regulativen Idee der Rahmenordnung in Gestalt der Besserstellung aller und zweitens nicht auf dem Postulat des rationalen, eigeninteressierten Handelns. Das Handeln von Unternehmen wird durch *Kosten-Nutzen-Kalküle* determiniert. Abbildung 2 zeigt den Fokus der „ökonomischen Unternehmensethik“.

3. Eigeninteresse und erweitertes Handlungsethos

Die ökonomische Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik unterstellt einen rationalen, eigeninteressierten wirtschaftlichen Akteur („homo oeconomicus“). Er sieht in den Regeln der Rahmenordnung und den (erwarteten) Handlungen anderer Akteure die Rahmenbedingungen seiner Entscheidungen, formuliert seine Handlungsmöglichkeiten, leitet seinen Ergebnisraum ab, also die vornehmlich ökonomisch relevanten Wirkungen seiner Aktionen in den Umweltzuständen, und wählt die seinem Zielsystem am besten entsprechende Handlungsmöglichkeit aus.

Die Rahmenordnung für wirtschaftliches Handeln

- bietet in der Regel einen *sehr großen Frei- oder Aktionsraum*, gleichzeitig
- hinkt die Festlegung und Weiterentwicklung von Regeln der realen Entwicklung in vielen Fällen eklatant hinterher.²⁸

Das Konstrukt des „homo oeconomicus“ erlaubt einen tief gehenden Einblick bei der Beschreibung, Analyse und Lösung von Dilemmaverhältnissen. Es gewährleistet einen tiefen Einblick in gemeinsame und konfliktäre Interessen von wirtschaftlichen Akteuren. Es erlaubt auch die Untersuchung der Bedingungen für Entscheidungen (wie Investitionen) und die Erarbeitung von Empfehlungen, wie die Spielregeln zum Handeln, also die Rahmenordnung, zu gestalten und weiterzuentwickeln sind.²⁹

²⁸ BURGER, 204 ff.

²⁹ SUCHANEK, 147.

Die Handlungsmaxime des homo oeconomicus liegt in seinem *Eigeninteresse*. Ob seine (wirtschaftlichen) Handlungen auch der Allgemeinheit zum Vorteil gereichen, ob sie also der *Besserstellung aller* dienen, das könnte nur mittels einer gesamtgesellschaftlichen Bewertungsfunktion – im utilitaristischen Sinn – abgebildet werden.³⁰

Die Notwendigkeit eines über das Eigeninteresse hinausgehenden „*erweiterten Handlungsethos*“ für wirtschaftliche Akteure (Menschen, Unternehmen, Führungskräfte von Unternehmen) leiten wir aus zwei Gründen ab:³¹

- erstens aus dem *Reparaturcharakter* der Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung und
- zweitens aus der Ersparnis von Transaktionskosten.

Ad Reparaturcharakter der Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung:

Die Rahmenordnung gibt in der Regel große Freiräume, sie definiert keinen konkreten wirtschaftlichen Zustand oder Plan, sondern eröffnet eine schier unüberschaubare Vielfalt an Handlungsmöglichkeiten. All diese Aktionen sollen letztlich der regulativen Idee der Besserstellung aller dienen.

Die durch die Rahmenordnung geschaffene Handlungsfreiheit kann auch zu Handlungsweisen und Ergebnissen führen, die die Gesamtwohlfahrt vermindern:

- Das Problem der Antizipation:

Bei der diskursiven Formulierung der Rahmenordnung ist man mit einer kaum zu bewältigenden Komplexität konfrontiert: Die schier unüberschaubare Zahl an denkbaren Handlungen und Folgen kann bei der Etablierung der Rahmenordnung nicht vollständig antizipiert werden. Dadurch werden, ohne dass Schädigungsabsicht vorliegt, Handlungsweisen innerhalb der Rahmenordnung möglich, die der Gesamtwohlfahrt zuwider laufen.

- Das Problem der verdeckten Handlung:

Die Freiräume der Rahmenordnung können durch Akteure auch dadurch missbraucht werden, dass sie ihr Eigeninteresse durch eine bewusste Schädigung anderer Akteure oder der Gesellschaft erhöhen. Dies geschieht in der Erwartung, dass die schädigende Handlungsweise verdeckt bleibt und damit durch die Sanktionsmechanismen der Rahmenordnung nicht bestraft wird. Der Bogen reicht hierbei von der Übervorteilung eines Transaktionspartners durch einen wirtschaftlich mächtigeren Akteur über Steuerhinterziehung durch besondere

³⁰ BURGER, 194 ff.

³¹ BURGER, 198 ff.

Sachverhaltensgestaltungen oder Schwarzarbeit bis zur Aneignung oder Schädigung natürlicher Ressourcen zum eigenen Vorteil.

Sobald erkannt oder aufgedeckt wird, dass Handlungsweisen der Besserstellung aller entgegenstehen oder dass bewusst schädigendes Verhalten möglich ist, muss die Rahmenordnung repariert werden. Diese Art der Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung trägt den Charakter einer „*Ex-post-Reparatur*“ erkannter Mängel, sie hinkt der empirischen Entwicklung hinterher.

Ein markantes empirisches Beispiel liefert die Finanzkrise der Jahre 2008 bis 2010: Wirtschaftliche Akteure forderten zunächst „freie Spielregeln“ für Kapitalmärkte und erhielten diese im Rahmen der „Deregulierung“ auch. Sehr gewagte Geschäftspraktiken v. a. von manchen Banken führten letztlich nicht nur zu schweren wirtschaftlichen Nachteilen für die Gemeinschaft, sondern auch für einzelne Akteure selbst. Der Ruf nach neuen engen Spielregeln und nach finanzieller Hilfe von staatlicher Seite ertönte. Nach massiven staatlichen Hilfen (Garantien, neues Kapital, Verstaatlichung von Banken usw.) wurden allerdings nur einige wenige neue Spielregeln der Rahmenordnung, wie z. B. das – zum Teil befristete - Verbot der Spekulation auf sinkende Kurse an Börsen (das sog. „Leerverkaufsverbot“), gesetzt, im Großen und Ganzen geht das gewinnträchtige, aber risikoreiche und letztlich u. U. der Gemeinschaft zur Last fallende Geschehen allerdings weiter.³²

Ausschließlich eigeninteressierte Akteure auf der einen Seite und die Probleme der Antizipation und der verdeckten Handlungen auf der anderen Seite sind eine Kombination, die das Konzept der Besserstellung aller *massiv beeinträchtigen* kann. Ohne ein über den eigenen Vorteil der Akteure hinausgehendes Handlungsethos ist zu befürchten, dass ein suboptimales gesellschaftliches Ergebnis erreicht wird und dass im Extremfall sogar die Rahmenordnung ihren imperativen Charakter einbüßt.

Erst ein über das Eigeninteresse hinausgehendes Handlungsethos kann den Problemen der Antizipation und der verdeckten Handlungen entgegenwirken. Die Freiräume der Rahmenordnung sind nicht (nur) dazu da, um von den Akteuren im Eigeninteresse möglichst weit genutzt zu werden, vielmehr bieten sie weiten Raum auch für eine spezifische *Art des Handelns*. Dieses kann im Hinblick auf die gesellschaftliche Wohlfahrt z. B. auf eine bewusste „Mäßigung“ gerichtet sein: ein durchschnittlicher statt es maximalen Gewinns, das Nichtausnutzen ökonomischer Macht bei Verhandlungen oder bei Vertragsbedingungen, keine extensive Nutzung von sog. „Steuerschlupflöchern“, eine nachhaltige Verwendung natürlicher Ressourcen usw. usf.

³² BURGER, 199–200, v. a. auch Fußnote 760.

Dieses weiter gehende Handlungsethos kann in das Eigeninteresse des Akteurs eingebettet sein bzw. bleiben. Die Verfolgung von Eigeninteressen kann – im Sinne eines marktwirtschaftlichen Wettbewerbsmechanismus – deshalb nach wie vor zentral sein, weil in sehr vielen Fällen die durch die Rahmenordnung möglichen Handlungsweisen im gesellschaftlichen Interesse liegen. Lediglich dann, wenn ein Konflikt zwischen Eigen- und Gemeinschaftsinteresse offenkundig wird bzw. Akteuren ein Konflikt bei einer reflexiven Betrachtung klar werden müsste, ist die korrigierende Funktion eines weiter gehenden Handlungsethos gefragt.

Ein solches Handlungsethos geht über die Regeln der Rahmenordnung hinaus. Es stellt eine persönliche Eigenschaft der Handelnden dar, also des einzelnen Menschen oder des korporativen Akteurs Unternehmen. Der Akteur handelt innerhalb der Rahmenordnung aus sich heraus, also gemäß seiner Überzeugung in einer bestimmten Art und Weise.³³

Die Korrekturfunktion eines weiter gehenden Handlungsethos wäre nur im theoretischen Idealfall, in dem die Probleme der Antizipation und der verdeckten Handlungen nicht bestehen, entbehrlich. Es ist offensichtlich, dass dieser Idealfall empirisch nicht vorliegt. Die laufende Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung im Sinne einer Expost-Reparatur bedeutet auch, dass man nicht alle Handlungen von Akteuren gutheißen kann, die die Rahmenordnung nicht verletzen. Die ökonomische Ethik sieht den *Ort der Moral in der Rahmenordnung*,³⁴ vor dem Hintergrund der aufgezeigten Probleme ist nicht alles, was die Rahmenordnung an Freiräumen bietet, auch gut für die Gemeinschaft. Daher sind sowohl eine *Rahmenordnung* als auch ein *individuelles weiter gehendes Handlungsethos* für das Gemeinschaftsinteresse unverzichtbar.

Ad Transaktionskosten:

Sowohl auf der Ebene der einzelnen Verträge zwischen wirtschaftlichen Akteuren als auch auf jener der Rahmenordnung fallen *Transaktionskosten* an:

Auf der *Ebene der einzelnen Verträge* fallen sie im Kontext von „Transaktionen“ wie Kauf, Verkauf oder Miete an. Sie umfassen Kosten der Suche, Anbahnung, Information, Verhandlung, Abwicklung, Absicherung, Durchsetzung, Kontrolle usw.; sie sind Kosten, die zusätzlich zum Preis des Gutes vor, während und nach der Transaktion entstehen. Ein wesentlicher

³³ Vgl. aus der Enzyklika *Spe Salvi*: „Der rechte Zustand der menschlichen Dinge, das Gutsein der Welt, kann nie einfach durch Strukturen allein gewährleistet werden, wie gut sie auch sein mögen.“ *Spe Salvi* [Über die Christliche Hoffnung], Enzyklika von Papst Benedikt XVI. vom 30. Nov. 2007, Abschnitt 24a <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals>.

³⁴ SUCHANEK, 62 ff.

Faktor für die Höhe der Transaktionskosten liegt in der Unsicherheit der Transaktion und in der Transaktionsatmosphäre.³⁵

Ein erweitertes Handlungsethos kann Transaktionskosten reduzieren, weil es Transaktionen zwischen Akteuren „erleichtert“. Insbesondere sind auch Vertrauen und Verlässlichkeit der Transaktionspartner Voraussetzung für das *Zustandekommen von Verträgen*, d. h. ohne ein entsprechendes Ethos kommen manche Transaktionen wegen der Unsicherheit, vom Partner u. U. übervorteilt zu werden, erst gar nicht zustande. Grundsätzlich beeinträchtigen nicht erfolgte Transaktionen die Besserstellung aller. Darüber hinaus bieten Vertrauen und Verlässlichkeit die Möglichkeit, Verträge mit einer *geringeren Regelungsdichte* auszustatten. Man braucht nicht jedes Detail zu regeln und für jede denkbare Situation vertraglich vorzusorgen, man kommt ohne besondere Absicherungen und Garantien usw. aus. Dadurch sinken die Kosten der Transaktion zum Teil erheblich.

Auf der *Ebene der Rahmenordnung* entstehen Transaktionskosten für ihre Etablierung und Weiterentwicklung. Analog zur Ebene der einzelnen Verträge fallen sie z. B. für die Informationsbeschaffung, für den Prozess der diskursiven Verabschiedung und für die institutionelle Durchsetzung der Regeln an. Ein erweitertes Handlungsethos erlaubt es, eine Rahmenordnung mit einem geringeren Detaillierungsgrad vorzusehen. Kann man in einer Gemeinschaft davon ausgehen, dass bestimmte Verhaltensweisen v. a. bei wirtschaftlichen Handlungen auch ohne Normierung eingehalten werden, so braucht die Rahmenordnung nicht für viele denkbare Situationen, die dem Gemeinwohl zuwider laufen, durch Regeln vorzusorgen oder negative Sanktionen für den Fall des Zuwiderhandelns vorzusehen. Mithin werden die Transaktionskosten der Gemeinschaft für die Gestaltung der Rahmenordnung gesenkt.

Unternehmen sind in die Erarbeitung der Rahmenordnung im Rahmen ihrer *Ordnungsverantwortung* eingebunden. Ihr Engagement wird auch in einem internationalen Kontext, wo es an einer entwickelten Rahmenordnung mit normativer Kraft weitgehend fehlt, für notwendig erachtet.³⁶ Ihre Fachkompetenz in ökonomischen Fragen ist im Rahmen der *Diskursverantwortung* gefragt.³⁷ Nehmen Unternehmen ihre Ordnungs- und Diskursverantwortung im Sinne des Eigeninteresses wahr, so können sie die Durchsetzung solcher Regeln unterstützen, fordern etc., die ihren wirtschaftlichen Interessen

³⁵ Vgl. z. B. C.-T. FRITZ, *Transaktionskostentheorie und ihre Kritik sowie ihre Beziehung zum soziologischen Neo-Institutionalismus*, Frankfurt, 2005.

³⁶ Vgl. z. B. HOMANN, 53–43, 57.

³⁷ HOMANN, 58–59.

dienen, u. U. auch zu Lasten der regulativen Idee der Besserstellung aller; in diesem Fall liegt *Lobbyismus* vor.³⁸

Wenn wirtschaftliche Akteure ausschließlich im Sinne des Eigeninteresses handeln, dann ist die Wahrnehmung von Ordnungs- und Diskursverantwortung zur Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung aus der Sicht der Gemeinschaft u. U. sehr problematisch. Denn sie könnten solche Freiräume oder Regeln durchsetzen, die ihr Eigeninteresse fördern, während sie gleichzeitig gesellschaftlichen Werten zur sozialen Ordnung, zur Ökologie, zur Nachhaltigkeit etc. entgegenstehen. Ordnungs- und Diskursverantwortung kommen ohne ein erweitertes Handlungsethos nicht aus; nur bei Vorliegen dieses erweiterten Ethos, sich im Interesse der Besserstellung aller einzusetzen, ist das Engagement von Unternehmen bei der Etablierung der Rahmenordnung erst erwünscht!

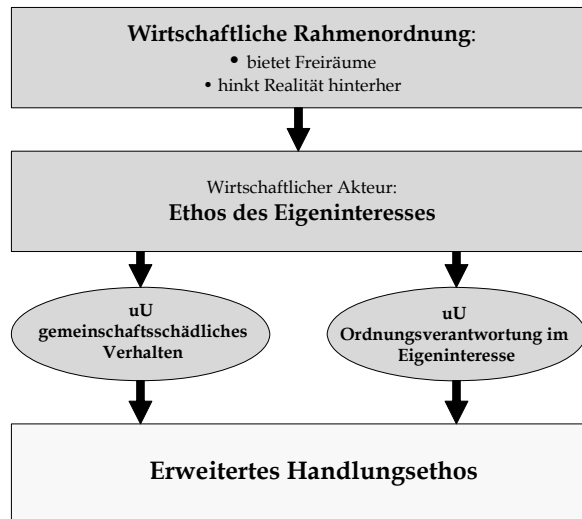


Abbildung 3: Notwendigkeit eines erweiterten Handlungsethos³⁹

Abbildung 3 veranschaulicht, dass das Eigeninteresse wirtschaftlicher Akteure – auf Basis der Rahmenordnung – zu Handlungsfolgen und zur

³⁸ „Lobbyismus“ ist in der (politik-)wissenschaftlichen Diskussion ein „neutraler“ Begriff, also grundsätzlich weder mit einer negativen noch mit einer positiven Konnotation versehen. Zu Ursprung, Arten, Für und Wider, Grauzonen des Lobbyismus usw. vgl. U. von ALEMANN, F. ECKERT, „Lobbyismus als Schattenpolitik“, in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 15–16, 2006, Bonn, 2006.

³⁹ BURGER, 207.

Wahrnehmung von Ordnungs- und Diskursverantwortung führen kann, die dem Gemeinschaftsinteresse zuwider laufen; erst ein erweitertes Handlungsethos trägt zur Lösung der Probleme (Ex-post-Reparatur bei der Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung, verdeckte Handlungen, Transaktionskosten auf Vertrags- und Gesellschaftsebene, Lobbyismus) bei.

4. Der Auftrag zur Gestaltung von Rahmenordnungen

Der Eine Bund Gottes mit den Menschen und der Welt⁴⁰ appelliert an den Menschen, die sog. „Horizontale“ als die Dimension des Umgangs der Menschen untereinander, und die sog. „Vertikale“ im Sinne der Rückkoppelung an Gott, gemäß den Bundessatzungen zu gestalten. Das in der Bundesbotschaft grundlegende „Tun“ und das „Wort“ der Bundesmitglieder richten die Welt im Sinne des Einen Bundes ein. Diese Berufung des Menschen, im Sinne der Bundesbotschaft zu handeln und zu gestalten, wurde im Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil mit dem Dekret „*Apostolicam actuositatem*“ (also über das Laienapostolat) besonders verdeutlicht.⁴¹ Gerade die aktuellen zum Teil sehr tiefgehenden Verwerfungen in Gesellschaft und Ökonomie gebieten ein intensives und weites apostolisches Wirken.⁴²

Ihre Grundlage findet die Berufung zum apostolischen Wirken in dem Einen Bund Gottes mit den Menschen und der Welt. Im Kern geht es um die „*Durchdringung und Vervollkommnung der zeitlichen Ordnung mit dem Geist des Evangeliums*“ sowie um die *Heiligung und Evangelisierung der Menschen*.⁴³ Genau darauf fokussiert die gesamte Katholische Sozialethik.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ RATZINGER.

⁴¹ *Apostolicam actuositatem* [Dekret über das Laienapostolat], 2. Vatikanisches Konzil, 18. November 1965 <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/>.

⁴² *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 1.

⁴³ *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 1; die hervorgehobene Formulierung stammt direkt aus dem Konzilsdokument; ferner *Gaudium et spes* [Pastorale Konstitution über die Kirche in der Welt von heute], 2. Vatikanisches Konzil, 7. Dezember 1965. <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/>, besonders Kapitel 3 und 4; und *Laborem Exercens* [Über die menschliche Arbeit], Enzyklika von Papst Johannes Paul II. vom 14. September 1981.

⁴⁴ Vgl. als Primärquellen die Sozialenzykliken: *Rerum Novarum* [Über die Arbeiterfrage], Enzyklika von Papst Leo XIII. vom 15. Mai 1891 (u. a. zum gerechten Lohn, Gemeinwohl und zur Sozialpflichtigkeit des Privateigentums), *Quadragesimo Anno* [Über die Wiederherstellung der sozialen Ordnung], Enzyklika von Papst Pius XI. vom 15. Mai 1931 (u. a. zur Subsidiarität), *Pacem in Terris* [Über den Frieden], Enzyklika von Papst Johannes XXIII. vom 11. April 1963, (u. a. zur Weltfriedensordnung und zu den Menschenrechten), *Populorum Progressio* [Über den Fortschritt der Völker],

Das Konzilsdokument betont die Liebe als Seele des apostolischen Auftrags, der einerseits auf die umfassende Gestaltung der Lebensverhältnisse des Menschen und andererseits auf die Hinwendung zu Gott gerichtet ist. Beide Dimensionen sind gleichzeitig zu verwirklichen, d. h. es soll keine Einseitigkeit im Sinne eines „Horizontalismus“ (ausschließliche Konzentration auf die horizontale Ebene) oder eines „Vertikalismus“ (Fokus ausschließlich auf der vertikalen Ebene mit Negierung des Diesseitigen) entstehen.⁴⁵

Das Konzilsdokument ruft zur Mitwirkung und zum Aufbau der gesamten „zeitlichen Ordnung“ sowie zur Arbeit am Heil der Menschen auf. Es bestärkt alle Laien darin, „bei der Herausarbeitung, Verteidigung und entsprechenden Anwendung der christlichen Grundsätze auf die Probleme unserer Zeit ihren Beitrag zu leisten“.⁴⁶ Die sog. „zeitliche Ordnung“ umfasst alle gesellschaftlichen Institutionen und mithin auch die „Wirtschaft“. All diese Bereiche der zeitlichen Ordnung stehen in einer spezifischen Beziehung zur menschlichen Person und ihrer Würde; für sie sind sie geschaffen und ihr sollen sie dienen.⁴⁷ Die aktive Wahrnehmung der Gestaltungsaufgabe erfordert eine profunde berufliche *Sachkenntnis* und ebenso einen familiären und mitbürgerlichen Sinn sowie alle jene *Tugenden*, die auf den Umgang der Menschen untereinander Bezug nehmen, wie vornehmlich Rechtschaffenheit, Sinn für Gerechtigkeit, Aufrichtigkeit, Menschlichkeit, Starkmut.⁴⁸

Die Gestaltung der zeitlichen Ordnung geschieht unter Wahrung jener „Gesetze“, denen Lebensbereiche der Gesellschaftlich eigentümlich folgen, d. h. die typischen Mechanismen der zeitlichen Ordnung, wie z. B. in der Wirtschaft die Aspekte des Tausches und der Arbeitsteilung, werden

Enzyklika von Papst Paul VI. vom 26. März 1967 (u. a. zu Problemen des Südens und seiner „Entwicklung“), *Laborem Exercens* [Über die menschliche Arbeit], Enzyklika von Papst Johannes Paul II. vom 14. September 1981 (u. a. zur Würde der Arbeit und zum Vorrang der Arbeit vor dem Kapital), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* [Über soziale Belange], Enzyklika von Papst Johannes Paul II. vom 30. Dezember 1987 (u. a. zu Strukturen der Sünde als Ursache der Not in der Dritten Welt), *Centesimus Annus* [Zum hundertsten Jahrestag von *Rerum Novarum*], Enzyklika von Papst Johannes Paul II. vom 1. Mai 1991 (u. a. zu Marktwirtschaft mit sozialem Gesicht und zu Demokratie) und *Caritas in Veritate* [Über die Liebe in der Wahrheit], Enzyklika von Papst Benedikt XVI. vom 29. Juni 2009 <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals> (u. a. zu Global Governance, zur Zivilisierung der Wirtschaft und zur ganzheitlichen Entwicklung des Menschen).

⁴⁵ BURGER, 225.

⁴⁶ *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 6.

⁴⁷ *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 7.

⁴⁸ *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 4.

grundsätzlich anerkannt. Die Weiterentwicklung der zeitlichen Ordnung soll den höheren Grundsätzen des christlichen Lebens gemäß erfolgen. Der apostolische Auftrag bedeutet, die *konkrete Situation* eines Lebensbereichs, wie z. B. die Rahmenbedingungen der Wirtschaft daraufhin zu analysieren, inwieweit er einer *Neugestaltung* bedarf. Im Zusammenhang einer (theologischen) Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik heißt das, die „Rahmenordnungen“ der gesamten *Wirtschaft* und des korporativen Akteurs *Unternehmen* zu untersuchen und sich in deren Weiterentwicklung im apostolischen Sinn einzubringen.

Adressaten des apostolischen Auftrags sind sowohl der einzelne Mensch als auch Gemeinschaften (Vereinigungen) von Menschen. Der *einzelne Mensch* ist erstens zum Zeugnis des ganzen, aus Glaube, Liebe und Hoffnung entspringenden Lebens und zweitens zum Apostolat des Worts aufgerufen.⁴⁹ Das bedeutet z. B. die Übernahme von Handlungsverantwortung im „sozialen Milieu“⁵⁰ Unternehmen oder das *Sich-Einbringen* in Diskurse zur Gestaltung von Institutionen der Gesellschaft.

Ebenso wie der Einzelne sind auch *Vereinigungen von Menschen* aufgerufen, apostolisch tätig und wirksam zu werden. Menschen sollen sich zusammenschließen, um das Ziel der Weiterentwicklung der zeitlichen Ordnung besser realisieren zu können, und dieser Aufruf umfasst alle sozialen Milieus und mithin auch jenes der Wirtschaft.⁵¹ Dort (Wirtschaft und Unternehmen) bedeutet dies etwa, durch seine Arbeit in der weltlichen Gemeinschaft „Unternehmen“ ein gemeinsames Zeugnis des Lebens, das an der göttlichen Bundesbotschaft orientiert ist, zu geben und durch dieses gemeinsame Zeugnis zur Weiterentwicklung der informalen Regeln der unternehmerischen Rahmenordnung, wie z. B. zur Weiterentwicklung der Unternehmenskultur, beizutragen. Ferner kann das gemeinschaftliche Apostolat bedeuteten, sich als Vereinigung in den Diskurs um die Weiterentwicklung der (formalen) Rahmenordnungen von Wirtschaft und Unternehmen aktiv einzubringen.

Eine wichtige Basis für die Mitwirkung an der zeitlichen Ordnung sind *Bildung und Wissen*. Das betrifft erstens die Kenntnis des sozialen Milieus, also der Gesetzmäßigkeiten, denen konkrete Lebensbereiche des Menschen folgen; sie schafft die Grundlage für die Arbeit an der Weiterentwicklung der zeitlichen Ordnung.⁵² Zweitens betrifft dies die Kenntnis der göttlichen Botschaft, der

⁴⁹ *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 16.

⁵⁰ Mit dem Begriff „soziales Milieu“ bezeichnet das Konzilsdokument konkrete Lebensbereiche des Menschen.

⁵¹ *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 18.

⁵² *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Rz. 29: „Die Bildung zum Apostolat setzt eine gewisse, der Begabung und der Situation eines jeden gemäße gesamt menschliche Bildung voraus.

Botschaft des einen Bundes mit seiner vertikalen und horizontalen Dimension. In der Verknüpfung beider Arten von Kenntnissen kommt der interdisziplinäre Charakter jeder „angewandten Ethik“ zum Ausdruck, die also auf einen konkreten Lebensbereich des Menschen – wie die Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik – bezogen ist.⁵³

Der an den Menschen (bzw. an Vereinigungen von Menschen) gerichtete Auftrag zur Mitwirkung an der zeitlichen Ordnung bedeutet resümierend:

- Das *aktive Sich-Einbringen in den gesellschaftlichen Diskurs*, also in den demokratischen Prozess des Wettbewerbs um Ideen; hierbei geht es z. B. um die Etablierung und Weiterentwicklung, vielfach auch Reparatur, der Rahmenordnung für die Wirtschaft. Dieses Engagement bedeutet nicht einen „Kampf gegen“ Andere, sondern den „Einsatz für“ die christliche Gestaltung von sozialen Milieus.⁵⁴
- Das aktive Tun, also das *Zeugnis des Lebens* im Sinne der Bundesbotschaft als Mitwirkender in sozialen Milieus zu geben, wie z. B. als (führender) Mitarbeiter eines Unternehmens. Auch diese Art des Engagements trägt zur Einrichtung und Weiterentwicklung der zeitlichen Ordnung bei.

5. Zum Inhalt einer theologische Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik

5.1. Vorbemerkungen

Die Rahmenordnung für wirtschaftliches Handeln, die Handlungsmaxime des Eigeninteresses, der Reparaturcharakter der Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung, die Betrachtung von Transaktionskosten und die Wahrnehmung von Ordnungs- und Diskursverantwortung im Eigeninteresse führten zur Notwendigkeit eines weitergehenden Handlungsethos. Nun gilt es, dieses Ethos mit Inhalt im Sinne einer „christlich-theologischen Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik“ zu füllen.

Im gesellschaftlichen Diskurs geht es um einen Leistungswettbewerb zwischen Ideen, im Kontext von „Wirtschaft“ um Ideen zur Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung für das wirtschaftliche Handeln insgesamt und für Unternehmen auf Mikroebene. Dem apostolischen Auftrag folgend gilt es, auf der Basis profunden Wissens um dieses soziale Milieu das christliche Welt-

Der Laie muss nämlich die Welt dieser unserer Zeit gut kennen und darum ein Glied seiner eigenen Gesellschaft sein, das für deren Kultur aufgeschlossen ist.“

⁵³ FISCHER et al., 84 ff.

⁵⁴ *Laborem Exercens*, besonders Abschnitt 20.

und Menschenbild einzubringen.⁵⁵ Das geforderte erweiterte Handlungsethos wollen wir mit einem sog. „theologischen Bundesethos“ füllen; es hat seine Grundlage in dem Einen Bund Gottes mit den Menschen und der Welt, der ein zentrales biblisches Fundament bildet und ein den Menschen und die Welt befreiendes positives Geschehen ausdrückt.⁵⁶

5.2. Zum Inhalt einer „theologischen Wirtschaftsethik“

Eine „*theologische* Wirtschaftsethik“ liegt dann vor, wenn das erweiterte Handlungsethos aus den positiven Botschaften des Einen Bundes gewonnen wird. Die Erweiterung des Fokus der „*ökonomischen* Wirtschaftsethik“ betrifft:

- die regulative Idee der Besserstellung aller;
- Handlungen von Menschen und von Unternehmen.

Die regulative Idee der ökonomischen Ethik liegt in der „*Besserstellung aller*“. Dabei handelt es sich um eine Leitidee, die allgemein gehalten und nicht genau spezifizierbar ist; Ansätze zur Entwicklung einer Bewertungsfunktion, wie z. B. im Utilitarismus, scheiterten letztlich. Folglich bleibt dieses Konzept der Besserstellung aller sehr vage.⁵⁷

Die *Offenheit der regulativen Idee* mag einerseits deshalb bedauernswert sein, weil dadurch der Maßstab für die Aufstellung und Weiterentwicklung der Regeln für wirtschaftliches Handeln im Dunkeln bleibt. Andererseits bietet die Offenheit der regulativen Idee die Notwendigkeit und Möglichkeit für die Gesellschaftsmitglieder, sich in den Prozess der Entwicklung der Normen aktiv einzubringen.

Die Maxime der Rahmenordnung in Gestalt der „*Besserstellung aller*“ ist mithin auch dafür offen, im Geist der Bundesbotschaft inhaltlich gefüllt zu werden. Dieser Geist des Einen Bundes betrifft die Horizontale, also Gemeinschaften von Menschen, zu denen auch Unternehmen zählen, und die Vertikale, also die den Menschen und der Welt aus Gnade gewährte Verheißung, das damit verbundene Vertrauen in den Bundesgott. Die Erneuerungen des Einen Bundes in unterschiedlichen geschichtlichen Kontexten⁵⁸ enthalten als

⁵⁵ In diesem Sinne charakterisiert etwa auch *Gerlach* den Inhalt einer Theologischen Wirtschaftsethik: Sie soll nicht nur die Perspektivität der verschiedenen wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen wie der Wirtschaftstheorie, der Soziologie, der Psychologie etc. offen legen, sondern vor allem ihre eigene Perspektivität im Sinne eines christlichen Welt- und Menschenbildes einbringen; vgl. GERLACH, 280–281.

⁵⁶ BURGER, 44 ff.

⁵⁷ Zur normativen Idee der Besserstellung aller vgl. BURGER, 194 ff.

⁵⁸ Vgl. BURGER, 92 ff. mit weiteren Nachweisen.

„Bundessatzungen“ positive Wegweisungen, also Orientierungsmarken für die Gestaltung der sozialen Milieus des Menschen.

In Bezug auf eine theologische Wirtschaftsethik sind der einzelne Mensch und Vereinigungen von Menschen zur aktiven Mitarbeit aufgerufen

- an der inhaltlichen Füllung der regulativen Idee der „*Besserstellung aller*“,
- am (demokratischen) *Diskurs* im Sinne einer Einflussnahme auf die Einrichtung und Weiterentwicklung der *Rahmenordnung für die Wirtschaft*.

Handlungen der wirtschaftlichen Akteure (einzelne Menschen, Unternehmen) erfolgen der ökonomischen Ethik entsprechend im Eigeninteresse. Die „Zielfunktion“ des Handelns wird in ein Vorteils-Nachteils-Kalkül gegossen, Handlungen und ihre Folgen werden vor diesem Hintergrund optimiert. Das Eigeninteresse ist zentraler Bestandteil des marktwirtschaftlichen Leistungswettbewerbs und des damit einher gehenden Fortschritts. Angesichts der erörterten Verzerrungen, die z. B. ein „Ausnützen“ der wirtschaftlichen Rahmenordnung in dem Sinn erlauben, dass die eigenen Vorteile zu Lasten der Gemeinschaft gehen, kann der marktwirtschaftliche Prozess zu – aus Gemeinschaftssicht – suboptimalen Ergebnissen führen.

Ein erweitertes Handlungsethos setzt sowohl bei den Zielen als auch bei den Handlungen der wirtschaftlichen Akteure an. Der Einfluss eines erweiterten Ethos auf die *Ziele der Akteure* wirkt ex ante, leitet die Handlungsinteressen also vorn vorneherein in eine über das Eigeninteresse hinausgehende Richtung. Während in der ökonomischen Ethik die Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnung vielfach den realen Entwicklungen hinterherhinkt und dadurch massives gemeinschaftsschädliches Verhalten ermöglicht sowie hohe Transaktionskosten der Gesellschaft verursacht, lässt das erweiterte Ethos die Problematik wegen der Ex-ante-Wirkung erst gar nicht entstehen.

Die beste Handlungsmöglichkeit für einen wirtschaftlichen Akteur ist jene, die seine Ziele am besten erfüllt. Da ein Ziel bzw. ein Zielsystem mit gesamtgesellschaftlichem Bezug allerdings aus Komplexitätsgründen in der Regel nicht vollständig formulierbar ist, bedarf es auch auf der *Ebene der einzelnen Handlungsmöglichkeiten* einer Orientierungsfunktion, die ein erweitertes Handlungsethos bietet.

Ein „theologisches Bundesethos“ stellt das grundsätzlich rationale, eigeninteressierte und für den marktwirtschaftlichen Leistungswettbewerb grundsätzlich erwünschte Verhalten der wirtschaftlichen Akteure – sowohl in Bezug auf die Auswahl der Ziele als auch der konkreten Handlungen – in einen übergeordneten, aus der Bundesbotschaft gewonnen ethischen Rahmen.

Resümierend ist zu einer „theologischen Wirtschaftsethik“ festzuhalten, dass sie an den beiden zentralen Voraussetzungen für wirtschaftliches Handeln in einer Gesellschaft ansetzt:

- sie füllt die regulativen Idee der „Besserstellung aller“ mit Inhalt,
- sie formt das konkrete wirtschaftliche Handeln, die Interessen der Akteure (Ziele, Aktionen).

Abbildung 4 verdeutlicht die Konzeption dieser „theologischen Wirtschaftsethik“, bei der sowohl der regulativen Idee als auch den Interessen der wirtschaftlichen Akteure die Orientierungsmarken der positiven Botschaft des Einen Bundes zugrunde liegen.

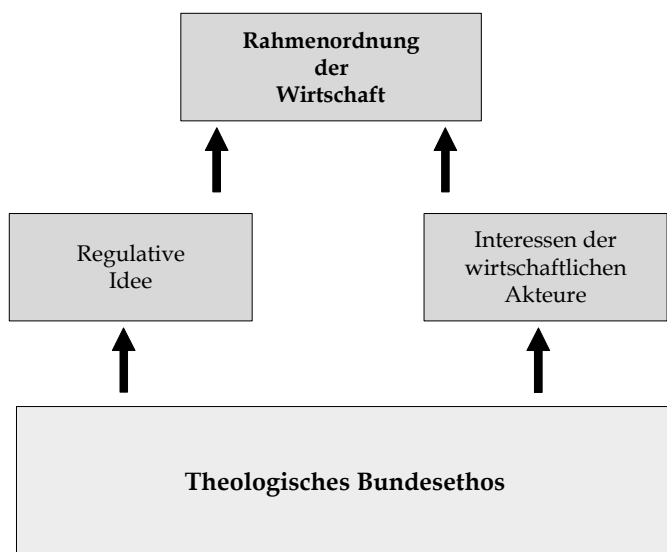


Abbildung 4: Theologische Wirtschaftsethik⁵⁹

5.3. Zum Inhalt einer „theologischen Unternehmensethik“

Die „Unternehmensethik“ umfasst jenen Bereich der wirtschaftsethischen Betrachtungen, die auf den korporativen Akteur „Unternehmen“ gerichtet sind. Das Unternehmen kann aus Sicht der bundestheologischen Theorie der Gesellschaft als Gemeinschaft von Menschen, als „weltlicher Bund“ interpretiert werden.⁶⁰ Die (Welt-)Gesellschaft kann als „gestuftes System von Bundesstrukturen“ verstanden werden; Personen handeln in unterschiedlichsten Bundesgemeinschaften, von der Familie über Unternehmen bis hin zur Gesamt-

⁵⁹ BURGER, 231.

⁶⁰ FETZER, 87.

gesellschaft. In weltlichen Bündnissen sind Menschen miteinander verbunden, sie haben gemeinsame Interessen, es besteht eine selbstständige Verantwortlichkeit untereinander und gegenseitige Fürsorge, als Grundelemente gelten Vertrauen (als passive Dimension) und Loyalität (als aktive Dimension).⁶¹

Für die Unternehmensethik zentral ist das Konzept der „Verantwortung“.⁶² Der weltliche Bund Unternehmen trägt eine zweifache Weise, und zwar einerseits „nach außen“ und andererseits „nach innen“. Beide Dimensionen der Verantwortung bedürfen eines erweiterten Handlungsethos.

In der *Außenperspektive* geht es um die im Kontext der ökonomischen Ethik bereits erörterte Handlungs-, Ordnungs- und Diskursverantwortung:⁶³

- Handlungsverantwortung ist Verantwortung für konkrete Handlungen, die im Namen der Bundesgemeinschaft Unternehmen erfolgen;
- Ordnungsverantwortung ist Verantwortung des korporativen Akteurs dafür, zur Einrichtung und Weiterentwicklung einer wirtschaftlichen Rahmenordnung beizutragen;
- Diskursverantwortung ist Verantwortung dafür, vornehmlich zu ökonomischen Fragen eigene Beiträge der Aufklärung, Information usw. in den gesellschaftlichen Diskurs einzubringen.

Das erweiterte Handlungsethos ist für die Außenverantwortung des Unternehmens unverzichtbar. Denn nur so kann es gelingen, die Freiräume der wirtschaftlichen Rahmenordnung in den Dienst der regulativen Idee der „Besserstellung aller“ zu stellen.

In Bezug auf die *Handlungsverantwortung* beeinflusst das erweiterte Handlungsethos sowohl die Auswahl der maßgeblichen Ziele des Unternehmens als auch die Formulierung und Wahl von Handlungsmöglichkeiten. Ein strikt im Eigeninteresse handelnder Akteur wird – im Sinne der ökonomischen Ethik – nur jene Handlungsfolgen einbeziehen, die aufgrund der Rahmenordnung zur Vorteilen einerseits und zu Nachteilen (auch im Sinne von negativen Sanktionen) andererseits führen. V. a. negative Folgen auf Gesellschaft(eile) braucht er nur insoweit einzubeziehen, als dies die formalen und informellen Regeln der Rahmenordnung so vorsehen.

Die „theologische *Wirtschaftsethik*“ beschäftigt sich – über die regulative Idee und die Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft hinaus – mit der Rahmung des Eigeninteresses. Auf der Mikroebene des korporativen Akteurs „Unternehmen“, auf der Ebene der „Unternehmensethik“ geht es beim konkreten wirtschaft-

⁶¹ FETZER, 163–164; ferner BURGER, 134–134 mit weiteren Nachweisen.

⁶² Zum Konzept der „Unternehmensverantwortung“ vgl. insbesondere FETZER, 37 ff.

⁶³ Zu diesen Kategorien der Unternehmensverantwortung vgl. HOMANN, 52 ff.

lichen Handeln, wie z. B. bei der Aufstellung der Ergebnismatrix über die Zielwirkungen und Folgen von Handlungsmöglichkeiten, darum, die *Leitlinien des Handelns* sich in Erinnerung zu rufen, sich erneut zu vergegenwärtigen. Eine „theologische Unternehmensethik“ formuliert diese Leitlinien gemäß der skizzierten positiven Bundesbotschaft; als angewandte Ethik erschließt sie das christliche Ethos, arbeitet seinen orientierenden Sinn heraus und kommt zu Schlussfolgerungen für die Gestaltung der Lebenswirklichkeit Unternehmen.

Im Alltagsgeschehen eines Unternehmens dominiert unseres Erachtens die Dimension der Handlungsverantwortung. Aber auch in Bezug auf eine *Ordnungsverantwortung* kommt man ohne erweitertes Ethos nicht aus: Einfluss auf die wirtschaftliche Rahmenordnung zu nehmen, setzt Vorstellungen darüber voraus, wie ihr Soll-Zustand in einem Zeitpunkt aussieht. Nur ein erweitertes Handlungsethos stellt sicher, dass die Wahrnehmung von Ordnungsverantwortung nicht zur Durchsetzung von Interessen des Unternehmens missbraucht wird.

In Bezug auf eine *Diskursverantwortung* von Unternehmen ist analog zu argumentieren. Auch sie ist von der Ebene des Eigeninteresses loszulösen, um einen Mehrwert zum Gemeinwohl entstehen zu lassen. Ohne ein erweitertes Handlungsethos würde man den Beitrag von Unternehmen zu gesellschaftlichen Diskursen als Maßnahme der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit einstufen können, die einem Vorteils-Nachteils-Kalkül folgt, nicht aber dem Gemeinwohl verpflichtet ist.

In der *Innenperspektive* der Verantwortung von Unternehmen geht es um die Gestaltung der *Bundesgemeinschaft* Unternehmen, der Fokus liegt auf dem weltlichen Bund, also auf seinen Mitgliedern einerseits und auf jenen Menschen und Einrichtungen andererseits, die über Interessen mit der Gemeinschaft zu tun haben; im Sinn der heutigen Theorie zu Gesellschaft und Ökonomie gelten sie als „*Stakeholder*“.

Analog zur Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft, die den wirtschaftlichen Akteuren (Menschen, Unternehmen) Freiräume für wirtschaftliches Handeln eröffnet, haben auch Unternehmen eine *Rahmenordnung*. Sie definiert den Rahmen, in dem die Mitglieder des Bundes „Unternehmen“ erstens in der Gemeinschaft selbst agieren und zweitens den Umgang mit den außerhalb der Gemeinschaft stehenden Stakeholdern gestalten. Da außen stehende Stakeholder Menschen oder Gemeinschaften von Menschen darstellen, betrifft die Rahmenordnung des Unternehmens im Grunde die Frage nach dem *Umgang der Menschen untereinander*, vom Bezugspunkt Unternehmen ausgehend.

Die wichtigsten *Stakeholdergruppen* sind die Eigentümer, die Arbeitnehmer, die Kunden, die Lieferanten und die Öffentlichkeit. Bundesmitglieder sind die Arbeitnehmer, arbeiten Eigentümer im Unternehmen mit, so sind auch sie Teil der Bundesgemeinschaft Unternehmen im engeren Sinn. Die übrigen

Stakeholder sind zwar nicht Mitglied des korporativen Akteurs, allerdings v. a. über Rechtsbeziehungen, wie insbesondere Eigentum und Verträge, mit dem Unternehmen verbunden.

Die Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft determiniert die Zusammenarbeit der Stakeholder in den Grundzügen. In einer marktwirtschaftlich organisierten Gesellschaft kommt den Eigentümern die zentrale Stellung zu. Denn sie tragen das sog. „unternehmerische Risiko“, d. h. das Risiko, dass sie für Ihren Beitrag (in Gestalt des bereitgestellten Eigenkapitals) eine schwankende Gegenleistung, die sogar negativ sein kann, erhalten; wer Risiken trägt, ist auch zu den maßgeblichen Entscheidungen berufen.

Die zweite zentrale Stakeholdergruppe bilden die Mitglieder der Bundesgemeinschaft Unternehmen, also die *Arbeitnehmer*. Die Berücksichtigung ihrer Anliegen ist erstens durch Normen zur arbeitsrechtlichen und unternehmerischen *Mitbestimmung* gesichert, die die wirtschaftliche Rahmenordnung vorsieht. Zweitens führt die *Vertragsfreiheit* in unserer Gesellschaft dazu, dass der einzelne Mensch autonom entscheidet, ob und unter welchen Bedingungen er Mitglied eines korporativen Akteurs Unternehmen wird. Dass allerdings ökonomischer Druck und fehlende Alternativen zu einer Zwangslage und damit zu einer schiefen Machtverteilung v. a. in Situationen einer hoher Arbeitslosigkeit oder eines nahezu unbeschränkten Arbeitskräfteangebots führen können, sei angemerkt.

Ob und in welcher Weise die Stakeholdergruppen der Kunden und Lieferanten eingebunden werden, hängt zum einen von Rahmenbedingungen der Zusammenarbeit, wie z. B. von den Machtverhältnissen etwa zwischen Zulieferer und Abnehmer, und zum anderen von Entscheidungen des Unternehmens und der Stakeholder selbst ab; auch in der Vertragsfreiheit besteht ein grundsätzliches Regulativ.

Das konkrete Funktionieren der Bundesgemeinschaft Unternehmen wird wesentlich durch die Stakeholdergruppen der *Eigentümer* und der *Arbeitnehmer*, die heute zunehmend als „Humanressourcen“ bezeichnet werden,⁶⁴ bestimmt. Dimensionen dieses Umgangs untereinander sind folglich:

1. der Umgang der Eigentümer untereinander;
2. der Umgang der Humanressourcen des Bundes untereinander und
3. der Umgang der Eigentümer mit den (restlichen) Humanressourcen.

Ad (1): Der *Umgang der Eigentümer untereinander* ist bei Gesellschaften bedeutend. Zum größten Teil ist der durch Normen des Gesellschaftsrechts und damit durch die Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft vorgegeben, wie z. B. das

⁶⁴ Auch Eigentümer, die im Unternehmen mitarbeiten, gelten als „Humanressourcen“ des Unternehmens.

Fällen von Entscheidungen in Gesellschafterversammlungen, Informations- und Auskunftsrechte etc. Allerdings besteht auch auf dieser Ebene ein Freiraum, der zielorientiert durch Eigentümer wahrgenommen wird. Beispiele sind die über die Mindestanforderungen des Gesellschaftsrechts hinausgehende Einbindung von Minderheitsgesellschaftern in Entscheidungen oder die Behandlung von Gesellschaftern bei einem Ausschluss („Squeeze-out“).

Grundsätzlich sind gemäß der Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft die Eigentümer zur Führung des Unternehmens berufen. Sind bei einem Unternehmen „Eigentum“ und „Management“ (zumindest partiell) getrennt, dann werden Manager angestellt, um das Unternehmen zu führen. Daraus resultieren mögliche Interessenkonflikte zwischen den Eigentümern und den Managern, auf die die sog. „Prinzipal-Agenten-Theorie“ fokussiert. Mögliche Ziel- und andere Konflikte werden zu Gunsten der Eigentümer zu lösen versucht, und zwar einerseits

- ex post durch Kontrollsysteme, wie z. B. durch Rechnungslegung und Berichtssysteme, und andererseits
- ex ante durch Anreizsysteme, die z. B. eine Beteiligung an bestimmten Überschussgrößen vorsehen.

Ad (2): Alle im Unternehmen arbeitenden Menschen bilden seine „Humanressourcen“. Der Umgang untereinander betrifft vor dem Hintergrund der Aufbauorganisation, die Über- und Unterordnungen, Kompetenzen und Verantwortlichkeiten vorsieht, zum einen das Verhältnis zwischen Führenden und Geführten, also Fragen der Mitarbeiterführung, und zum anderen das Verhältnis zwischen Menschen auf derselben Hierarchieebene.

Das Postulat des rationalen, eigeninteressierten Akteurs bedeutet für die *Innenperspektive der Gemeinschaft* des Unternehmens, dass Humanressourcen ihr Verhalten gegenüber anderen Bundesmitgliedern nach einem Vorteils-Nachteils-Kalkül ausrichten, dessen Freiräume und Restriktionen durch jene Regeln bestimmt werden, die die Rahmenordnungen der Wirtschaft und des Unternehmens vorsehen.

Probleme dieses Postulats treten wie auf der Ebene der Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft auf: Die formale Rahmenordnung des Unternehmens kann aus Komplexitätsgründen in der Regel nicht für alle denkbaren Fälle Regeln vorsehen; mithin ist auch sie unvollständig; ihre Weiterentwicklung hat vielfach den Charakter einer Ex-post-Reparatur. Auch die unternehmerische Rahmenordnung kommt ohne ein erweitertes Handlungsethos nicht aus, das sowohl die Ziele als auch die Handlungen der Bundesmitglieder in einer spezifischen Weise rahmt.

Ad (3): Der Umgang der *Eigentümer mit den Humanressourcen* wird durch die Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft eher generell und durch jene des

Unternehmens konkreter determiniert. Folgen Eigentümer dem Postulat des rationalen, eigeninteressierten Akteurs, so sehen sie das Unternehmens als Instrument zur Erzielung von Einkommen, Humanressourcen sind hierbei ein Mittel zum Zweck, ein Baustein, ein Instrument zur Vorteilsgenerierung. Es sind die Eigentümer, die in einer marktwirtschaftlichen Wirtschaftsverfassung wegen ihrer Risikoübernahme eine Vorrangstellung innehaben, auch in Bezug auf die Gestaltung der Rahmenbedingungen des Handelns im Unternehmen; Korrektive sind die in der Rahmenordnung der Wirtschaft festgelegte Mitbestimmung und die Vertragsfreiheit der Humanressourcen.

Ein erweitertes Handlungsethos der Eigentümer betrifft die formale unternehmerische Rahmenordnung, wie z. B. Verträge mit Führungskräften und weiteren Humanressourcen, aber z. B. auch Fragen der Unternehmenskultur, die auf den Umgang der Humanressourcen untereinander ausstrahlt.

Nach einer Analyse der Stakeholdergruppen eines Unternehmens, das hier als eine Koalition von Interessengruppen interpretiert werden kann, soll nun auf das Konzept der „*Verantwortung nach innen*“ eingegangen werden. Die Außenbeziehungen des Unternehmens und damit auch zu Stakeholdergruppen (externe Eigentümer, Kunden, Lieferanten, Öffentlichkeit) fallen v. a. unter die Handlungsverantwortung, die Teil der Verantwortung nach außen ist. Bei der „*Verantwortung nach innen*“ fokussieren wir auf die *Humanressourcen* des Unternehmens. Hierbei differenzieren wir die folgenden drei Ebenen:

- die *kollektive Dimension*: hier geht es um das Kollektiv der Bundesmitgliedern und inhaltlich vornehmlich um Fragen der Unternehmenskultur;
- die *interpersonelle Dimension*: hier geht es um Interaktionen zwischen Bundesmitgliedern, die derselben oder über- und untergeordneten Hierarchieebenen angehören, und inhaltlich z. B. um Fragen der Anerkennung, der Wertschätzung oder der emotionalen Ansteckung;
- die *intrapersonelle Dimension*: hier geht es um das einzelne Mitglied der Gemeinschaft und inhaltlich z. B. um persönliche Verhaltensweisen und Einstellungen.

Die *Rahmenordnung des Unternehmens* umfasst formale und informale Regeln sowohl zur Verantwortung nach außen als auch zu jener nach innen. Auch die unternehmerische Rahmenordnung ist ein dynamisches Werk, das durch Diskurse v. a. der Bundesmitglieder laufend weiterentwickelt wird. Ein erweitertes Handlungsethos erlaubt erstens weniger formale und zweitens offenere formale Regeln; auf diese Weise werden Transaktionskosten gespart und manche Handlungen auch erst ermöglicht. Die informalen Regeln der Rahmenordnung sind Ausfluss des konkreten Tuns der Bundesmitglieder; eine normative Wirkung entfalten sie insofern, als sie das Verhalten der

Bundesmitglieder beeinflussen und zu positiven und negativen Sanktionen führen. Diese informalen Regeln stellen zu einem Gutteil die Unternehmenskultur dar; vermittelt wird sie insbesondere durch eine unternehmerische Sozialisation.⁶⁵

Eine theologische Unternehmensethik füllt das erweiterte Handlungsethos für die Verantwortung sowohl „nach außen“ als auch „nach innen“ mit den Orientierungen aus dem einen Bund Gottes mit den Menschen und der Welt. Dadurch erfährt das Postulat des rationalen, eigeninteressierten Unternehmens bzw. des rationalen, eigeninteressierten Mitglieds der Gemeinschaft „Unternehmen“ eine Korrektur.

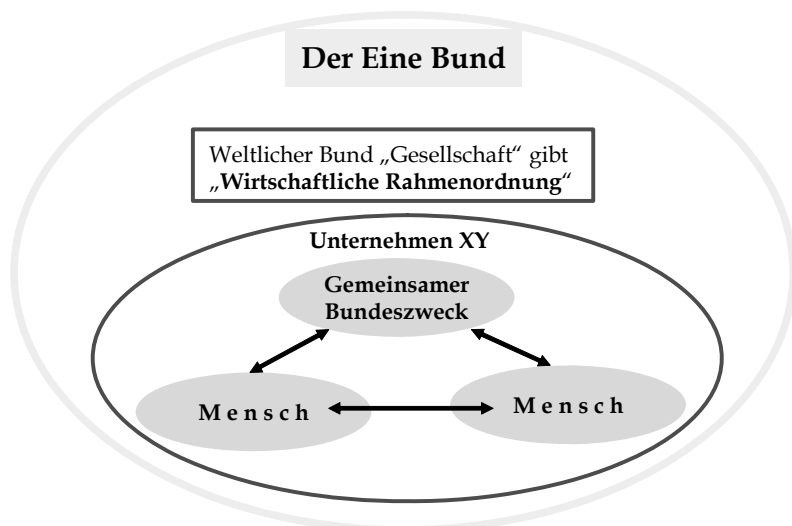


Abbildung 5:
Der weltliche Bund „Unternehmen“ und seine Einbindung in den göttlichen Bund⁶⁶

Die Füllung des erweiterten Handlungsethos mit dem *positiven Bundesethos* des Einen Bundes bedeutet, die Positiva des göttlichen Bundes in den weltlichen Bund „Unternehmen“ zu tragen. Der korporative Akteur „Unternehmen“ steht mithin im großen Kontext des Einen Bundes, seine Mitglieder sind über die horizontalen und vertikalen Beziehungen im weltlichen Bund hinaus an Gott rückgebunden: Die handelnden Personen haben feste Orientierungen für die Handlungen, also für die Formulierung ihrer Ziele, für die Wahl ihrer Handlungsweisen, sie vermögen die in dem Einen Bund zum Ausdruck

⁶⁵ BURGER, 309 ff.

⁶⁶ BURGER, 238.

kommende Liebe und Treue Gottes aufzunehmen und in die Gemeinschaft des weltlichen Bundes „Unternehmen“ einzubringen. Diese Einbindung des weltlichen Bundes „Unternehmen“ und seiner Bundesmitglieder in den *großen Kontext des Einen Bundes* veranschaulicht Abbildung 5.

Die zentralen Grundlagen und Elemente einer „*Theologischen Unternehmensethik*“ gibt Abbildung 6 wieder: Die wirtschaftliche Rahmenordnung, die Rahmenordnung des Unternehmens und das konkrete Handeln des korporativen Akteurs „Unternehmen“ sowie seiner Mitglieder mit den Dimensionen der Verantwortung nach außen und nach innen fußen auf dem theologischen Bundesethos.

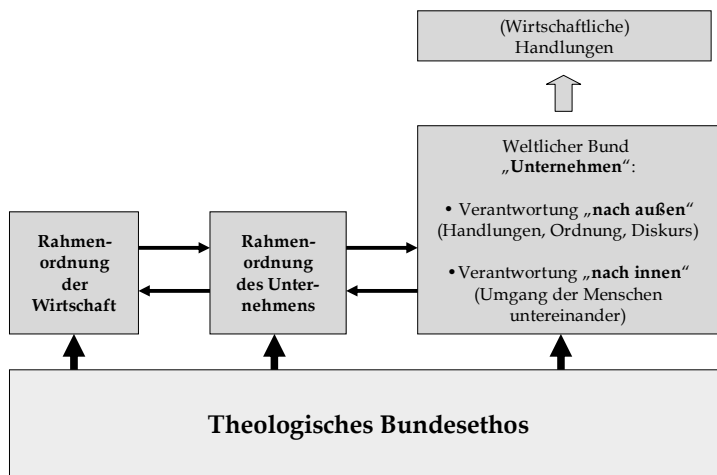


Abbildung 6: Theologische Unternehmensethik⁶⁷

6. Resümee und Ausblick auf konkrete Maßnahmen

Resümierend sehen wir die Aufgaben einer „*theologischen Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensethik*“ darin, das erweiterte Handlungsethos, das

- für die Etablierung und Weiterentwicklung der Rahmenordnungen der Wirtschaft einerseits und der Unternehmen andererseits sowie
- für die konkreten Handlungen der wirtschaftlichen Akteure (Menschen, Unternehmen)

gefordert wird, mit dem für diese Lebensbereiche zu erarbeitenden christlichen Ethos inhaltlich zu füllen, Orientierungen abzuleiten und konkrete Schluss-

⁶⁷ BURGER, 239.

folgerungen für die Gestaltung von Rahmenordnungen und für wirtschaftliche Handlungen abzuleiten.

Konkrete Maßnahmen, die auf einer derart verstandenen „theologischen Unternehmensethik“ aufbauen, betreffen in Bezug auf die „*Verantwortung nach innen*“ die folgenden drei Dimensionen (in kurz-, mittel- und langfristiger Perspektive):

- die *intrapersonelle Dimension*, wo es um Einstellungen, Haltungen, Stimmungen und Emotionen sowie um Maßnahmen der Personalauswahl, der Schulung, des Trainings usw. geht;
- die *interpersonelle Dimension*, wo es um Personalführung sowie um die Zusammenarbeit von Bundesmitgliedern geht und Maßnahmen die emotionale Intelligenz, die emotionale Ansteckung, Stimmungen, Verlässlichkeit, Wertschätzung, Lob und Anerkennung, die symbolische Führung, die Vermittlung von Sinn und Visionen, von Normen und Werten betreffen;
- die *kollektive Dimension* fokussiert vornehmlich auf die Etablierung und Weiterentwicklung einer dem ereiterten Handlungsethos entsprechenden Unternehmens- oder Bundeskultur; dabei geht es
 - erstens um „*Artefakte*“ *der Kultur*, zu denen Objekte der Kultur (von der Bekleidung über Zeichen und Symbole bis zur Architektur und Raumgestaltung), Elemente der Kommunikation (wie bewusster Umgang mit Sprache, Sprachregelungen für Lob und Anerkennung und auch für Kritik und für Vorschläge)⁶⁸ und Rituale (z. B. die feierliche Verleihung von Auszeichnungen, feierliche Handlungen zu Geburtstagen, zur Geburt eines Kindes usw., auch besinnlich gestaltete Feiern zum Oster-, Weihnachts- und anderen Festen, gemeinsame Ausflüge etc.)
 - zweitens um *Normen und Standards*, wie z. B. Emotions-, Manifestations- und Korrespondenzregeln, und
 - drittens um sog. „*Basisannahmen*“ *der Bundeskultur*, zu denen der Einfluss eines Unternehmensgründers, das Welt- und Menschenbild, bei dem es auch um Fairness und Vertrauen sowie um die Personwürde geht, und unsichtbare und vorbewusste Wertesysteme, Anschauungen, Wahrnehmungen etc. zählen; die Basisannahmen können insbesondere mittels eine Mobilisierung des Bewusstseins und Gewissens der Bundesmitglieder und

⁶⁸ Besonders hierdurch soll über die Förderung des Bundeszwecks hinaus erreicht werden, der Personwürde jedes Menschen gerecht zu werden.

mittels einer Sozialisation⁶⁹ im Unternehmen erfolgen, bei der etwa neuen Mitarbeitern Sozialisationsagenten im Sinne eines Coaches, Mentors oder Paten zur Seite gestellt werden können.

⁶⁹ Das Konzilsdokument „*Gaudium et spes*“ spricht von „Personalisation“, die eine Sozialisation mit dem zentralen Augenmerk der Personwürde des Menschen darstellt; sie ist eine dem christlichen Menschen- und Weltbild folgende „Reifung der Person“ und die Entwicklung „wirklich personaler Beziehungen“ zwischen Menschen in Gemeinschaften; vgl. *Gaudium et spes*, Abschnitt 6; Hervorhebungen wörtlich im Dokument.

THE ACTIVITY OF THE MAJLÁTH CIRCLE OF THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FROM CLUJ DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF ÁRON MÁRTON

JUDIT OZSVÁTH*

Abstract. The few years marked by Áron Márton's ecclesiastical leadership have a defining role in the history of the University and College Section (the latter Majláth Circle) founded by the Transylvanian Catholic League of Nations in 1928. He is noted for a number of contributions: the reorganisation of the catholic youth society, at that time in its third year of activity, and also for the initiation and leadership of the Social Seminar. In my present study I will discuss the various programmes organised within this circle and its underlying concepts.

Keywords: student, society, New Catholicism, village movement, social work

The university of Cluj, which after the border changes following the Treaty of Trianon became Romanian, did not allow the establishment of any Hungarian students' union, thus, the youth engaged in a strong denominational organisational activity. The *University and College Section* set up within the framework of the Transylvanian Roman Catholic League of Nations¹ was founded on 13 of June 1928, and it started its activity in the following academic year.² At the beginning of the 1928/29 academic year Gusztáv Károly Mailáth appointed bishop József Patay, a Piarist abbot, to be the ecclesiastical president of the section, while the office of secular presidency was given to dr. Lajos György, the director of registry. In January 1929 youth circles were established according to the provenance of students. Besides the ecclesiastical and the secular presidents, the section also had student officers (at the beginning György Parecz was president, Zoltán Nagy vice-president and Lajos Szócs A., Géza Blédy, and János Demeter were secretaries-general). The section started its activity with the organisation of lectures. The different groups organised mainly historical and church history lectures, and lectures related to village research.

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¹ The Transylvanian Catholic League of Nations was the first national organisation following the border changes after the Treaty of Trianon which was founded for the strengthening of solidarity and the better methodical utilization of the spiritual and material resources.

² After its establishment, the Section joined the Pax Romana international students' union.

In the 1929/30 academic year the executive committee was changed: Jenő Dsida became youth president, Zoltán Nagy remained vice-president and Zoltán Balogh, Béla Kékel, and János Demeter were elected secretaries-general. They “were concerned not only with the inner, constructive goals of the fellowship itself”, but considered also “the issues of community education, protection of the nation and the study of the problems closely affecting the Szeklers”³ [note: a Hungarian-speaking ethnic group from eastern Transylvania] as vital goals of the organisation. Having all these in view, they organised lectures on several occasions about the economic significance of the co-operative societies, the organisation of credit unions, the tasks of the Catholic Academy and the catholic press, and also about issues closely affecting the youth.⁴

In the following academic year the Section under the leadership of youth president Zoltán Balogh, vice-president Gerő Száz S., and secretaries-general László Zsombory, Richárd Boér and Endre Orbán, mainly organised seminars on the economic (primarily co-operative), political and cultural issues of the Hungarians from Transylvania, and, during the academic year, its members also undertook social work. The exchange lecture series, organised on the basis of the agreement with the editorial staff of *Erdélyi Fiatalok* [Transylvanian Youth], deserves special mentioning.

Starting from the 1931–32 academic year, the social activity of catholic students saw a revival and Áron Márton, who had previously moved to Cluj, played an important role in this. In the meantime, there were some changes in the student leadership of the Section, too. The members of the executive committee at that time were: László Zsombory (president), Zoltán Imreh (vice-president), József Venczel, Richárd Boér, Endre Orbán and Viktor Oszláts (secretaries-general). József Venczel, in his capacity of secretary-general of the Section, invited Áron Márton, who at that time served at the episcopate of Alba Iulia, for an afternoon discussion, which turned out to be extremely successful. Being enthused by the success of the event, Venczel and Lajos György sent a delegation to Alba Iulia with the following request:

There is great need for Christian representation of current issues and ideas of world view for the present-day catholic students, for which we find the bishop’s secretary from Alba Iulia, Áron Márton, to be the most suitable and the most modern in all respects as what concerns the contest of ideas

³ *Erdélyi Fiatalok*, 6, 1930, 103 [quotations of Hungarian texts translated by the author].

⁴ *Erdélyi Fiatalok*, 2, 1930, 31–32; 4, 1930, 34.

and trends. Thus, we request the Diocesan Authority to be as kind as to appoint him college leader, praeses.⁵

Complying with the request, bishop Mailáth allowed Áron Márton to move to Cluj, who, by taking the place of the earlier resigned József Patay, took over the ecclesiastical leadership of the University and College Section. The new executive committee ever forcibly urged the drawing up of explicit aims for the Section, and also the devoted following of these aims.

The general staff is aware of the fact that progressive development is the primary condition of society life, the certain advancement towards the proposed aim of the fellowship. Thus, our fellowship's aim is to gather together the Roman Catholic students who study in Cluj and to instil in them, besides the Transylvanian fulfilment of the thousand years old racial consciousness, the two thousand years old Christian catholic conviction, which is creator and conservator of cultures.

– said József Venczel at the general meeting on 27 November 1931. The lectures discussing issues of world view were attended by a great many people in that year, as well as the lectures of Béla Baráth, professor of theology in Alba Iulia, presenting the papal encyclical entitled *Quadragesimo Anno*, and the idea of a new-order society. Through his lectures, the students heated by the idea of “Youth Catholicism” were acquainted with the social programme of this new school of thought. “Just like the Catholic Action, Youth Catholicism is also a return to the eternal truths, their modern scrutiny and illumination, and their revaluation proportioned and applied according to the necessities of the era, and the revision of the Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles” – was advertised in the *Fiatalok* [Youth] column of the newspaper *Erdélyi Lapok* [Transylvanian Pages].⁶ The writing discusses in detail the programme-like character of the new idea, which requires from its followers organisation with a sense of vocation and unity. The “youth edition” of the *Erdélyi Tudósító* [Transylvanian Courier] was a serious presentation of the youth movement of New Catholicism in Cluj, growing stronger and stronger. In spring 1932 editor Endre Veress gave the pentecostal issue over to them. The rich and varied, 60 pages long material was edited by Áron Márton, aided by József Venczel. In one of the writings of this very effective presentation Áron Márton – arguing with the *Erdélyi Fiatalok* – declared firmly, that “there is no world view independence”. In the same time he also emphasised that the open declaration of one's world view affiliation is not a

⁵ Quoted by: ANTAL Á., “Venczel József életpéldája”, in *Keresztény Szó* [Christian Word], 11, 1993, 19.

⁶ *Erdélyi Lapok*, 5, 1932, 120.

hindrance, but in fact, it is the only real basis for cooperation in the important collective tasks.⁷ “There are thousands of cases in our Transylvanian Hungarian life – he writes – where the concentration of all good-intentioned forces is possible, and it is a holy mandate.” In the same issue József Venczel analyses the failure of the old middle class and the problems regarding the formation of the new intellectual class.⁸

The young Catholics were also greatly interested in the research of villages. József Venczel, who definitively parted with the *Erdélyi Fiatalok* group, and who already had considerable experience in such organising activities, was an undoubted asset for the sociographic work.⁹ The primary aim of the students was to become acquainted with the village, as the community preserving folk values, hence, no special preliminary training was considered important for this work.

The method which suits my personality best will be found during the collection and systematisation of materials. If I am a philologist I will collect the intellectual products of the folk (songs, tales, superstitions etc.), if I am interested in the arts, I will collect and systematise folk ornaments and carvings, if I am a doctor, I will analyse folk therapies and quackeries, if I am a musician, the folk songs, if I am a law student, I will look at the folk practices, if I am a chemist, I will examine the folk medicinal plants, if I am a technologist, I will analyse the folk crafts, if I am a clergyman I will examine the picture that the people form of God etc. Everyone should get involved in the ethnographic data collection with his/her special knowledge, and not expect training for the tasks like the one day old new recruit in the barracks

– exhorted Sándor Demeter before the sociographic data collection from 1932, organised together with the seminarists from Alba Iulia.¹⁰

⁷ MÁRTON Á., “Világnézeti függetlenség”, in *Erdélyi Tudósító*, 10, 1932, 397–399.

⁸ The editor of *Magyar Kisebbség* [Hungarian Minority], Elemér Jakabffy, also gave an issue over to the youth (issue 3–4, 1933.), giving up all censorship. The core of the editorial committee was formed by József Venczel, Sándor Vita and Dezső Albrecht. The above mentioned successful attempts already indicated the publication of the subsequent “own” magazines, *Erdélyi Iskola* [Transylvanian School] and *Hitel* [Credence].

⁹ The column entitled *Egyesületi Élet* [Organisational Life] of the *Erdélyi Fiatalok* gives a true account of the Section’s activity between 1930–1934. It should be noted that after the aggravation of world view disputes (the college conference organised in the autumn of 1931) one can scantily find catholic news in the *Erdélyi Fiatalok*.

¹⁰ *Erdélyi Tudósító*, 10, 1932, 387.

The society life of the catholic students was truly spurred by the activity of Áron Márton¹¹, which propagated as “programme” the deepening of the religious ethical idea, the clear understanding of the social idea and the generalisation of the village activity. The basis of Áron Márton’s relationship with the youth was the confidence he placed in them, to which he gave voice on several forums. He did not reject the father-blaming attitude of the youth, however, he tried to guide the mentality stuck in the past towards nobler aims.¹² Through his writings and speeches, first of all, he gave back to the youth their confidence in themselves and in the future that would be shaped by them. Still, he was well aware of the fact that the liberal thinking, influenced also by the Marxist ideology can be reformed primarily through purposeful educational work. In such circumstances “he starts his convictive work on individuals, forming a leadership for the college society, the direction of which he would take over a year later” – József Venczel remembers in 1938.¹³ “And how does he educate us? – he continues. Without words or explanations, he just gives us the text of the Quadagesimo Anno, and we become by ourselves the followers of the Christian social doctrines; he debates with each of us at length, he does not find it boring, and does not put us in our place: our social and private lives unnoticed become what they should become, and what we are so proud of now.” Besides the deepening of faith, he also considered the shaping of the apostolic disposition in the youth a primary aim of his activity, thus, he especially strived for personal contact. The best possibility for this was offered by the Báthory-Apor Seminary, which gave him a home, too.¹⁴ It is his merit, that he transformed the loose relationships of the hall into strong friendly ones. The name of the intellectually well-trained priest quickly got through the walls of the Seminary, thus his Sunday homilies were attended by many young people of other confessions, too, filling the university (piarist) church to capacity each Sunday.

Áron Márton reorganised the university club split into curiae according to provenance – believing that if the society offers meeting opportunity only to

¹¹ *Erdélyi Fiatalok*, 8–10, 1931, 162.

¹² Jeromos Szalay mentions in his book presenting Áron Márton’s life, that before starting his activity in Cluj, bishop Mailáth took Áron Márton to Rome and presented him to Pope Pius XI, as the spokesman of the Hungarian student youth from Cluj. “Do you like the youth”, asked him Pope Pius XI. On his positive answer he continued: “Loving and educating the youth is the most important task of our era. For this I give you my special blessing.” (SZALAY J., *Márton Áron erdélyi püspök*, Paris, 1953, 99.)

¹³ VENCZEL J., “Márton Áron és az ifjúság”, in *Az Apostol* [The Apostle], 41, 1938, 3.

¹⁴ The Báthory–Apor Seminary was József Venczel’s home, too. There was a true, life-long friendship between the two, which started in their very first months here.

young people coming from the same place, it will not be viable for the common activity. He replaced the old division with the seminar system, thus, the students were gathered together into a group not according the geographical origin, but the assumed intellectual and social activity.¹⁵ As a result of his very effective sermons and his forceful organisational activity, young people sympathizing with the Marxist ideology attacked him more and more forcefully. Pamphlets were distributed on several occasions against him, and he also had to face their assaults.¹⁶ Still, he could not be deterred from his well-planned work. The renaming of the University and College Section as Majláth Circle is linked to his name, too. At first, only the Social Seminar, founded by him, adopted the name of the much-admired bishop, then later the whole Section started to use it.

According to the work plan of the social group, it primarily wanted to offer its members sociological training. Their regular gatherings were held on Tuesdays. In the first semester, following the theoretical lectures, Áron Márton outlined and explained in detail the new society shaping norms of Pope Pius XI's social encyclical, entitled *Quadragesimo Anno*, then Béla Baráth, professor of theology, held lectures on the rudiments of Marxism. The analysis of the marxist ideas continued also in the second semester, when the lecturers and the students debated on József Migray's book entitled *A marxizmus csődje* [The Failure of Marxism]. The work plan of the seminar included popularizing and practical work, too. Part of the popularizing activity was the publication of the annotations – illustrated with József Venczel's tables and diagrams – of the social encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, in six pamphlets¹⁷. The group also undertook the organisation of the unified Transylvanian catholic movement, this constituting its practical work. For this purpose, under the leadership of Áron Márton, and with financial support from the Transylvanian Roman

¹⁵ “The new executive committee of the University and College Section of The Transylvanian Roman Catholic League of Nations came to the conviction in June last year, that the society during the time of the renewed catholic movements cannot continue to merely provide a frame for the endeavours of the Hungarian catholic students in Cluj, but it must also get into the line of social work so clearly unfolding in the objectives of youth catholicism, finding its own voice also in Transylvania.” – they write in the issue of Erdélyi Tudósító edited by them. (“Majláth Kör. Az Erdélyi Római Katolikus Népszövetség Egyetemi és Főiskolai Szakosztálya”, in *Erdélyi Tudósító*, 5, 1933, 293–298.)

¹⁶ VENCZEL, “Márton Áron és az ifjúság”, 3.

¹⁷ The Hungarian translation of Pope Pius XI's social encyclical entitled *Quadragesimo Anno* provided with annotations was first published by the Majláth Circle under the title *A társadalmi rend megújítása* [The Renewal of Social Order].

Catholic Status, József Gál, László Laczkó and József Venczel visited young people in ten Hungarian villages from Szekler Land¹⁸ [note: the territories inhabited mainly by the Szekler, a Hungarian-speaking ethnic group from eastern Transylvania], and held informative and educational lectures to them on social and world view issues. In his letter to the bishop of Alba Iulia he presented in detail their village tour programme and gave an account of their experiences, too.

In every village an average of 200 boys and young married men attended the lectures. In most places the village council was also present. From their manifestations one can draw the conclusion that the agricultural workers are still everywhere in our hands, being suitable for guidance and shaping, we just need to take them into our hands

– he wrote. Áron Márton also turned his attention to meeting the catholic intellectuals of Miercurea Ciuc and Târgu Secuiesc, who promised to discuss the social and economic issues from a Christian point of view, and to popularize them through lectures held both in rural and urban youth clubs and through publications edited by them.¹⁹ The members of the social group laid particular stress on the organisation of Christian working-class movement, and they also undertook practical work in the course of the Saint Vincent conferences' action aiming to help the poor.²⁰

After organizing the social group, the next step was the organisation of the group for student teachers, which was considered the second most powerful group in the history of the Majláth Circle. Besides these, the natural science seminar had a considerably vigorous activity, too, organising self-educating programmes for its members in order to compensate for gaps in their knowledge in the field of natural sciences. A minority rights committee also activated in the framework of the Majláth Circle, and the medical students also organised themselves into a seminar. There were art lectures and

¹⁸ They chose villages (Ciucsângeorgiu, Sânmartin, Cechești, Sânsimion, Cetățuia, Cozmeni, Lăzărești, Plăieșii de Jos, Casinu Nou and Sânzieni), where the communist propaganda was already present. Cp.: Áron Márton's account to the bishop of Alba Iulia about their Szekler Land tour. January 1933. (*Erdélyi Katolikus Státus Levéltára* [The Archives of the Transylvanian Catholic Status, abbreviated as: EKSL], IV. 4/b. 408. d. 3170/1932. radix, 70/1933.)

¹⁹ As it turns out from his account to the bishop, the experiences from his village tour, taking place between 27 December 1932 and 4 January 1933, strengthened Áron Márton in his belief in the importance of community education, the organising of which he would assume in the columns of *Erdélyi Iskola*, which was to be launched nine months later.

²⁰ *Erdélyi Fiatalok*, 6, 115, 1932.

ethnographical lectures, presenting the lives of the Csango people from Moldavia [note: a Hungarian ethnographic group of Roman Catholic faith, living mostly in the Romanian region of Moldavia], and they also had a sports section and a choir.²¹

The Majláth Circle maintained relations with several student organisations from abroad. It had its best relations with the French Students' Union (Fédération Française des Étudiants Catholiques), participating at its congresses and establishing with them a mutual student exchange programme. Besides these, due to the vivid relationships the society maintained, the young catholic students from Cluj were able to go on other study tours and attend other congresses, too.

According to József Venczel, the movement of the catholic students was rapidly proven by time. The Transylvanian Catholic League of Nations drew up the principles of Christian Transylvanism at their general assembly of 1933 in Gheorgheni. Venczel considers that the students from Cluj will give these principles a lift:

This youth, by virtue of the christian principles, was able to see with more Transylvanian eyes, and today also the other groups advance in the course established by the Majláth Circle. The "Transylvan" Hungarians operating with liberal slogans, which in most cases had not managed to transcend the cultural-historiographic Transylvanism and the literary friendships, and had politically produced only newspaper articles suitable for historical documentation – thus, writing for example about the necessity of the Romanian-Hungarian "bridge building" – had ceased to be a programme in Transylvania. The most beautiful of the public phrases with an outward effect had lost its sense and transformed into – mainly in the plans of the catholic youth – a social and economic programme with an inward effect based on the natural rights of the different ethnical groups.²²

The motor of the Pedagogical Seminar was Lajos György, who constantly watched over the training of the student teachers.²³ The fundamental

²¹ *Kelemen Béla titkári jelentése a Majláth-Kör 1934/35. évi munkájáról.* 26 May 1935. (EKSL, IV. 4/b. 408. d. 3170/1932. radix, 1304/1935.); *Héjja Albert ifjúsági prézsesnek a Státus Igazgatótanácsa részére készített munkaterv-vázlata.* 9 October 1936. (EKSL, IV. 4/b. 408. d. 3170/1932. radix, 2347/1936.).

²² VENCZEL J., "Az erdélyi ifjúság és az új 'transzilvánizmus'" I, in *Erdélyi Tudósító*, July–Sept. 1934, 218.

²³ The organisation of the Pedagogical Seminar had already been planned by the executive committee consisting of praeses Áron Márton, prior Lajos György and youth president József Venczel, elected at the end-of-year general assembly. "The new executive committee took over the work. They consider the student teachers' seminar to be the

idea was to provide possibility for discussing the particular tasks and engagements awaiting the future teachers of the Hungarian minority schools, and if possible, the formation of a communal spirit “which can more effectively express and serve the purposful work of the Hungarian school than it is served and expressed today”.²⁴ Lajos György (and the then executive committee of the Majláth Circle) considered the religious ethical training of the student teachers to be exceptionally important, since

the student teachers preparing to enter our Hungarian schools not only have shortcomings in their Hungarian erudition, but neither do they display the reassuring spiritual grounding and form, necessary to become the self-conscious workers of our schools based upon world view foundations.²⁵

Because there is great need for a well-prepared young teacher generation, conscious in its tasks, and which can work in accordance with the expectations of the time and the interests of the future

– wrote the *Erdélyi Tudósító*'s issue edited by the youth.²⁶ When establishing the annual programme, the executive committee of the Seminar took into consideration the fact that the Hungarian schools in Transylvania had in fact minority and social community foundations, thus, its main goal could only be the shaping of worldview, and the Hungarian cultural and social education. These issues were debated throughout the whole year during their Wednesday night gatherings. During the two-three hours long programmes the issues raised were first exposed in specialist lectures, then ensued the discussion of the fundamental perspectives and practical guidelines, primarily with respect to the tasks of the Transylvanian Hungarian minority school. Lajos György's first account reports on the increasing interest of the university students; an average of 40-50 people attended the lectures, and this was particularly surprising.²⁷

most important in the future plans of the society, and also with regard to the Transylvanian Hungarian student youth. Otherwise, the new executive committee starts off with the aims of youth catholicism” – they wrote in the *Egyesületi élet* column of the *Erdélyi Fiatalok* issued in June 1932, (98–99).

²⁴ EKSL, IV. 4/b. 404. d. 2476/1928. radix, 3173/1932. – 28 December 1932. *György Lajos jelentése a pedagógiai szeminárium munkájáról.*

²⁵ *György Lajos jelentése.*

²⁶ “Majláth Kör. Az Erdélyi Római Katolikus Népszövetség Egyetemi és Főiskolai Szakosztálya”, in *Erdélyi Tudósító*, 5, 1933, 293–298.

²⁷ At the meeting of the Status's Executive Committee on 5 April 1935, the following motion relating to the Pedagogical Seminar was adopted: the lectures of the Seminar are to become compulsory for all the student teachers of the Báthory-Apor Seminary, and in the

“boarder students and day students alike without confessional distinctions showed a pleasing interest and enthusiasm”.²⁸ The issues raised during the lectures were first debated jointly, and then the different confessions could discuss their viewpoints separately.

In the first year of the Pedagogical Seminar, Áron Márton disserted upon the issue of world view education.²⁹ Seeing its efficient activity, the Executive Committee of the Status assured the Pedagogical Seminar of its support, thus, its leaders could make plans for its development and extension already during its first year of activity: they prepared summer courses for teachers on social issues, and decided to publish a pedagogical journal (the latter *Erdélyi Iskola* [The Transylvanian School]). Among the plans of the Pedagogical Seminar there is the proposal for the foundation of a specialist journal. Since Lajos György had already proposed this in 1927 to the leaders of the historical churches, one can draw the conclusion that the idea – inside the seminar – of launching a specialist journal was also his proposal. (Finally, the *Erdélyi Iskola*, committed to the issues of education and community education was launched in 1933, at the request of the members of the Pedagogical Seminar, being edited by Lajos György and Áron Márton.)

Attentively following the work of the Majláth Circle, it is evident, that the leaders of its most forceful seminars (the social and the pedagogical seminar) were the same two men who also undertook the editorial work of the *Erdélyi Iskola*: those who launched and edited the *Erdélyi Iskola* over a long period of time, were also the ones who did the most active organisational work within the Majláth Circle. It is also evident, that the work Lajos György and Áron Márton carried out at the *Erdélyi Iskola* was in fact the “continuation” of their seminar work – since Lajos György edited the journal’s pedagogical section and Áron Márton edited the other big section, the community education. The *Erdélyi Iskola* was a serious challenge for both of them, which they undertook besides other assumed tasks. This way the activity of the Social Seminar slowly ceased (in that year, on the basis of the *Quadragesimo Anno* they still dealt with the social issues of the time, then with minority rights, with the co-operative idea, the

case of the status educational institutions only those should be able to apply for teaching, who participated at all the programmes of the Pedagogical Seminar. Cp.: *Az Erdélyi Római Katolikus Egyházmegyei Tanács igazgatótanácsának 1933. április 5-i gyűlésén felvett jegyzőkönyv*, 178. entry 675. (EKSL, IV. 4/a., Minutes – vol. 83: 1932–1933.)

²⁸ The Lyceum-library, undoubtedly, played an import role in raising the interest, which was frequented by the majority of the student teachers, and here they also had the possibility to meet the section’s prior and youth leader personally.

²⁹ He later published his lecture in the *Erdélyi Iskola*. (Cp.: MÁRTON Á., “Világnézet és nevelés”, in *Erdélyi Iskola*, 5–6, 233–238, 1933/34.)

catholic social system, the issue of social solidarity, and with the socially educative force of the scout movement,³⁰ then from the following year it was transformed into a co-operative section). Still, this did not at all bring “liberation” for Áron Márton – his name would continually to be found among the lectures of the Majláth Circle.

With the 1935/36 academic year, practically the Pedagogical Seminar also ceased its activity. In the following academic year they only organised within the literary and debating society – where they welcomed all catholic students – “little” educational lectures on topics of national literature and history. In the entire programme plan one cannot find a single topic related to pedagogy. Still, according to the then youth praeses, Géza Héjja, “each gathering of the literary and debating society was a miniature *Erdélyi Iskola*”.³¹ The analysis of the future society life of the catholic university students also indicates, that after Áron Márton’s departure and Lajos György’s gradual withdrawal, the entire Majláth Circle lost much from its momentum.

³⁰ “Főiskolás Élet”, in *Erdélyi Fiatalok*, 4, 1933, 108; “A főiskolás egyesületek munkája”, in *Erdélyi Fiatalok*, 1, 1934, 29; “Főiskolás Élet”, in *Erdélyi Fiatalok*, 4, 1934, 133–134.

³¹ EKSL, IV. 4/b. 408. d. 3170/1932. radix, 2347/1936. – 9 October 1936. *Héjja Albert ifjúsági prézesnek a Státus Igazgatótanácsa részére készített munkaterv-vázlata.*

**“WORDS STOLEN”¹ FROM THE LEGEND: THE DISPUTE OF THE
SAINT IN THE SERMON?
(WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO ANDRÁS ILLYÉS’ FIRST SERMON
ON SAINT ELISABETH OF HUNGARY)**

ANNA-RÓZSIKA SZILÁGYI*

Abstract. Compilation is an emphatic subject of the present scholarship on early medieval sermons. Most scholars investigate texts of the same genre from this point of view – in this case, sermons. It is worth extending the previous research on the basis of a well-known phenomenon: intertextuality. While listening to or reading the *contio* for the saints’ feast days, the reader often encounters fragments from legends. The preacher uses several rhetorical techniques to insert them into his sermons: as a narration, or as its marked exclusion (in a condensed, summarized form), or with the dispersed figure of face-catachresis, or as a thought of the Church Fathers about the given saint, presented in a third genre (usually a prayer). The preacher is guided in each case by a well-determined intention: to enforce the importance and truth of the dogmas of the Catholic faith in the confessional diversity of the Early Modern age. Therefore the orator’s voice must be eloquent, visual, and understandable for all. The rhetorical use of the saint’s legend is unavoidable – this enriches the sermon with a new meaning: it becomes a possibility for a procedure which combines several genres.

Keywords: legend, sermon, genres, compilation, compilation techniques, rhetorical methods, narrative textual fragments, preacher, narrator.

Introductory remarks

The root of the word *compilatio* is *compilo*. Gábor Kecskeméti sketches the semantic history of the word in his monograph entitled *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* (Sermon, rhetoric, literary history). His investigation reveals that the word was used already as early as the Antiquity. In Livius the meaning

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¹ Term used by Maczák Ibolya. MACZÁK I., *Elorzott szavak. Szövegalkotás 17–18. századi prédikációinkban* [Stolen words. Text creation in 17th-18th century Hungarian sermons], s.a., 53.

of the term *compilo* is to ‘violently deprive, rob’. Horace and Martial used it in a figurative sense. The term *compilatio* appeared for the first time at Cicero, then in late Antiquity in the writings of Macrobius, Saint Jerome, and Rufinus. At that time it still had the meaning of ‘illegitimate borrowing or transformation of someone else’s writing’. The initial pejorative sense only became neutral by the 12th century.² Emil Hargittay analyzes the early modern meanings of compilation: he refers to the dictionaries of Ferenc Pápai Páriz and Albert Szenczi Molnár. In these the meaning of the word is: ‘stealing’, ‘robbing’, ‘roguery’.³ We might suspect therefore a pejorative meaning, but the research proves that this method of composition was accepted in the age. Hargittay refers to the fact that for the verb form of the word (*compilo*) both authors mention the less pejorative meaning of ‘I collect together’.⁴ Ibolya Maczák in her earlier study proves the same thing by a different method. She calls compilation a “canonical plagiarism”. Her arguments: the contemporary taste, the “literary canon”, and the fact that in practice this method became a benchmark.⁵ Therefore the reader or audience of the sermons repeatedly encountered the method of compilation. The orator attempted to make his point by open or hidden insertions of textual correspondences: social critical vituperation, moral exemplum, or laudation.⁶ Simultaneously with this, intertextuality was also created, which, in Gérard Genette’s interpretation, is a relationship of several texts by their simultaneous presence: the actual presence of a text within another text.⁷ Speaking about sermons, the literature usually examined this method of intertextuality in the case of texts of the same genre: the presence of ideas of a certain sermon in other sermons, and the methods by which it was done. The learned clergy of the age wanted to assist the less

² KECSKEMÉTI G., *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetoric, literary history], Budapest, 1998, 194.

³ HARGITTAY E., *Filológia, eszmetörténet és retorika Pázmány Péter életművében* [Philology, history of ideas, and rhetoric in Péter Pázmány’s life work], Budapest, 2009, 205.

⁴ HARGITTAY, 205. Cf. also BÁRCZI I., *Ars compilandi. A késő középkori prédikációs segédkönyvek forráshasználata* [Ars compilandi. The use of sources in late medieval sermonaries], Budapest, 2007, 131–139.

⁵ MACZÁK I., “A kanonikus plágium (Szövegalkotás barokk prédikációinkban)” [The canonical plagiarism. Text creation in Baroque sermons], in *ItK*, 2003, 2/3, 265–266.

⁶ LUKÁCSY S., “Prédikációk Szent István királyról” [Sermons on Saint Stephen], in LUKÁCSY S. (ed.), *Isten gyertyáskái* [God’s little candles], Pécs, 1994, 30.

⁷ G. GENETTE, “Transztextualitás” [Transtextuality], in *Helikon*, 1996, 82–83. [G. GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, Paris, Seuil, 1982, trans. BURJÁN M.]. Cf. also MACZÁK, “A kanonikus plágium”, 261.

learned priests by following the way of exposing dogmatic or theological questions to the public in other kinds of sermons, excerpting these and completing the ideas contained in them. The graduates of the Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum had an eminent role in this respect.⁸ For example, the works of Péter Pázmány were used in Hungarian-language sermonaries of the late-17th century, the number of which continued to increase in the 18th.⁹

Some researchers have already noticed that generic boundaries often overlap in compilations:¹⁰ in our case these genres are the legend and the sermon. The result of this overlapping is the *copia rerum*, a form of exemplum which displays narrative textual fragments. Its functions are the following: evokes an action,¹¹ teaches (*educatio*), illustrates (*illustratio*), persuades (*persuasio*), argues (*argumentatio*), undertakes a moral teaching (*moralisatio*), and entertains (*delectatio*).¹²

In the followings I shall examine the relationship of the legend fragments appearing in András Illyés’ *Szent Ersebet aszszony napi I. predikáció* (First sermon for the feast of Saint Elisabeth) with the corresponding *vita* in the same author’s legend collection *A keresztyéni életnek példája* (Example of a Christian life). I shall also make reference to one sermon for the feast of Mary Magdalene and one for Saint Catherine of Alexandria. I shall analyze sermons on women saints, since they yield a better opportunity for a deeper insight: it is only these three women saints that the former Transylvanian bishop includes three sermons for each in his collection. Male saints are treated more frequently in his orations; however, a comparative analysis of these exceeds the scope of this paper. My text is therefore far from being comprehensive, since the relationship of this author’s sermons and legends is multiple, and employs a plethora of methods from case to case. The multilayered nature of this “relationship” could only be adequately traced by a monographic approach. Thus my endeavour is a subject proposal rather than an insightful analysis. For

⁸ BITSKEY I., *Hungáriából Rómába. A római Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum és a magyarországi barokk művelődés* [From Hungaria to Rome. The Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum of Rome and Baroque culture in Hungary], Budapest, 1996, 155.

⁹ OCSKAY Gy., “Pázmány hatása Kelemen Didák prédikációiban” [Pázmány’s influence in the sermons of Didák Kelemen], in *ItK*, 4 (1982), 437.

¹⁰ MACZÁK, “A kanonikus plágium”, 275.

¹¹ PAPP A., “Példákrul faragott tükörök’ (Utak és lehetőségek az exemplumkutatásban)” [“Mirrors carved by examples” (Ways and possibilities of exemplum research)] in BITSKEY I., TAMÁS A. (eds.), *Toposzok és exemplumok a régi irodalmunkban* [Topoi and exempla in early Hungarian literature], Debrecen, 1994, 91–98.

¹² TŰSKÉS G., “Az exemplum használata és típusai Nádasi János műveiben” [Usage and types of exempla in the works of János Nádasy], in BITSKEY, TAMÁS (eds.), 127.

my inquiries I made use of the first editions of the volumes: the 1692 edition of the sermonary, and the 1682 edition of the legend collection.

Compilation: the “possibility” of generic transgression

Jenő Kastner formulated the relationship between András Illyés’ *sermonarium* and *legendarium* as follows:

András Illyés published then the life of saints in Vienna, in the form of a sermon collection entitled “Shortened Word” [...] His example was followed by his younger brother István with his own work entitled “Sertum sanctorum. A wreath made from the scented flowers of the Praise of the Glorious Saints” (Nagyszombat [Trnava, SK], 1708.)¹³

Ibolya Maczák criticises this idea. She thinks that Kastner is wrong when suggesting that Illyés’ sermon collection is primarily based upon his legend collection,¹⁴ and she proves by the presentation of the method of compilation that Illyés employs in his sermons fragments from orations of György Káldi and sermons of Péter Pázmány.

I cannot completely agree with Ibolya Maczák, who is only concerned with compilation in her monograph. It should not be disregarded that a legend collection was of outstanding importance for the contemporaries for the re-foundation and evoking of Catholic values. That is why Illyés translated several legends, and summarized “his own” texts from several other texts. His legend collection was popular: it was published three times in ten years. It still proved necessary for the legend or its basic ideas, albeit with slight changes, to be disseminated in other ways as well. The reason was social and cultural deficiency: illiteracy, or the very narrow range of those who could read or write. The orator can thus place himself into the given rhetorical situation (see: necessity, audience, constraint/barrier):¹⁵ he may refer to some acts of the celebrated saint, events that happened to him, etc. The interconnectedness of

¹³ KASTNER J., “XVII. és XVIII. századi olaszból fordított vallásos műveink”, [17th-18th century Hungarian religious works translated from Italian], in *Egyetemes Philologiai Közöny*, 51 (1927), 26. Translated by E.G. CZINTOS.

¹⁴ MACZÁK, *Elorzott szavak*, 53.

¹⁵ ACZÉL P., “Minta és mód. Adalékok a modern retorikai műfajelmélethez” [Pattern and mode. Additions to modern rhetorical genre theory], in DÉRI B. (ed.), *Oratoris officium. Tanulmányok a hetvenéves Adamik Tamás tiszteletére*, [Oratoris officium. Studies in the honour of the seventy years old Tamás Adamik], Budapest, 2008, 19. Cf. ARISTOTLE, *Rétorika* [Rhetoric], 1982, 11. L. BITZER, “The Rhetorical Situation”, in *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1968/1, 1–14. Ch. BAZERMAN, *Shaping Written Knowledge: The genre and Activity of the Experimental Article in Science*, Madison, 1988, 82.

the legend collection and the sermonary is thus beyond doubt. Csilla Gábor also highlights the legend’s influence on the sermon. In her case study entitled *Szentisztelet és szentségi kritériumok a középkor és a kora újkor között* (Veneration of saints and criteria of sainthood from Middle Ages to Early Modernity), she draws attention to the fact that András Illyés’ sermon on Saint Stephen can be traced back to Hartvik’s legend.¹⁶

Legend in the sermon

The recommendation of Ludovicus Granatensis is observed in the *Szent Ersebet aszszony napi I. predikatió*. It addresses those orators who have difficulties in transposing the feeling communicated by the Holy Spirit to the soul of the listeners:

And since there are so few of them who have enjoyed this fortune, no oration is more troublesome and difficult for the orators than that which speaks of the veneration of saints. And who can only accomplish it to a lesser degree, readily finds a remedy for it: namely, that he explains the daily Gospel reading in the customary way, and exposes the excellent virtues of the saint either during this exposition (at its right place), or at the end of the oration.¹⁷

In his sermon on Saint Elisabeth of Hungary, András Illyés employs the second method: he explains the pericope of the day, then copies almost verbatim the matching fragments about the saint from his legend collection. In what follows, I shall pay attention to the techniques of compilation, as well as the functions of the exempla used.

¹⁶ GÁBOR Cs., “Szentisztelet és szentségi kritériumok a középkor és a kora újkor között. Esettanulmány”, [Veneration of saints and criteria of sainthood from Middle Ages to Early Modernity. A case study], in BERSZÁN I., EGYED E. (eds.), *A komparáció etikája a kritikai vizsgálatokban* [The ethics of comparison in critical examinations], Kolozsvar (Cluj), 2006, 167.

¹⁷ L. GRANATENSIS, “Az egyházi ékesszólásnak avagy a hitszónoklat elméletének hat könyve”, in BITSKEY I., “*Retorikák a barokk korból*” [The rethorics in the baroque], Debrecen, 2003, 128. [L. GRANATENSIS, *Ecclesiasticae rhetoricae siue de ratione concionandi libri sex*, Venetiis, 1578, ford. SZÖGEDI G.] [Quotation – English translation from the Hungarian version].

Example of Christian life ¹⁸ (1682) [A keresztyéni életnek példája]	Shortened daily reading (1692) [Megrövidített Ige]
<p>“Saint Elisabeth is the daughter of King Andrew II of Hungary, she has been prone to serve God since her childhood. When she went to the church, when she wasn’t older than five years of age, she occupied herself with prayer, and she <i>was so drawn into prayer</i> that she could hardly be taken away from there. As there was a chapel in her Father’s palace, she always sought the opportunity to go there, and she always prayed on her knees. <i>One day when she was in that Chapel with her servants, they wrote the names of as many Apostles as they were: then each of the girls took one of them with the ambition to be exceptionally pious towards the one whose name she chose by fate. God gave so that Elisabeth happened to choose the name of Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist: she much rejoiced, asking him to keep her chastity.</i></p> <p>She was very pious towards the Virgin Mary, whenever she had some money, she gave it to <i>poor women</i> so that they prayed the Hail Mary. The older she became, the more she <i>grew</i> in her good deeds. She tried not to observe her own will. And when</p>	<p>“<i>Let us now speak of today’s feast day of Saint Elisabeth.</i></p> <p>Saint Elisabeth is the daughter of King Andrew II of Hungary, she has been prone to serve God since her childhood. When she went to the church, when she wasn’t older than five years of age, she occupied herself with prayer, and she did that so eagerly that she could hardly be taken away from there. As there was a chapel in her Father’s palace, she always sought the opportunity to go there, and she always prayed on her knees. [II/604, III/84.]</p> <p>She was very pious towards the Virgin Mary, whenever she had some money, she gave it to the poor so that they prayed the Hail Mary. The older she became, the more she grew in her good deeds. She tried not to observe her own will. And when anything</p>

¹⁸ Translated by E.G. CZINTOS. See the original in the attachment. The content of the two columns is identical, except certain fragments in the first column which are absent from the second. The differing fragments are written in italic.

anything came up that she liked, she left it alone, so that she might infringe and *break* her own will. She was always moderate in her clothing and outfit. Her words were few and clever, and she was always very careful of what she said so that she might never offend anyone, but always be of assistance to all.

When it was due time that her Father King Andrew married her: which she first resisted, but then, *to be obedient: she trusted herself first to the will of God, then* of her Father and Mother; striving that she might have sons for the service of God; and not that she might share the pleasure of married people. Which she also proved with her acts; since as soon as she married, she made a pledge to God that if she lived longer than her husband, she would then always keep her chastity. Her husband was Ludwig, Landgrave of Thuringia: *And* although Elisabeth had changed the status and ways of her life, she changed nothing about her determined will and desire which directed her to the service of God. She was very pious towards God, very harsh and moderate to herself, and very merciful to her brethren. She woke up at night to pray, strengthening it with many tears: she was very eager to engage in humble and lowly services. *Once she leaned her head to the head of a sick man, which was stinking horribly, and nobody would suffer it; however, she cut his hair and washed it, while her servants seeing it, they laughed at her and*

came up that she liked, she left it alone, so that she might infringe and break her own will. She was always moderate in her clothing and outfit. Her words were few and clever, and she was always very careful of what she said so that she might never offend anyone, but always be of assistance to all. [II/604.]

When it was due time that her Father King Andrew married her: which she first resisted, but then being obedient to her Father and Mother; striving that she might have sons for the service of God; and not that she might share the pleasure of married people. Which she also proved with her acts; since as soon as she married, she made a pledge to God that if she lived longer than her husband, she would then always keep her chastity: *and indeed so it happened.* Her husband was Ludwig, Landgrave of Thuringia. Although Elisabeth had changed the status and ways of her life, she changed nothing about her determined will and desire which directed her to the service of God. She was very pious towards God, very harsh and moderate to herself, and very merciful to her brethren. She woke up at night to pray, strengthening it with many tears: she was very eager to engage in humble and lowly services. [II/604–605, III/85.]

mocked her; but she suffered that all for the love of God.

During common processions, which happened at times according to the laudable custom and order of the Holy Church, she *always* walked in poor clothes and barefoot. When she first went to the church after childbed, she did not put on pompous and adorned dresses, as some Women usually do; but in a lowly dress, holding her newborn child in her hands, she offered the baby to God, with one single candle and other gifts that she gave to the Priest: and going home, she gave the dress she had worn that day to the poor. Usually when she ate, she left some of the food, and gave it to the poor. All kinds of poor people called her their Mother: because she did well with all of them, and helped them in their need. When some poor died, she dressed them up and buried them. She gave clothes to the newborn and baptized children of the poor. Together with her servants she was spinning wool so that she could give alms from her own hands' work. When she had nothing else to give, she sold her jewels and precious stones, and shared their price among the poor. She had a certain house near her Palace, where she took in pilgrims and visitors and had them stay there for a few days: and she treated and cured the sick. In the same house she raised the children of the poor, who called her their Mother, and followed her like little lambs. In

During common processions, which happened at times according to the laudable custom and order of the Holy Church, she walked in poor clothes and barefoot. When she first went to the church after childbed, she did not put on pompous and adorned dresses, as some Women usually do; but in a lowly dress, holding her newborn child in her hands, she offered the baby to God, with one single candle and other gifts that she gave to the Priest: and going home, she gave the dress she had worn that day to the poor. Usually when she ate, she left some of the food, and gave it to the poor. All kinds of poor people called her their Mother: because she did well with all of them, and helped them in their need. When some poor *man* died, she dressed them up and buried them. She gave clothes to the newborn and baptized children of the poor. Together with her servants she was spinning wool so that she could give alms from her own hands' work. When she had nothing else to give, she sold her jewels and precious stones, and shared their price among the poor. She had a certain house near her Palace, where she took in pilgrims and visitors and had them stay there for a few days: and she treated and cured the sick. In the same house she raised the children of the poor, who called her their Mother, and followed her like little lambs. In one word:

one word: Saint Elisabeth exercised herself in all acts of mercy: *and although it seemed not befitting her status, as she was often present at the funeral of the dead, she sometimes took off her veil and covered the dead with it. Her husband knew all these things, but since he could not be present, busying himself with the Emperor's affairs, he gave her freedom to do so.*

In those times the Christians were at great war with the Pagans for the Holy Land, and they had already gained back some territories. Therefore Landgrave Ludwig wanted to take part in that fight; and he spoke to his wife, Saint Elisabeth, who advised him to go there; because that would please God. The Landgrave prepared as it was becoming for his status, and went to Palestine; where he fought bravely, and fell ill; and he earned the crown of good bravery in the otherworld. The news was soon heard by Saint Elisabeth, who, although felt great pain over the death of her beloved husband: she followed the will of God; she chose the way of chaste widowhood, both in her widow's clothes, which were very lowly; and in other bodily matters; since she changed everything to bitter penitence. Sometimes she kept vigil all night with her Betrothed, Jesus Christ. She never stopped giving alms.” [V/13–16.]

Saint Elisabeth exercised herself in all acts of bodily mercy. [II/605, III/85–86.]

The reader/listener may observe several compilation techniques: addition, subtraction, substitution, transposition, amplification, abbreviation, omission, variation.¹⁹ There are differences in the use of omissions: sometimes the preacher omits larger parts of texts, entire narrative fragments, other times only a single word, an expression, or a sentence.

Three longer fragments are absent from the sermon. The first such excerpt presents a “holy” game: Saint Elisabeth and her companions draw lots to choose themselves an apostle towards whom they would be “exceptionally pious”.²⁰ The other two are embedded into the narration as exempla. Both serve as justifications for her piety.

In the preacher’s interpretation Saint Elisabeth, following the principle of *contemptus mundi*, finds no advantage in wealth, in the selfish pleasure taken in life, but she observes the needs of the outcasts of society and tries to help them. In the second example she takes care of a stinky, ill person, not minding that she is mocked and laughed at. In the third one the orator emphasizes her many actions done to help the poor, demonstrating that they are also part of the society: she went to the funerals of the poor, and covered the dead with her veil. The same excerpt proves her strong relationship with her husband, as well as her husband’s *laudatio*, as he allowed her to do all this, although he knew that by this his wife failed to observe the rules of the upper circles of social hierarchy.

The narrative technique used in the first narrative fragment omitted is variation. Andrea Hargitai explains this method as follows: “in the course of compilation the texts can become parts of a new system of thought.”²¹ Let us repeat the omitted part for the sake of better understanding:

One day when she was in that Chapel with her servants, they wrote the names of as many Apostles as they were: then each of the girls took one of them with the ambition to be exceptionally pious towards the one whose name she chose by fate. God gave so that Elisabeth happened to choose the name of Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist: she much rejoiced, asking him to keep her chastity.²²

¹⁹ HARGITAI A., “Kelemen Didák prédikációinak Pázmány kompilációi” [Compilations from Pázmány in the works of Didák Kelemen], in *ItK*, 5/6 (2001), 641–646. OCSKAY, 441–444. MACZÁK, “A kanonikus plágium”, 270.

²⁰ ILLYÉS A., “Szent Ersébet Aszszonynak, a’ Második András Magyarok Királya leányának élete” [The life of Saint Elisabeth, daughter of King Andrew II of Hungary], in ILLYÉS A., *Keresztyéni életnek példája avagy tüköre, az az a’ szentek élete* [Example or mirror of Christian life, or the life of saints], Nagyszombat, 1707, RMK. I. 1728, 14.

²¹ HARGITAI, 645.

²² ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersébet Aszszonynak”, 14.

The subject of this fragment is the beginning of her devotion of John the Apostle and Evangelist, followed in both texts – the sermon and the legend – by the description of her veneration of the Virgin Mary. The orator of the sermon – teaching widows, as I have mentioned earlier – only speaks about women. He mentions two widows in the introduction: the Old Testament Judith and the New Testament Anna. After the *propositio* he argues, with the statements of some Church Fathers – Saint Augustine and Saint Ambrose –, that “Marriage is a Big yoke.”²³ The exemplary material is again women: Saint Euphrasia of Rome, Olimpia, Marcella of Rome, Galla (daughter of the chief mayor of Rome, Simacus), who all entered the nunnery after their marriage. Men are referred to as doctors of the faith: no other allusion is made to them. Therefore the legend fragment must be modified as it is inserted into a different context. The reference to Saint John is no longer functional, since of importance here is the saint’s veneration, and not the words of wise men.

The reason for the omission of the other two cases is more obvious. Besides omission, the orator also applies the possibilities of subtraction and abbreviation. He does not consider it necessary to explain in more details the sentences prior to the parts used as exempla. Such is the role of the following sentences: “she was very eager to engage in humble and lowly services”²⁴ and “In one word: Saint Elisabeth exercised herself in all acts of bodily mercy.”²⁵ It seems that this time the preacher highlights national sainthood, he treats Saint Elisabeth’s feast as *sollemnitas*.²⁶ The laudation of her husband is therefore not included into the text. He must also observe the pericope of the day, according to which he must instruct widows to a Christ-like life.

The less significant omissions do not result in important differences in meaning. I would still emphasize one such case, since it seems important for the subject. Elisabeth intends to extend the pious attitude towards the Virgin Mary. The sermon version reads as follows: “She was very pious towards the

²³ ILLYÉS A., “Szent Ersebet aszszony napi I. predikatio”, in ILLYÉS A., *Megrövidített Ige az az Predikációs Könyv* [Shortened Word, or Book of Sermons], Vienna, 1692, RMK I. 1416, 604. Cf. also ILLYÉS A., *Megrövidített Ige, az az Predikációs könyv*, Vienna, 1692, RMK. I. 1417, 84.

²⁴ ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersébet Aszszonynak”, 14.

²⁵ ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersébet Aszszonynak”, 15.

²⁶ *Sollemnitas* means a major feast, held on the feast day of the patron saint of churches, as well as on the feast day of the patron saint of a diocese. Cf. Nóda M., “Szent Erzsébet liturgikus tisztelete”, [The liturgical veneration of Saint Elisabeth], in GÁBOR Cs., KNECHT T., TAR G. N. (eds.), *Árpád-házi Szent Erzsébet. Magyar-német kultúrkapcsolatok Kelet-Közép-Európában* [Saint Elisabeth of Hungary. Hungarian-German cultural relations in Central and Eastern Europe], Kolozsvár (Cluj, RO), 2009, 182.

Virgin Mary, whenever she had some money, she gave it to *poor women* so that they prayed the Hail Mary.”²⁷ The legend-version reads: “She was very pious towards the Virgin Mary, whenever she had some money, she gave it to the poor so that they prayed the Hail Mary.”²⁸ To summarize, in the sermon Saint Elisabeth addresses *the poor*, while in the legend, *the poor women* to venerate Mary. This omission is due to the difference in genre. The sermon also contains the doctrinal, ritual explanation of the sacrament: therefore the orator ignores gender differences even when presenting women saints. He uses the word *poor*, originally an adjective, as a noun. Thus he addresses women and men alike. His purpose is to urge to action, to call the attention of both men and women to the values of the Catholic Church. He does that in a time when so many women died because of the accusation of witchcraft.²⁹

Albeit less often, there are also cases of substitution and transposition. “Mennél inkább nevedet idejében, annál inkább *nevedet* a’ jóságos cselekedetekben.”³⁰ The corresponding place in the sermon is: “Mennél inkább nevelkedett idejében, annál inkább *öregbedett* a’ jóságoscselekedetekben.”³¹ The orator substitutes the two words for sake of a better sounding, and to avoid repetition.

The amplification is more emphatic in two cases. First, when the orator, temporarily undertaking the role of a narrator, speaks about Elisabeth’s pledge: “[...] as soon as she married, she made a pledge to God that if she lived longer than her husband, she would then always keep her chastity: *and indeed so it happened.*”³² The expression which enforces the pledge – “and indeed so it happened” – finds its place in the sermon, keeping the rules of homiletics. It assumes an argumentative role in the given rhetorical situation, which measures the authenticity of the saint’s life conduct and way of thinking by acts, and not statements.

²⁷ ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersebet aszszony napi I. predikatio”, (RMK I. 1416) 604. (RMK I. 1417) 84.

²⁸ ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersébet Aszszonynak”, 13.

²⁹ See: KLANICZAY G., KRISTÓF I., PÓCS É. (eds.), *Magyarországi boszorkányperek. Kisebb forráskiadványok gyűjteménye* [Witch trials in Hungary. A collection of minor sources], Budapest, 1989.

³⁰ ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersébet Aszszonynak”, 13.

³¹ ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersebet aszszony napi I. predikatio”, (RMK I. 1416) 604. (RMK I. 1417) 84. Both sentences translate as: “The older she became, the more she *grew* in her good deeds” – the Hungarian words for ‘grew’ in the sermon and the legend are synonyms.

³² ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersebet aszszony napi I. predikatio”, (RMK I. 1416) 604. (RMK I. 1417) 84.

In the second case this technique is ampler, it exceeds the scope of one single expression. The preacher, in the manner and words of a narrator, completes Saint Elisabeth’s laudation as follows:

To such an extent that the Prophet’s words were fulfilled in her: *Dispersit, dedit pauperibus: justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi*. She shared and gave to the poor: her truth lasts for eternity. Let us follow Saint Elisabeth in this valley of lament so that we may rejoice with her in Heaven in eternal happiness after we die. Which may the merciful gracious God grant to all of us. Amen.³³

The enhancement of the laudation offers a *compendium* of the previous *laudatio* by referring to the statement of the Prophet King. Justifying its authenticity, according to the custom of the age, he cites the biblical locus in Latin as well.³⁴ The preacher displays the function of the long legend-fragment told at the end of the sermon when he draws the audience’s attention that they must follow Saint Elisabeth’s example. This does not sound as a command, but as a matter of choice, together with the anticipation of the result of such a life conduct. For this reason he mentions the rejoicing in Heaven. Then it is followed by blessing/prayer, and the concluding word of the prayer.

As far as the embedding of the long legend-fragment is concerned, this sermon can be related to Passion sermons and Gospel harmonies. The long, coherent narrative passages dominate both genres.³⁵ He only uses this technique in this sermon about a woman saint. It is due to the cult and popularity of Saint Elisabeth: for example, the place of her cult permanently changed, in accordance with the medieval cult of relics. Her body was first preserved in Marburg. In the 13th century Emperor Frederick II donated the chalice in which her head rested to the people of Mainz, then it subsequently appeared in Würzburg in 1631, and now it is preserved in the Stockholm museum.³⁶ Her main shrines are in Marburg, Thuringia, Košice, Spain, France, Mexico, Winchester, Columbia, Bogota.³⁷ Women’s movements used the example of Elisabeth as source of inspiration in the Middle Ages (see the religious

³³ ILLYÉS, “Szent Ersebet asszony napi I. predikatio”, (RMK I. 1416) 605–606. (RMK I. 1417) 86.

³⁴ Psalms 3,9.

³⁵ MACZÁK, “A kanonikus plágium”, 267.

³⁶ ZALA M. (ed.), *Szentelek lexikona*, [Lexicon of saints], Budapest, 1994, 86.

³⁷ ZALA, 86.

movement of women in Thuringia),³⁸ but the phenomenon prevailed even as late as the 20th century (see the Anglican Women’s Congregation, London 1912).³⁹ Besides, she was often associated in popular religion with persons of outstanding social position (e.g. Sissi).⁴⁰ Her presence in art is also prominent. István Bitskey presents several texts of various genres in his study “*Erkölcsöknek tündöklő gyöngyszeme*” (*Szent Erzsébet a kora újkor magyar irodalmában*) [“Brilliant pearl of virtues” (Saint Elisabeth in early modern Hungarian literature)] which revolve around this woman saint.⁴¹ Representations of Elisabeth are frequent in painting and sculpture as well.⁴² In addition to all these, it also means a great deal that the preacher addresses his own people with the life story of a saint also of his own people. Thus – with the help of history – he admonishes his audience to stay in the Catholic faith, or, if needed, to the need for re-Catholization.

In place of conclusion: means used in other sermons (browsing)

In the *Szent Mária Magdolna napi I. predikáció* (The first sermon for the feast of Saint Mary Magdalene) the key element of the legend’s embedding into the sermon is some thoughts of the theologians about the saint. The preacher refers to the statements of Caesarius of Arles, Diego de Estella, and St. Thomas of Villanova. The source is apparently noted, according to the customs of the age. Obviously these thoughts cannot be regarded as the direct sources of the citations. Evidence of their indirectness is the fact that these statements reflect the

³⁸ NEMES J. B., “Jutta von Sangerhausen (13. század). Egy ’új szent’ Szent Erzsébet nyomdokain?” [Jutta von Sangerhausen (13th century). A ’new saint’ in the footsteps of Saint Elisabeth?], in GÁBOR, KNECHT, TAR (eds.), 108.

³⁹ PUSKELY M., *Kétezer év szerzetessége. Szerzetesség- és művelődéstörténeti enciklopédia* [The monasticism of two thousand years. An encyclopaedia for the history of monasticism and culture], I, Budapest, 1998, 315.

⁴⁰ LANDGRAF I., “Erzsébet, a magyarok királynéja – második Szent Erzsébet”, [Elisabeth, Queen of the Hungarians – the second Saint Elisabeth], in BARNA G. (ed.), *A szentisztelet történeti rétegei és formái Magyarországon és Közép-Európában. A magyar szentek tisztelete* [Historical levels and forms of the cult of saints in Hungary and Central Europe. The cult of Hungarian saints], Szeged, 2001, 109–128.

⁴¹ BITSKEY I., “‘Erkölcsöknek tündöklő gyöngyszeme’ (Szent Erzsébet a kora újkor magyar irodalmában)” [“Brilliant pearl of virtues” (Saint Elisabeth in early modern Hungarian literature)], in GÁBOR, KNECHT, TAR (eds.), 9–17.

⁴² KOSTYÁL L., “Változatok egy témára – Árpád-házi Szent Erzsébet” [Variations on a theme – Saint Elisabeth of Hungary], in BARNA (ed.), 98–103. PROKOPP M., “Szent Erzsébet ábrázolásának főbb típusai a középkorban” [Major types of the representation of Saint Elisabeth in the Middle Ages], in GÁBOR, KNECHT, TAR (eds.), 159–166.

legends of Mary Magdalene in a constructive way: they subtract the events and miraculous acts appearing in the legend, or the fragments referring to an ascetic lifestyle. They make didactic, moralizing connections between textual units, explaining them. For example, Caesarius of Arles presents Mary Magdalene’s penitence: “She did not hold herself back, to keep penitence only at the end of her life; but while she could still sin, she wanted to escape sins in such a way that what kept her from adultery should be her will, and not the impossibility to do so.”⁴³ The legend’s narrator comments on it as follows: “Saint Mary Magdalene, after she converted many souls to God, went to a dreary desert, where she lived a very desolate, solitary life in a cave for thirty years. Her food was grass and the roots of trees. Her clothes were completely torn, and fell off her body: but the Lord God clothed her, nicely growing her hair.”⁴⁴

The preacher also remarks that with the acceptance of such a life conduct, the saint also rejected the main challenge of time passing: the acceptance of worldly delights. At the same time, the decision and will to that what is good is paramount in Caesarius’ *argumentatio*.

Thomas of Villanova also refers to the saint’s penitence, struggling with the insufficiency of language. He strives to represent the divinity of the saint in an eloquent way, dissolving the opposition of the two worlds: “[...] She wore an angelic person in human members, without food, without water, without clothes, desiring only heavenly things.”⁴⁵ Apparently, these are the words of the narrator about an ascetic lifestyle. However, knowing the legend, the orator’s words imply more than that. The narrator displays the devotion of the saint not only in her ascetic life and miracles, but he stresses the reply of the divine world: “Day and night, she was lifted seven times into the air by the angels, and she always heard the beauty of divine music.”⁴⁶ The first part of the theologian’s sentence is a *compendium* for this statement: “[...] She wore an angelic person in human members.” Thus the few further elements of the enumeration do not necessarily explain the first, but are completions of it. On other occasions the narrator uses the figures of *face-catachresis* and *prosopopoeia* to enlist the saint’s acts.⁴⁷

⁴³ ILLYÉS A., “Szent Mária Magdolna napi I. predikatio”, in ILLYÉS, *Megrövidített Ige*, (RMK I. 1416), 316.

⁴⁴ ILLYÉS A., “Szent Maria Magdolna élete”, in ILLYÉS, *Keresztyéni életnek*, 11.

⁴⁵ ILLYÉS, “Szent Mária Magdolna napi I. predikatio”, 317.

⁴⁶ ILLYÉS, “Szent Maria Magdolna élete”, 11.

⁴⁷ B. MENKE, “Ki beszél? A beszélő arc alakzata a retorika történetében” [Who speaks? The figure of the speaking face in the history of rhetoric], in FÜZI I., ODORICS F. (eds.),

The sermons on Mary Magdalene are connected to the legends through the exempla. The theologian usually names the author of these: he finds inventive ways to rethink some of the elements of the penitence legends of the saint.

In the second sermon for the feast of Saint Catherine (*Szüz Szent Katalin napi II. predikatio*) the preacher uses methods of a greater variety than for the previous sermon. In four cases he resorts to narration. The preacher undertakes a narrator's role on several occasions: he uses different words and expressions to tell the same story that also appears in the legend. In the narrations – in all four cases – he refers to the following elements of the legend: the angels serve the saint in her prison, God feeds her through a white dove, after her death only angels could touch her body; Saint Catherine “disputes” with the philosophers, she converts them to Christ, which results in the martyrdom of the philosophers; the angel and the white dove appear again; Christ chose Catherine as His bride, and when He visited her in her prison, He encouraged her to suffer martyrdom. It can be observed that in the succession of textual fragments the preacher does not follow the chronology and order of the events, but he subtracts, summarizes, abbreviates, suggests. Sometimes he offers the *compendium* of almost the entire legend: “This God also spoke to Saint Catherine when choosing her his Bride, he put a ring on her finger: and when he visited her in the prison, he encouraged her to suffer Martyrdom, because he will always help her conquer all her torments.”⁴⁸ The narrations are intertwined by other kinds of rhetorical figures as well. The author uses the narrative fragment on the help of the angels and the *white dove* as an argument. The main statement – “She showed the same fervency with regard to the spiritual mountain of this Virgin” – marks the virgin saint's unequalled fear of God. It is to this that the preacher subordinates the quoted fragment. Speaking of the conversion of philosophers, he attempts visuality – he inserts Christian symbols into a Baroque sentence: those of the severe heart and the fire. The first refers to unfaithfulness, the second is the representation of the Soul, a symbol of God. It is widely known that the prophets describe the wrath of God in the form of fire. This symbolism prevails from ancient Christianity to the Middle Ages and beyond. In early medieval times, for instance, Germanic peoples made fire and blessed it before the rites of the spring equinox.⁴⁹ Along visuality, the preacher

Figurák [Figures], Budapest – Szeged, 2004, 87–118, [B. MENKE, *Prosopopoiia. Stimme und Text bei Brentano, Hoffmann, Kleist und Kafka*, Verlag, 2000, trans. TÖRÖK E.].

⁴⁸ ILLYÉS A., “Szüz Szent Katalin napi II. predikatio”, in ILLYÉS, *Megrövidített Ige*, (RMK I. 1416), 633.

⁴⁹ GECSE G., “A vallási kultusz szimbolizmusa” [The symbolism of religious cults], in KAPITÁNY Á., KAPITÁNY G. (eds.), „*Jelbeszéd az életünk.*” *A szimbolizáció története és*

also attempts eloquence: he wants to express something which is unutterable in human language, but a figurative representation may still yield some understanding of it for an outsider.

On other occasions he also applies other procedures besides narration: in three fragments he uses analogy (the analogy between Moses and Catherine), in three different cases he uses the words of theologians to summarize his thoughts: Saint Jerome, Albertus Magnus, and “Judok Doctor’s”.⁵⁰ Of the rhetorical figures connecting the two genres, attention should also be given to a technique which also concerns a third genre: the preacher uses the prayer to employ another analogy and allegorical explanation:

Deus, qui dedisti legem Moysi in summitate montis Synai, et in eodem loco corpus B. Catherinae per sanctos Angelos tuos mirabiliter collocasti: prasta quasumus, ut ejus meritis, et intercessione ad montem, qui Christus est, prevenire valeamus. God, who gave the law to Moses on the Sinai Mountain; and on the same spot you placed the body of Saint Catherine miraculously by your angels: grant us, we ask you, that by her virtues and intervention, we may reach the mountain, which is the Christ.⁵¹

The domination of narrative fragments justifies the content-based, textual comparability of the sermon and the legend, and, moreover, the importance of their parallel representation. The oratorical purpose of the preacher also becomes more obvious thus: preserving the audience in the Catholic faith by moving (*movere*) them and raising their admiration (*delectare*) towards the saint.

Translated by Emese G. Czintos

kutatásának módszerei [Our life is symbolic language. The history and research methodology of symbolization], Budapest, 1995, 504.

⁵⁰ ILLYÉS, “Szűz Szent Katalin napi II. predikatio”, 633.

⁵¹ ILLYÉS, “Szűz Szent Katalin napi II. predikatio”, 632. Translated by E.G. CZINTOS.

Attachment

A keresztyéni életnek példája (1682) [Example of Christian life]	Megrövidített Ige (1692) [Shortened daily reading]
<p>Sz. Ersébet Második Andrásnak Magyar-ország Királyának leánya, kis-korától fogva mindenkor hajlando volt az Isteni szolgálatra. Mikor a' Temblomba ment, még nem lévén nagyobb ött esztendősnél, magát az imádságban foglalta, és <i>addig meg-maradot az imádságban</i>, hogy nehezen vitethetnék el onnan. Az Attya Palotájában egy Kápolna lévén, minden nap gyakran kereset alkolmatosságot oda menni, és mindenkor térden álva imádkozott. Némely nap azon Kápolnában lévén az ő szolgálóival, annyi Apostoloknak nevét irák-le, a' menyin ök voltak: azután ki-ki azok közül a' leányok-közül vőt egyet olyan igyekezettel, hogy ahoz kivált-képpen-valo áitatossággal lenne, a' kinek neve a sors-által néki jutna. Az Isten ugy adá, hogy Ersébet, a' Sz. János Apostol és Evangélista nevét találá venni: igen örüle azon, kérvén ötet, hogy örizné-meg az ő tisztaságát.</p> <p>A' Boldogságos Szüz Máriához igen áitatos volt, mikor pénzt vehetet kezébe a' <i>szegény aszszonyoknak</i> adta, hogy az Idvöz légy Máriát, elmondanak. Mennél inkább nevedet idejében, annál inkább <i>nevedet</i> a' josságos cselekedetekben. Igyekezett</p>	<p>„Szollyunk immár a' mái Sz. Ersébet Aszszonyrol.</p> <p>Sz. Ersébet Második András Magyarország Királyának leánya, kis korától fogva mindenkor hajlando volt az Isteni szolgálatra. Mikor a' Tēplomba ment, még nem lévén nagyobb öt esztendősnél, magát az imádságban foglalta, és oly örömet maradt az imádságban, hogy nehezen vitethetnékel onnan. Az Attya palotájában egy kápolna lévén, minden nap gyakran keresett alkolmatosságot oda menni, és mindenkor térden álva imádkozott. II/604, III/84.</p> <p>A' Boldogságos Szüz Máriához igen áitatos volt, mikor pénzt vehetett kezébe a' szegényeknek adta, hogy az Eüdvöz légy Máriát, elmondanak. Mennél inkább nevelkedett idejében, annál inkább <i>öregbedett</i> a' josságos-cselekedetekben. Igyekezett a' maga</p>

<p>a' maga akarattyának ellenne mondani: és midön valami oly dolog következett, mely ö-néki tettet volna, azt magán hadta, hogy megszegje, és <i>törje</i> a' maga kivánságát. Mindenkor csendes maga-viselő volt ruházatiban, öltözetiben. Az ö beszédi kevesek voltak, és okossak mindenkor jól reá figyelmeztvén arra, a' mit akarna mondani, hogy soha másoknak ártalmára ne lenne, hanem mindeneknek segítségére.</p> <p>Mikor immár illendő ideje volna, az Attyától András Királytól fér-hez adaték, mely dolognak elsőbben ellenne-mondván, végezetre <i>hogy engedelmes légyen: Isten után, az Attyának, es Annyának akarattyára bizá magát</i>, olyan igyekezettel, hogy az Isten szolgálattyára fiai legyenek, és nem hogy a' házasoknak gyönyörüségében részes lenne. <i>Ezt cselekedetivel is meg-mutatá</i>, mivel mihent férjhez méne, mingyárt fogadást tön az Istennek, hogy ha tovább élne az ö férjénél, azután mind örökké meg-tartaná tisztaságát. Az ö férje Landgrávius Lajos, Thuringiai Herczeg volt: <i>Es</i> noha Ersébet változtatá állapotját, és modgyát életének, mindazáltal semmi változtatást nem tön el-tékéltet igyekezetiben, és kivánságában, melytől izgattatik vala az Istennek szolgálattyára. Igen áitatos volt Istenhez, igen kemény, és mértékletes önnön magához, és igen irgalmas felebarátihoz. Ejjel fel kél vala az imádságra, sok könyhullatásokkal egybe foglolván azt: igen tettet néki alázatos, és alacson</p>	<p>akarattyának ellennemondani. Es midön valami oly dolog következett, mely ö néki tettet volna, azt magán hadta, hogy megszegje, és <i>meztörje</i> a' maga kivánságát. Mindenkor csendesmagaviselő volt ruházatiban, és öltözetiben. Az ö beszédi kevesek voltak, és okossak mindenkor jól reá figyelmeztvén arra, a' mit akarna mondani, hogy soha másoknak ártalmára ne lenne, hanem mindeneknek segítségére. II/604.</p> <p>Mikor immár illendő ideje volna, az Attyától András Királytól férjhez adaték: mely dolognak elsőbben ellennemondván; végezetre Attyának, és Annyának engedelmes lön; olyan igyekezettel, hogy az Isten szolgálattyára fiai legyenek; és nem hogy a' házasoknak gyönyörüségében részes lenne. Mellyet cselekedettel is megmutatott; mivel mihent férjhez méne, mingyárt fogadást tön az Istennek, hogyha tovább élne az ö férjénél, azután mindörökké megtartaná tisztaságát: <i>s' ugvis lön</i>. Az ö férje Landgravius Lajos, Turingiai Herczeg volt. Noha Ersébet változtatá állapotját, és modgyát életének: mindazáltal semmi változtatást nem tön eltekéltet igyekezetében, és kivánságában, melytől izgattatik vala az Istennek szolgálattyára. Igen áitatos volt Istenhez, igen kemény, és mértékletes önnön magához, és igen irgalmas felebarátihoz. Ejjel felkél vala az imádságra, sok könyhullatásokkal egybefoglolván azt: igen tetszet néki alázatos, és alacson szolgálatokban magát foglalni. II/604–605, III/85.</p>
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szolgálatokban magát foglalni.

Egyszer a' maga fejét egy betegnek fejéhez haytotta, mely iszonyu bűdös volt, és nem találtatott, a' ki azt elszenvedte volna; mindazáltal ő annak a' fejét meg nyirte, és megmosta, mellyet látván a' szolgálai, megnevezték, és csufolták ötet; de ő mind el-szenvedte az Isten szeretetért.

A' közönséges Processiókban, mellyek bizonyos időkben az Anyaszent-egyháznak dicsiretes szokása, és rendelése-szerént voltak, *mindenkor* alacson öltözetben, és meztláb járt. Mikor gyermek születése után elsőbben a' Templomba ment, nem pompás, és ékes ruhákba öltözött, a' mint némely Aszszonyok szoktak cselekedni; hanem alacson ruhában a' töle születet gyermekskét a' maga kariain tartván, *az* Istennek ajánlotta, egy szál gyertyával, és más rend béli ajándékkal, mellyet a' Papnak adott; és haza menván, azt a' ruhát, melyben azon nap járt, a' szegényeknek adta: és közönségesen mikor övött, meghagyott az ételben, és a szegényeknek adta. Minden rend-béli szegény emberek, Annyoknak hitták ötet, mert mindenekkel jól téssen vala, és szükségekben megsegítette őket. Midön valamely szegény meg-holt, fel-öltöztette, és el-temettette azt. A' szegényeknek ujjonnan születet, és meg-kereszteltetett gyermekit meg-ruhádzotta. A' maga szolgálóival egyetembe más embereknek gyapjat font, hogy a' maga kezei munkáiból alamisnát adhasson. Mikor nem volt egyéb mitt adni, drága köveit, és

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gyöngyeit el-adta, és azoknak árát elosztogatta a’ szegényeknek. Egy bizonyos háza volt az ő Palotája mellett, melybe a jövevényeket, és szarándokokat bé fogadván, némely napig tartotta: és a’ betegeket meg-orvosolotatta, és *gyogyította*. Ugyan azon házban neveltette a’ szegény emberek gyermekeit, kik annyoknak hitták ötet, és mint a’ báránykák ö-utánna jártak. Egy szóval: Sz. Ersébet Aszszony a’ testi irgalmasságnak minden cselekedetiben magát gyakorlotta: és noha nem illendőnek láztot lenni az ő állapottyához, sokszor jelen lévén a’ halottak temetésin, néha a’ fátyolt a’ maga fejéről levőtte, és azzal a’ halottakat bé-takarta. Tudta mind ezeket a’ dolgokat az ő férje, de mivel ott jelen nem lehetet, foglalatos lévén a’ Császár dolgaiban, szabadságot adot néki, hogy azokat cselekdgye.

Az időben a’ Keresztyének igen hadakoztak a’ Pogányok-ellen a’ Szent Földért, és immár némely helyeket vissza nyertek vala. *Annak-okaért* Landgravius Herczeg jelen akara lenni abban a’ szent hadakozásban; és szolla a’ feleségének Sz. Ersébetnek, ki azt adá tanátsul, hogy oda menne; mert azzal kedves dolgot cselekednék az Istennek. El-készüle a’ Herczeg, a’ mint az ő állapottyához illendő volt, és Palestinába méne; holot dicsiretessen vitézkedvén, betegségben esék; és a’ jo vitézségnek koronáját el-nyeré a’ más világon. Szent Ersébetnek hamar meg-hozák ezt a’ hirt, ki noha nagy szibéli

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Az időben a’ Keresztyének igen hadakoztak a’ Pogányok ellen a’ Sz. Földért, és immár némely helyeket visszanyertek vala. *Azokáért* Landgravius Herczeg jelen akara lenni abban a’ szent hadakozásban; és szolla a’ feleségének Szent Ersébetnek, ki azt adá tanácsul, hogy oda menne; mert azzal kedves dolgot cselekednék az Istennek. Elkészüle a’ Herczeg, a’ mint az ő állapottyához illendő volt, és Palestinába méne; holott dicsiretessen vitézkedvén, betegségben esék; és a’ jo vitézségnek koronáját elnyeré a’ más világon. Szent Ersébetnek hamar meghozák ezt a’ hirt, ki noha nagy

fájdalommal érzette az ő kedves férjének halálát: mindazáltal az Isten akarattyához szabván magát, a' tiszta özvegységnek állapottyát választá magának, mind özvegységnek ruhájában, mely igen alacson volt; mind pedig egyéb testi alkalmatlanságban, mivelhogy minden dolgot sanyaru poenitentia-tartásra változtata. Néha egész éjjel vigyázot vala az ő Jegyesével a' Kristus Jéssussal, meg nem szünt alamisnákat osztogatni.” V/13–16.

szibéli fájdalommal érzette az ő kedves férjének halálát: mindazáltal az Isten akarattyához szabván magát; a' tiszta özvegységnek állapottyát választá magának, mind özvegységnek ruhájában, mely igen alacson volt; mind pedig egyéb testi alkalmatlanságban; mivelhogy minden dolgot sanyaru penitentiartásra változtata. Néha egész éjjel vigyázott vala az ő Jegyesével a' Kristus Jéssussal. Meg nem szünt alamisnákat osztogatni a' szegényeknek. Elannyira hogy bétellyesedett ő benne a' Királyi Profétának ama mondása: *Dispersit, dedit pauperibus: justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi*. Osztogatott, a' szegényeknek adott: az ő igazsága megmarad örökkön örökké. Ugy kövessük Sz. Ersébetet e' siralomnak völgyében, hogy holtunk után ő véle együtt örvendzessünk Menyországban az örök Boldogságban. Mellyet adgyon minnyájunknak az irgalmas kegyelmes Isten. Amen. II/605–606, III/86.

**PREPARATION FOR DEATH IN JESUIT ISTVÁN TARNÓCZY'S
BOOK *HOLTIG-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG*
[FRIENDSHIP THAT LASTS TILL DEATH]**

FRANCISKA KÓNYA*

Abstract: István Tarnóczy's collection of meditations and prayers, first published in 1680, subsequently saw more than ten editions. Its popularity was due to the timeliness of its subject matter. This Jesuit book of meditations contained prayers and meditations written for those seriously ill or preparing for death, while at the same time it worked as a kind of reference book for those assisting the suffering or the dying. In the concept of the time, the attainment of eternal happiness was largely due to a good death. The dying person had to learn the art of death (*ars moriendi*). This meant in the first place a thorough search of one's heart, penitence, persistent prayer, forgiveness of one's brethren, and a just last will. The role of the environment, of those who support the dying person with prayer, and may help his salvation after death by offering masses and saying prayers for his soul, is essential.

Keywords: preparation for death, assisting dying persons, collection of meditation, meditation, 17th century Jesuit meditation, 17th century piety literature.

István Tarnóczy¹ joined the Society of Jesus in Vienna in 1647. He studied philosophy in Graz in the period of 1651–1653.² He taught classes in rhetoric and poetics at Ungvár (Uzhhorod, present-day Ukraine). Later, he taught theology in Kassa (Košice, present-day Slovakia), Nagyszombat (Trnava, present-day Slovakia), Győr, and Klagenfurt.³ At Nagyszombat University he taught philosophy and theology. He was director of the colleges of Lőcse (Levoča, present-day Slovakia) and Győr. In his eulogy written at

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¹ István Tarnóczy (Nyitra [Nitra, present-day Slovakia], 1626 – Győr, 1689).

² WIX G., *Régi magyarországi szerzők. A kezdetektől 1700-ig*, [Early Hungarian authors. From the beginning until 1700], Budapest, 2008, 811.

³ PÉTER L. (ed.), *Új magyar irodalmi lexikon* [New Hungarian literary lexicon], III., Budapest, 1994, 2052.

Tarnóczy's death, the rector of Győr College emphasized his meekness, his piety, his care for poor students, and his patience in enduring his illness.⁴

Hungarian literary history has given little attention to the work of István Tarnóczy, whose books were published in Hungarian and Latin alike. His Hungarian writings mostly comprised works of piety, meditation, and theological treatises: *Menyben vezető Kalauz* (A guide leading to Heaven, Nagyszombat, 1675, RMK. I. 1185.) a translation of the Italian Giovanni Bona's work *Manuductio ad caelum*; one year later, he published his prayer book, *Titkos értelmű Rosa* (A rose with a secret meaning, Nagyszombat, 1676, RMK I. 1206.); this was followed by the *Holtig-velő barátság* (Friendship that lasts till death, Nagyszombat, s.a., RMK I. 1606.), analyzed hereby; then *Nagy mesterség a jó élet* (A good life is a great art, Nagyszombat, 1680, RMK I. 1252.), a translation of Roberto Bellarmino's *De arte bene moriendi*; three of his works published in Vienna, in 1685: *Jó akarat* (Good will, RMK I. 1325.), *Választott nyíl* (A chosen arrow, RMK I. 1326.), *Vigyázó Szem* (A watchful eye, RMK I. 1327.). He wished to familiarize his readers with the lives of Hungarian saints in Latin: *Idea Coronata Sive Vita S. Stephani primi Regis Et Apostoli Hungarorum* (Bécs (Vienna), 1680, RMK III. 3036.); *Princeps Angelicus, Sive Vita S. Emerici Ducis Hungariae* (Bécs, 1680, RMK III. 3037.); *Rex Admirabilis, Sive Vita S. Ladislai Regis Hungariae* (Bécs, 1681, RMK III. 3098.).⁵

Publication and antecedents

István Tarnóczy's collection of prayers and meditations entitled *Holtig-velő barátság*⁶ was first published in Nagyszombat around 1680.⁷ It had ten more subsequent editions. The second edition appeared after Tarnóczy's death, in 1695. The six later editions in Nagyszombat (1707, 1722, 1735, 1741, 1754,

⁴ SZINNYEI J., *Magyar írók élete és munkái* [Life and works of Hungarian authors], XIII., Budapest, 1909, 1318.; KENYERES Á. (ed.), *Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon*, [Hungarian Lexicon of Biography], II., Budapest, 1967–1969, 825.

⁵ KÓNYA F., “Voluntas mea in ea”. Latin citátumok magyar fordítása Tarnóczy István Jó akarat című művében” [“Voluntas mea in ea”. Hungarian translation of Latin quotations in István Tarnóczy's work Jó akarat], in GÁBOR Cs., KORONDI Á. (eds.), *A fordítás kultúrája – szövegek és gyakorlatok* [The culture of translation – texts and practices] II., Kolozsvár, 2010, 85.

⁶ TARNÓCZY I., *Holtig-velő barátság. Avagy mi módon kellessék az beteg, és halálra vált embert, avagy meg-sentenciázot bűnöst segíteni* [Friendship that lasts till death. Or how to help an ill or dying man, or a sentenced sinner], Nagyszombat, n.d., RMK I. 1606.

⁷ Károly Szabó in the Régi Magyar Könyvtár bibliography of early Hungarian books mentions the period between 1680–1682. RMK I. 1606.

1773), as well as the work's publication in Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, present-day Romania, 1769), Eger (1771), and Buda (1817) stand as evidence for its popularity in the 18th century. The repeated republication and popularity of the book betrays the necessities of practical life. In my paper, I wish to highlight the private and collective practice of piety in the 17th-18th century, with reference to Tarnóczy's bestseller.

The first edition of the *Holtig-való barátság* followed the author's translation of Bellarmino, another work of assistance for good death, probably only at a distance of one or two years. Tarnóczy published his Hungarian translation of Bellarmino's work *De arte bene moriendi*⁸ by the title *Nagy mesterség a jó élet* [A good life is a great art].⁹ The title was not chosen randomly. While the Latin version links by its title to the tradition of *ars moriendi*, the Hungarian translation refers to itself as the art of good living. Bellarmino's book is divided into two parts: the first is about the preparation for death, when it is still thought of as something distant (Tarnóczy calls it healthy state), teaching at the same time the art of good living; the second part focuses on the time when death is at hand (the time of illness when healing is no longer expected). The work stresses the idea that good death is the result of good life: "he who never lived badly, can never die badly: just like he who has always lived badly, will die badly" – writes Tarnóczy in the preface.¹⁰ The art of good living is based on the practice of good deeds (faith, hope, love, moderation, justice, piety, prayer, fasting, almsgiving), while the sacraments may help one lead a perfect life. It is important that death may not find one unprepared. Life according to the *ars vivendi* is the best way to prepare for an unexpected death. It is dangerous to postpone one's conversion until the last moment, because eventually there may not be time for it. Bellarmino emphasizes the importance of the daily examination of one's conscience, recommends the reading of the Scripture and other pious books, and at the same time he considers it salutary for the faithful to "order himself daily an hour-long meditation about the passion of Christ, or the four last things of man".¹¹ Remembering death may shake man up from his sinful state, and push him onto the road of conversion. Therefore the *ars moriendi* can often be understood also as an *ars vivendi*.

⁸ R. BELLARMINO, *De arte bene moriendi*, Roma, 1620.

⁹ TARNÓCZY I., *Nagy mesterség a jó élet*, Nagyszombat, 1679, *RMK* I. 1252.

¹⁰ "nem is halhat rosszszúl meg, a' ki soha rosszszúl nem élt: a' mint az is, a' ki mindenkor rosszszúl élt, rosszszúl hal-meg" TARNÓCZY, *Nagy mesterség*, [A2 v]. All quotations of Hungarian texts translated by E.G. CZINTOS.

¹¹ "minden napra egy óráig-való elmélkedést rendel magának a' Christus kinszenvedéséről, avagy embernek négy végső dolgairól" TARNÓCZY, *Nagy mesterség*, 249.

Who is the book addressed to?

The addressees of the *Holtig-való barátság*, as the subtitle mentions, are “the healthy and the sick”.¹² Tarnóczy’s preface is addressed to those “who watch the salvation of the souls of ill and dying people”: these are, besides the priest, pious lay people, relatives, or friends. The publisher mentions this latter group in the dedication of the second edition, when writing about how saleable the book is: “the people serving God-fearing, dying sick people could hardly get even some of their rags or dust”.¹³

The voluntary assistance of ill and dying persons became customary at the beginning of the 16th century.¹⁴ Tarnóczy considers that the service done around ill and dying people, striving to make their passage salutary, is a manful and sacred act. On one occasion he also mentions those who are not present by the side of the dying person, and recommends certain mediating prayers for them.¹⁵ The Latin language selection inserted between the dedication and the preface, entitled *Resolutiones morales*, and dealing with canon law issues connected to the administration of the sacraments (Penance, the Eucharist, and the Anointing of the Sick) and the course of rites, must have been intended for members of the clergy. They are mostly also the intended audience of the *Intések* [Admonitions] and directions intercalated between prayers and meditations. Advice for the sick can mainly be found in the first part of the book, but prayers and meditations for this group are to be found all over the book. The fifth chapter of the work assists the person sentenced to death in his preparation for dying. Such a concern of the works of piety for convicted people can be observed ever since Bellarmino’s writings; previously, in the Middle Ages, they were considered evil people, who undoubtedly go to hell after their death.¹⁶ Bellarmino claims that their execution is a penance for their sins; if they die with a repenting soul, they can be saved.

What is there to do?

Tarnóczy’s collection of prayers and meditations contains several admonitions which usually pay attention to the changes in the state of the ill or dying person, and formulate recommendations related to these. These guides

¹² “mind egésségesek, s’ mind betegek”

¹³ “még a’ rongyában, és porában-is alig kaphattak az Isten főlő, és halálra vált betegeknek szolgáló emberek” TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, [4th unnumbered page].

¹⁴ A. TENENTI, *Il senso della morte e l’amore della vita nem Rinascimento*, Torino, 1989, 328.

¹⁵ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 164–167.

¹⁶ P. ARIES, *L’uomo e la morte dal medioevo a oggi*, Roma–Bari, 1980, 356.

most often advise the person or his entourage about prayers and meditations, but there are also some directions about proper conduct in the situation. In the preface, the author calls the priest's attention to the correct behaviour at visitation: his adequate preparation is a requirement, he must not only have comforting words for the ailing, but also for the relatives and friends around him.¹⁷ He very accurately describes the moment of arriving to the sick person's quarters: "he should begin sensibly, honourably greet those standing around, show compassion for the sick person, and ask him how he feels. Then raise and support him by comforting words (: but briefly:)."¹⁸ Comforting is about reminding the ailing person that his suffering is not accidental, but it is from God, therefore it happens in the interest of his salvation, and it must be accepted with peaceful patience. The author calls for increased attention: if the patient wishes to say something, the priest should gladly listen to him.¹⁹ And when he is dying, "the priest should treat him sensibly, he should not burden him with words and cries, but seek that what is most necessary, that he absolves him, asking for a sign; that he might be absolved of his sins".²⁰ The admonitions connected to various rites are also addressed to the priest: what prayer or blessing he must say at (or for) the sick, when giving him the cross;²¹ when handing him the lit candle;²² when sprinkling holy water over him.²³ Besides urging for receiving the sacraments, the priest's task is also to remind the person of formulating a proper testament. If the ill person's state becomes serious, "he must warn him to make a proper testament, or Codicilus, as it is appropriate, and dispose of everything well, everything to where it belongs, his soul to God, who created it, his body to earth; his debts to his creditors, his children and relatives; alms to the poor."²⁴ In order to make a proper testament,

¹⁷ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, [15th unnumbered page].

¹⁸ "okosson kezdgyen hozzá, a' környül-állókat böcsülettel köszöncse, az betegen szánakodgyék, s'-kérgye mint érzi magát. Az után vigasztaló szókkal (: de rövideden:) ébresze és gyámolitsa." TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, [15th -16th unnumbered page]

¹⁹ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, [16th unnumbered page]

²⁰ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 103.

²¹ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 68.

²² TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 103.

²³ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 106.

²⁴ "intse, hogy helyes Testamentomot, avagy Codicilust, a' mint annak a' módgya, tegyen, és azokat a' mi, kit illet, jól el rendellye, tudnia illik lölkét az Istennek, a' kitől teremtett, testét a' földnek; a' mivel tartozik az adosoknak, az östül maradtott gyermekinek, atyafiainak; az alamishát az Szegényeknek" TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, [17th unnumbered page]

the ill person must be asked whether he is not angry with somebody among his relatives, so that he might not be vengeful against them in his testament. The author considers that the priest has an important role in executing the last things, but he must do it in such a way that he does not interfere too much with personal matters. The priest's task is to remind the entourage of the deceased of the prayers uttered and masses commissioned for the salvation of the deceased, or the shortening of temporary suffering, while he himself does the same.²⁵

It has been thought ever since the Middle Ages that Satan tempts man the most on his deathbed, therefore the help of *friends and relatives* is very important.²⁶ Bellarmino thinks it is important that the dying person be surrounded by believers, whose prayer is liked by God and useful for the sick person.²⁷ The dying man mustn't be beguiled with free life and useless hopes. It is better if his state is not kept secret from him, but he is informed about it, so that he can prepare adequately for his death.²⁸ In his work entitled *Dispositorium moriendi* (1467), Giovanni Nider recommends to Dominican monks to loudly recite the Credo by the side of the dying man, and put a lit candle in his hand.²⁹

The *artes moriendi* usually offer help simultaneously to the individual's preparation for death, and serve as guidance for those who surround the dying person. The source of the first such works is considered to be Johannes Gerson's treatise entitled *De arte moriendi*³⁰ (1408).³¹ In the last two chapters

²⁵ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 108.

²⁶ B.A. DOEBLER, "Continuity in the Art of Dying: The Duchess of Mafi", in *Comparative Drama*, 14 (1980), 205. The bed of the dying person began to be in the centre in iconographic representation from the 15th century. Besides the people standing around, the devils, demons, and saints, angels, and Virgin Mary are also represented on the two sides. ARIES, 119–123.

²⁷ TARNÓCZY, *Nagy mesterség*, 464–465.

²⁸ MEDGYESI P., *Praxis pietatis, az az Kegyesség-Gyakorlás, Melyben bé-foglaltatik, mint kellyen az Keresztyén Embernek, Isten és a' maga igaz ismémentiben nevedetni, életét naponként az ő felelmére intézni, csendes lelki-ismémenttel költeni, és futásának el-töltése után, böldegul végezni*, [Praxis pietatis, or the practice of piety[...]], Bártfa [Bardejov, SK], 1640, 853. RMK I. 700.

²⁹ Cited by: TENENTI, 69–72.

³⁰ Complete title: *Opus tripartitum de praeceptis decalogi, de confessione, et de arte moriendi*.

³¹ D.F. DUCLOW, "Everyman and the Ars moriendi: Fifteenth-Century Ceremonies of Dying", in *Fifteenth Century Studies*, 6 (1983), 94–95. Others consider Anselm of Canterbury's *Admonitio morienti et de peccatis suis nimis formidanti* to be the first work of the genre. Cf. SZABÓ F., "Források kódexeink halál-szövegeihez", [Sources for texts on death in our codices], in *ItK* (1964), 681–690. 681.

of the work, a special role is given to the environment of the dying or deceased person. Their task is basically the same as those presented in the *Holtig-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG*: comforting, urging for receiving the sacraments, making a proper testament, and praying for them. The catechism-like series of questions on faith, which are supposed to be asked from the sick person, are still present at Gerson: whether he wants to die in true faith, wants to find penance, will improve his life if cured, will pay his debts, and will forgive those who sin against him.³² Protestants ask the same kind of questions of their dying believers: in Medgyesi's *Praxis pietatis*, in addition to dogmatic questions, the subjects of one's reconciliation with God and his own fellows (asking for forgiveness, forgiving) are also stressed.³³ In time, this kind of interrogative form disappeared, but the professing, the confession of faith, similar in its content, was still preserved in 17th century works preparing for death, as it also appears with Tarnóczy. The texts of the professions were often read to the patient by those present. This practice was also recommended by Bartolomeo d'Angelo at the beginning of the 17th century: these should be read aloud for the ill who can no longer speak, but who can still consider those heard in their hearts, and agree with the texts of the profession of faith.³⁴

In the *Holtig-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG* the admonitions for the environment usually urge for comforting the sick person and praying for his salvation. It is not proper to burden the ailing person with much reading and speech, writes Tarnóczy, it is more suitable to share some "salutary advice" with him. And if the patient "has turned completely to death", than he must be reminded of the anointing of the sick, "so that by this he might hope the curing of not only his soul, but also his body."³⁵ There are several prayers and litanies in the booklet which are supposed to be uttered by the surrounding people for the sick or the dying: for the five wounds of Christ, for the sick, Saint Bernard's litanies of Mary, the litany of the church for the joyful passage and the dedication of the passing soul, the litany of the name of God, etc. The prayer for the dying person might occasionally also serve the spiritual use of the praying person, since it may make him aware that he will also arrive at this point sometime, and he must give account of his life.³⁶

³² SZABÓ, 682.

³³ MEDGYESI, 854–858.

³⁴ B. D'ANGELO, *Ricordo del ben morire*, 1602, 234.

³⁵ "hogy ez által nem csak lelkének, de testének-is gyógyulását remélhesse" TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG*, 15.

³⁶ MEDGYESI, 865.

Tarnóczy also offers various types of prayers for the convict (when he is tied up to be taken out; when he is taken to justice, and then taken back to his cell after the sentence), as well as directions for a humble behaviour (“When he is taken to justice, he must not look to and fro, but with his eyes cast down, as if he heard Pilate saying: Behold the man.”)³⁷ The priest’s task is to encourage the sinner to meditate on Christ’s suffering, then urge him to examine his conscience as the last preparations before the execution, absolve him of his sins, and make him kiss the cross while giving him the last blessing.³⁸ Then the priest should pray for the executed, and ask the bystanders to say a Lord’s Prayer and a Hail Mary for the salvation of his soul.

Prayer on the deathbed

The appropriation of the art of good dying was considered very important in the 16th-17th century, because it was believed that the eternal afterlife mostly depended on the person’s state at his death: “who dies as an enemy of God, will remain forever an enemy of God, and will be forced for eternal fire: and who dies as a friend of God, and inheritor of heaven, will never fall out of that glory”.³⁹ Thus our eternal happiness or misery depends on a good or bad death – concludes Tarnóczy’s translation of Bellarmino.

Examining the collection of prayers in the *Holtig-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG*, one may find evidence about the most frequently addressed saints and the content of the prayers. The addressees are most often: the three persons of the Holy Trinity (together or one by one), especially the suffering Christ. Among the saints, Virgin Mary’s intervention is most often required, followed by the other saints, patron saints, angels (guardian angels, Archangel Michael). The author recommends that if the patient’s state becomes more serious and it can be feared that he cannot confess before he dies, he should pray to Saint Barbara.⁴⁰

The prayers of the sick preparing for death most often beseech peaceful endurance, the acceptance of God’s will (“if you take my body and soul, you take not mine, but yours; therefore I commend my body and soul into your

³⁷ “A’ mikor Törvény eleibe állattyák, akkor ne nézzen ide s’ tova, hanem levetett szemmel, mint ha azt hallaná Pilátustol: Ime az ember.” TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG*, 171.

³⁸ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG*, 177.

³⁹ “a’ ki úgy hal-meg, mint Istennek ellensége, mindenkor Isten ellensége marad, és az örök tüzre köteles: a’ ki pedig úgy hal-meg mint Istennek barátja, és menyországnak örököse, soha abból a’ dicsőségből ki nem eshetik”. TARNÓCZY, *Nagy mesterség*, 260.

⁴⁰ TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-VALÓ BARÁTSÁG*, 14.

hands, and I hail you for keeping it this long, and letting me borrow it.”),⁴¹ penance, a joyful passage, and salvation. Temptations are the strongest on the deathbed: “at the proximity of death the devil from hell is a mortal enemy of man, he forgets not himself, but as a lion looking for prey, hurries for the last fight, and schemes with all his power to shake man’s faith right in the first battle” – writes Tarnóczy, after Bellarmino.⁴² Therefore there are several prayers in the *Holtig-való barátság* in which the dying man asks for power against temptation, desperation, and the fear of death.

Tarnóczy publishes several prayers and meditations⁴³ in which the ill person prays while recalling the stations of Christ’s passion and his five wounds. The Saviour’s attitude to pain must serve as a model for all Christians, who must endure every hardship similar to Christ. The prayer to Christ’s passion [*Christus kin szenvedéséhez-való Imádság*] is such an example:

Oh my dear Jesus, who were born as a saviour to the world, circumcised, persecuted, mocked by the Jews, betrayed with a kiss by your disciple, tied-up, and like an innocent lamb, taken to the slaughterhouse, dragged from Annas to Caiaphas, from Pilate to Herod like a villain, falsely accused, spit, mocked, scourged, crowned with thorns, slapped in the face, beaten with reed, they covered your holy face, deprived you of your clothes, nailed you to the high cross, counted you among villains, made you drink vinegar and gall, pierced with a spear, in other words, you suffered terrible death for me and all people.⁴⁴

⁴¹ “ha testemet, és lelkemet el-veszed, nem enyimet, hanem Sajátodat veszed-el; Azért a’ te szent kezembe ajánlom testemet, lelkemet, és hálát adok néked, hogy eddig megtartottad, és kölcsön engtetted.” TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 20.

⁴² “az halálnak közel létekor a’ pokolbéli ördög embernek halálos ellensége, magát el-nem feleyti, hanem mint a’ praedára siető orosz lány az utolsó harczra siet, és minden tehetségével azon mesterkedik, hogy mindgyárt az első ütközetben hitiben megtántorítsa az embert”. TARNÓCZY, *Nagy mesterség*, 399–400.

⁴³ E.g. Az oláifák hegyén keseredet Christus Urunkhoz-való Imádság [Prayer to Christ our Lord tormented in the garden of Gethsemane]; Hét rövid Imádság a’ kereszt-fán függő Jesushoz [Seven short prayers to Christ hanging on the cross]; Christus kinszenvedéséről-való Litánia [Litany on Christ’s passion]; A’ Christus kin-szenvedéséről, hála-adó emlékezet [Thanksgiving memory of Christ’s passion]; A’ Christus kin-szenvedéséről, ájtatos Imádság [Pious prayer on Christ’s passion]; Imádság A’ Christus öt Sebeihez [Prayer to the five wounds of Christ]; Isten, és ember közöt-való szüntelen emlékezet Avagy Christus Urunk öt Sebeihez-való Imádságok [Eternal remembrance between God and man or prayers to the five wounds of Christ]; etc.

⁴⁴ “Oh édes Jesusom, ki a’ Világ váltságá-ért születettél, környül metéltetted, öldöztetted, a’ Sidoktól csufoltattál, Tanítványodtúl, csokkal el-arultattál, meg-kötöztetted, és mint, egy ártatlan bárány, mézár-székre vitetted, Annástol Kaifáshoz, Pilátustol, Herodes-hez

Knowing that the sick man “watches for almost all beats of the clock”,⁴⁵ in order to make this easier, Tarnóczy compiled an “artificial clock” made up of 12 or 24 parts, which connects the time of illness with Christ’s sacrifice by the memory of, and meditation on, the stations of his passion. At the same time, it also presents a similar “very nice way”, by which one can unite with the suffering of the ailing Christ:

Compare the time of your illness to the hours of Christ’s passion. Say this in time of night: Now I go with Christ to the garden of Gethsemane, to pray with him there, sweat with blood, and be arrested.

If the pain lasts all night, say this to yourself: This night with my Christ I shall be dragged from Annas to Caiaphas.

In the morning, you say: Now I go with my Lord to Pilate. *At nine or ten o’clock, you say:* now I am scourged with the Lord, and I shall occupy myself with the memory of it.

If pain gets to you at noon, you say: Now I want to go to the Golgotha, to be crucified with him.

At three o’clock, you say: Now I go with the Lord to die with him.⁴⁶

Testament

In the period discussed, one important instance of the preparation for death is to make one’s testament. Testaments provide an image about the mentality of the age regarding death, as well as funeral customs. Of the most recent research of 17th century Hungarian testament-writing practice, the

mint egy gonosz tévő hurczoltattál, hamissan vádoltattál, pökdöstettél, csufoltattál, megostoroztattál, tövis koronával koronáztattál, arczul csapdostattál, náddal verettéssel szent orczádat bé-födötték, ruhádtul meg-fosztottak, a’ magas kereszt-fára fel szegeszték, latrok közé számláltak, eczettel és épével itattak, láncsával által-verték, egy szóval én érettem, és minden ember-ért gyalázatos halált szenvedtél.” TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 28–29.

⁴⁵ “beteg az órának csak nem minden ütésére vigyáz” TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 47.

⁴⁶ “A’ te betegségednek ideit hasonlícsd a’ Kristus kin-szenvedésének óráihoz. Ugy mint estvének idején mongyad: Most indulok a’ Christussal, az olai fák hegyére, hogy ottan véle imadkozzam, vérrel veréttékezzem, és meg fogattassam. Hogy ha a’ fáidalom egész etzakán tart, így szolly magadban: Ezen éjtel, az én Christusommal, Annástol Kaifashoz fogok hurczoltatni. Reggelre kelvén azt mondyad: Most megyek az Urral Pilátushoz. Kilencz vagy tiz ora tájban mongyad: Most az Urral meg ostoroztatom és annak emlékezetiben foglalatoskodom. Ha az fájdalom ebédkor jön reád, mongyad: Most akarok az Urral a’ Cálvária hegyére menni, hogy véle meg feszíttessem. Három óra tájban, mongyad: Most megyek az Urral hogy véle meg hallyak.” TARNÓCZY, *Holtig-valo barátság*, 46–47.

source-editing and analyses of József Horváth,⁴⁷ and the textual editions and studies of Gábor Németh⁴⁸ should be mentioned in the first place. While during the 17th century, oral testaments were still dominant, however, in the 18th century, with the increasing dissemination of literacy, written testaments became more and more prevalent.⁴⁹ The oral testaments were often noted down subsequently (based on the evidence of the witnesses), but it can be assumed that for their largest part they were never written. Most people made their testaments at home, in the presence of the official deputies and with their help, since usually they could only write their names (or not even that, signing only with a cross); however, it also happened, although less frequently, that they visited official places or persons for this reason. There is some evidence for testaments freely formulated by their authors, but the drawing up in writing was usually a notary's job, therefore it bore his style and way of thinking. Certain formulas became thus permanent, and repeatedly appeared in the testaments of a settlement with slight modifications.⁵⁰

For their decisive majority, the reasons for writing the testament were illness or old age (although precise years of age are very rarely mentioned), but the fear appearing in times of epidemics, the need to take care of one's family, the solution of an expected or already occurred family property dispute,⁵¹ or some other unforeseen event (death of someone close, going to war, etc.) could

⁴⁷ HORVÁTH J., "Temetkezési szokások kora újkori végrendeletek tükrében" [Funeral customs in the mirror of early modern testaments], in KISBÁN E. (ed.): *Parasztkultúra, populáris kultúra és a központi irányítás* [Peasant culture, popular culture, and central government], Budapest, 1994, 197–212; HORVÁTH J. *Győri végrendeletek a 17. századból (I–III.)*, [17th century testaments from Győr], Győr-Moson-Sopron Megye Soproni Levéltára, Győr, 1995–1997.; HORVÁTH J., DOMINKOVITS P. (eds.), *17. századi Sopron vármegyei végrendeletek*, [17th century testaments from Sopron County], Győr-Moson-Sopron Megye Soproni Levéltára, Sopron, 2001.; etc.

⁴⁸ NÉMETH G., *Gyöngyösi testamentumok és fassiólevelek, 1642-1710*, [Testaments from Gyöngyös], Heves Megyei Levéltár, Eger, 1991; NÉMETH G., *Nagyszombati testamentumok a XVI-XVII. századból*, [Testaments from Trnava from the 16th -17th century], Budapest 1995.

⁴⁹ SZÉKELY G., "A kecskeméti reformátusok végrendeletei a XVII-XVIII. századból" [Testaments of Calvinists from Kecskemét from the 17th - 18th century], in BÁRTH J. (ed.), *Cumania 24., A Bács-Kiskun Megyei Önkormányzat Múzeumi Szervezetének Évkönyve*, Kecskemét, 2009, 199–284, 205.

⁵⁰ HORVÁTH, *Temetkezési szokások*, 201.

⁵¹ Eölbey Ilona made her testament in Győr, in 1684, "Hogy azért jövődöben az én édes gyermekeim között valami pör patvar, visszavonyás avagy veszekedés ne következze" ["so that no dispute, quarrelling, or disagreement could be between my dear children in the future"], HORVÁTH, *Győri végrendeletek*, 147.

also motivate it.⁵² Prior to the mid-18th century, besides the division of the inheritance, the testament also contained a pious clause.⁵³ This so-called *pium legatum* (pious donation) meant in fact that part of the acquired goods were left to others than the legal heirs: usually the church. Donations to the church were of assistance to the employees, and also the church building, the schools, the hospital, and the poor. It also happened that donations were not only made for the local church, but also for the churches of nearby settlements, or even distant places of pilgrimage, or the ornamentation of famous saint's images or shrines. In addition to money, churches could also receive houses, shops, land, livestock, crops, or all kinds of movable goods as donations.⁵⁴

The motif of the earthly goods temporarily borrowed from God, the metaphor of stewardship known from the New Testament also appear in last wills: “about the goods that God has given me to keep as a good steward, I shall make such a testamentary disposition for my servants”⁵⁵; “[...] the few goods I have, which were given for me by God to be a good steward of [...]”.⁵⁶ After giving away one's goods as inheritance, often some kind of commendation to divine will, or some kind of blessing follows: “After all these, wishing everything well for the Lord God, I commend all to the providence of God”.⁵⁷

There is an admonition in the *Holtig-való barátság* with reference to the fact that the testament maker should leave his belongings to whom or what they belong: his soul to God, his body to dust, his wealth to his heirs. There are many examples of this formulation in contemporary testaments, as the first disposition before the enlisting of one's belongings. Such thoughts can be found in Catholic and Protestant testaments alike: “I commend my soul to the

⁵² Felsőbüki Nagy György referred to the King's order in 1663, when he had to go to war with the Turks. HORVÁTH, DOMINKOVITS, 55.

⁵³ TENENTI, 217.

⁵⁴ Pétor blacksmith's testament from 1669: “Elsőben hagiok Templom épületire Istenös jó indulatomból egi tavali borjút” [“First I leave for the church building a last year's calf out of my godly good will”], SZÉKELY, 220.

⁵⁵ “az minemü javait az Uristen sáfárságul kezem alá bocsátott, cselédim között azokról teszek ily testamentális dispositiot” Koós Szabó István's testamentary disposition from 1682. NÉMETH, *Gyöngyösi testamentumok*, 74.

⁵⁶ “[...]jaz mi kicsiny javacs kajim vadnak, mellyekre Istenemtül bizattattam volt sáfáru[...]” Anna Kovács's testament from 1692 quoted by SZÉKELY, 233.

⁵⁷ “Ennekutánna az Úr Istennek minden jót kívánván, ajánlok mindeneket az Úr Istennek gondviselése alá”. Öreg Szabó Mihályné's testament from 1690. SZÉKELY, 211.

hands of the mighty God until my Christ the Saviour comes, and my body to where it originated from, to its mother, the black earth.”⁵⁸

One important part of testaments is the dispositions made for the funeral, and the order of the future divine services for the salvation of the deceased's soul, especially the insurance of their costs. Bellarmino draws attention in his work on good dying: “you act cleverly if you leave some part of your goods to the priests, so that they present divine sacrifice for your soul.”⁵⁹ According to the testaments, having masses celebrated for the deceased was a practice prevalent with the Catholics all over Hungary. These masses were usually celebrated on the anniversary of death or the funeral.

Summary

The popularity of the *Holtig-való barátság* in the 17th-18th century is a sign of the importance of preparation for death. Death is not merely a private business of the individual, but the community also undertakes an important role in comforting the dying person, and assisting to the salvation of his soul. Man must begin the preparation for good death while he is still healthy, because he who lives all his days as a good Christian must not fear sudden death, as he can stand prepared before the Judge at all times. In the light of the prayer book and testaments of the age, one can state that the 17th-18th-century individual accepted the suffering connected to old age and illnesses and passing itself as the will of God, regarded death as an organic part of life, and, being aware of its unavoidability, tried to prepare for it with prayers, meditations, receiving of sacraments, and with leaving testament of his earthly goods.

Translated by Emese G. Czintos

⁵⁸ “Ajánlom lelkemet az én megváltó Christusomnak eljövételéig az hatalmas Istennek kezében, testemet viszontag az honnét eredetet vett volt, az ő anyjának, az fekete földnek”. The testament of Hegy Mihály's widow, 1645. NÉMETH, *Gyöngyösi testamentumok*, 32.

⁵⁹ “okossan cselekeszel, ha javaidnak valami részét a' Papoknak rendeled, hogy lelkedért áldozatot mutassanak az Istennek” TARNÓCZY, *Nagy mesterség*, 342.

THE ROLE OF EXPERIENCING MEANINGFULNESS RELATED TO RELIGIOUS FAITH IN PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

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Abstract. The role of psychosocial factors in the maintenance of physical health and evolvement of chronic diseases is a well known phenomenon in the field of health psychology. Some psychosocial factors might play a role in the emergence of diseases, for example stress, negative life events, the experience of loss. Other factors help people preserve their health, like social support or religious faith. Among the least mentioned, we would like to enroll meaningfulness, a concept introduced by the psychiatrist and philosopher Viktor Frankl, that – according to the author – refers to man’s deepest motivation. According to his theory named logotherapy, man is instinctly striving to find and fulfill meaning and purpose in life, and the frustration of this “will to meaning” leads to different mental and physical disorders. Frankl speaks about “psychosomatic health” in spite of psychosomatic disease and states that meaningfulness contains something that he called “survival value”. Starting with these concepts, in the present study we attempt to make a review of the literature concerned with the relationship of experienced meaningfulness/ meaninglessness and physical health, with both its objective and subjective aspects. We would like to take into consideration religious faith as well, more specifically its inner aspect, one’s personal relationship with the Divine, and the way it relates to the experience of meaningfulness and physical well-being.

Keywords: well-being, meaningfulness, logotherapy, religious faith.

1. Introduction

In this study we aim to be concerned with the construct of meaningfulness, the experience that life has a meaning, a purpose to be fulfilled, as it appears in the logotherapy of Viktor Frankl¹, who made a substantial contribution toward the development of the theoretical foundation for meaning in life. We relate meaningfulness/meaninglessness (and its counterpart) to the domain of health psychology, and, to begin with, we enroll meaningfulness in the list of other psychosocial factors that can influence health states. In the subsequent chapter we have a look at how meaningfulness appears in Viktor Frankl’s approach. Then we attempt to make an approximate overview of the literature concerned with the

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role of meaning in life in well-being, with both its psychological and physical aspects. In the end, we present a few meaning-oriented interventions implemented by now, which resulted in significant improvements of health.

2. The concerns of health psychology

In the last three decades we have witnessed the emergence of numerous new interdisciplinary sciences on the boundary of classical medicine and psychology, which propose to study the meeting points of these two domains. Such disciplines are for example medical psychology, psychosomatics, behavioral medicine, epidemiology, health promotion. The results of these isolated efforts are accumulated and integrated by *health psychology*, the discipline that tries to understand how health and illness of people are influenced by psychological factors and the way they people react to disease². Among the antecedents which led to the appearance of health psychology we may mention the failure of the biomedical model in proper interpretation of health and illness, the shift of emphasis from contagious diseases to chronic diseases, increased concern with quality of life, and most of all the recognition that psychological issues play a central role in almost every health condition and that addressing these issues will increase well-being and the quality of life.³

2.1. The bio-psycho-social model of well-being

All these resulted in a paradigm change in the health system: the monopoly of the biomedical model of health was gradually taken over by the less reductionist *bio-psycho-social model*, which offers a more comprehensive frame for interpreting well-being. The World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of health is congruent with this approach, as it defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."⁴ This definition suggests that health doesn't mean an adequate physiological state, rather it results from the optimal functioning of both biological, psychological and social aspects of one's life. In this approach it is inappropriate to speak about 'psychosomatic disease' because psychological, social, cultural and economical factors play a role in the evolvment and development of every disease.⁵

² VARGHA J.-L., SZABÓ K.-G., *Egészségpszichológia*, Kolozsvár, 2009, 4.

³ P. KENNEDY, S. LLEWELYN, "Introduction and Overview", in *The essentials of clinical helath psychology*, New York, 2006, 1.

⁴ *WHO definition of Health* <<http://who.int/about/definition/en/print.html>> [13.12.2010].

⁵ VARGHA, SZABÓ, 5.

One of the basic principles of health psychology committed to the bio-psycho-social approach is that psychosocial factors contribute measurably to maintenance of health, or conversely, to getting ill prematurely. In the next paragraph we make a short review of a few psychosocial factors which, according to many studies, exercise influence on promoting health or generating disease.

2.2. A few psychosocial factors that play role in health

The impact of *stress* upon health is well-known: the persisting state of distress is the source of many diseases: high blood-pressure, coronary sclerosis, heart attack, contagious diseases, etc.⁶ Chronic states of distress (ex. divorce, unemployment, war) are exerting their effect through directly attenuating the organism's immune defense system. Strongly related to this we mention here the effect of *burnout* which, according to longitudinal studies, entails premature mortality.⁷ Similarly, research has proven the immune suppressive impact of *negative life events* as well, like losing a beloved person. Many studies indicated the experience of *mourning* as generating factor in cancer and tuberculosis.⁸ In the case of mourners, the activity of natural killer cells of the immune system, which have a role in destroying cancer cells, is significantly dropped.

Several studies have been concerned with psychosocial factors involved in the evolvement of cancer diseases as well as those playing role in survival. According to the results, the experience of loss – the event of losing an important relationship – can be found in the lifespan of cancerous patients almost in every case, which in turn leads to a feeling of “inner vacuum” and the conviction that “life has no more good to offer”.⁹ At the same time it was revealed that patients with a strong will and motivation to live, those able to express negative feelings, and those who are less conformists, can expect better outcomes of the disease.¹⁰

Finally, we would mention one psychosocial factor that, unlike the aforementioned, appears to be a resource in the maintenance of both physical and mental well-being. The health promoting impact of social support has been

⁶ EGRI L., “Spiritualitás, vallásosság és testi egészség”, in TÖZSÉR E. (ed.), *Pszichológusok és teológusok. Az istenhit mint erőforrás*, Budapest, 2006, 160.

⁷ S. TOPPINEN-TANNER, K. AHOLA, A. KOSKINEN, A. VAANENEN, “Burnout predicts hospitalization for mental and cardiovascular disorder: 10-year prospective results from industrial sector”, in *Stress and Health*, 25 (2009), 294–295.

⁸ VARGHA, SZABÓ, 88.

⁹ SZABÓ K.-G., “A pszichoszociális tényezők szerepe a rákos megbetegedésekben”, in *Erdélyi Pszichológiai Szemle*, II/1, 2001, 73.

¹⁰ SZABÓ, 82.

revealed by numerous studies. By social support we mean that feeling of comfort, care and appreciation that is received by the person from other significant people or groups. Among the functions of social support manifested in the form of either emotional support or concrete help we may mention satisfying the need for relatedness, assuring the feeling of belonging somewhere, strengthening self-esteem.¹¹ We emphasize that when speaking about social support, we are not concerned with the objective presence of a social network in the life of a person (ex. family, friends), rather the subjective experience of the support, because only this way it can exert its defensive effect against the negative consequences of acute stress.

3. Meaningfulness in the approach of Frankl's logotherapy

3.1. Basic concepts

Above we made a short overview of a few relevant psychosocial factors purportedly influencing well-being. In this paper we suggest another psychological factor that very likely plays a role in the maintenance of health and emergence of diseases, and that would be meaningfulness. Hereinafter we propose to come round this concept and its linkage to general well-being.

The need for meaning in life, as man's deepest desire is first getting contours in the work of Viktor E. Frankl, a neurologist and psychiatrist, the founder of the Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy, called *logotherapy and existential analysis*. Not irrelevant to mention, he was also a Holocaust survivor, and his best-selling book, *Man's search for meaning* (originally published in 1946 as *Trotzdem Ja zum Leben sagen: Ein Psychologe erlebt das Konzentrationslager*) chronicles his experiences as a concentration camp prisoner and puts into practice his theory of finding a meaning in all sorts of existence, even the most cruel ones. His method of psychotherapy, the logotherapy is an application of the principles of existential philosophy to clinical practice.

According to Frankl's theory, humans are originally built in such a way as to find meaning in life and to fulfill it, a desire described by him as the "will to meaning". The meaning in Frankl's conception is pre-existent, and it is not meaning in life in general, "rather the specific meaning of a person's life at a given moment", which "differs from man to man, from day to day and from hour to hour".¹² This meaning can be fulfilled in three different ways: at first through what we contribute to life, what we create (*creative values*), secondly

¹¹ VARGHA, SZABÓ, 50.

¹² V. FRANKL, *Man's search for Meaning, An introduction to logotherapy*, Boston, 1992, 114.

through the love and joy we experience, when we are passive “contemplators” in life (*experiential values*). But these two forms of values are not the only sources of meaning. We might be facing a fate which cannot be changed, but there is still meaning in our lives through the attitude we take towards the unavoidable suffering.¹³ According to Frankl, these attitudinal values compose the most “human” way to fulfill meaning in life.

Besides these three sources of meaning, other core concepts of the theory are *supra-meaning* and *self-transcendence*. *Supra-meaning* in his conception is the idea that there is, in fact, ultimate meaning in life, meaning that is not dependent on us or on others: it is a reference to God, something which cannot be proven, it only appeals for one’s faith.¹⁴ *Self-transcendence* means that “the more one forgets oneself – by giving oneself to a cause to serve or to another person to love – the more humane one is and the more one actualizes oneself”.¹⁵ Self-actualization is possible only as a side-effect of self-transcendence.

According to the author, the feelings of joy and happiness should not be a purpose of human strife, rather an epiphenomenon, a result of fulfilling a meaning. As he says in his work, *Die Wille zum Sinn*: “happiness cannot be pursued. It must ensue.” The more people are concerned with pursuing happiness, the more probably they will miss experiencing it.¹⁶ To this end, Frankl suggests the technique of *dereflection*, which helps people to shift their focus of attention from themselves to the task they are involved in.¹⁷

Frankl states that today man’s greatest problem is not rooted in frustration as Freud suggested it, or inferiority complexes as Adler thought, rather it takes the form of meaninglessness, which leads to an “existential vacuum”.¹⁸ This existential vacuum is used as a metaphor: if meaning is what we desire, then meaninglessness is a hole, an emptiness, in people’s lives. Whenever there is a vacuum, things rush in to fill it. He suggests that a new types of neurosis, termed ‘*noogenic neurosis*’, can be observed which arises

¹³ V. FRANKL, *The doctor and the soul. From psychotherapy to logotherapy*, London, 2004, 12, 58–59, 109–166; FRANKL, *Man’s search for Meaning*, 116.

¹⁴ V. FRANKL, *The unconscious God*, New York, 1985, 13, 141–142.

¹⁵ H. LI, “College stress and Psychological well-being: Self-transcendence meaning of life as a moderator”, in *College Student Journal*, 42/2, 2008 Part B, 533.

¹⁶ FRANKL, *The doctor and the soul*, 51–52.

¹⁷ FRANKL, *The doctor and the soul*, 232–237.

¹⁸ FRANKL, *The doctor and the soul*, 11.

largely as a response to the complete emptiness of purpose in life.¹⁹ The existential vacuum, the frustration of the will to meaning, the existential hindrance may lead to different forms of psychopathology like depression, substance addiction, aggression, burnout, premature mortality, etc. There is empirical evidence to support this assumption. For example, in the course of a sociological survey, young people who attempted to commit suicide were interviewed about the motives of their action, and in 85% they indicated meaninglessness as a main cause.²⁰

3.2. The “survival value” of finding a meaning

Frankl states that the need for meaningfulness contains something he calls *survival value*. To illustrate this, he brings the metaphor of the alpinist who, by getting into the thick fog and losing sight of his aim, is endangered by final exhaustion. Once the fog slips away and the alpine-hut becomes discernible in the distance, he regains power and vitality to continue his way.²¹ Frankl gives examples to this phenomenon from his own life experience as well: only those prisoners of Nazi concentration camps were able to survive in the end, who were open to the future, to a task that was waiting for them, to a meaning they wanted to fill in.²² In his autobiographical work, he recalls one of his fellow-prisoners: the man dreamt that on X day of the next month the camp would be liberated, and this hope kept him in countenance in the next weeks. Since that day arrived and nothing of what he had expected happened, suddenly he became ill and died.²³

From our point of view this “survival value” of meaningfulness might have relevancy in health psychology, making meaningfulness a psychosocial factor which has significant impact upon mental and physical health states.

Frankl himself was concerned with the problem of psychosomatics. However, he suggests that instead of psychosomatic disease, we should be speaking of psychosomatic health. He adds that from this point of view the psychosomatic medicine should shift its focus from indispensable disease treatment to the alternative health promotion.²⁴

¹⁹ J. CRUMBAUGH, L. MAHOLICK, “An experimental study in existentialism: the psychometric approach to Frankl’s concept of noogenic neurosis”, in *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 20, 1964, 200.

²⁰ V. FRANKL, *Az ember az értelemre irányuló kérdéssel szemben*, Budapest, 2005, 154.

²¹ FRANKL, *The doctor and the soul*, 119.

²² FRANKL, *Man’s search for Meaning*, 84.

²³ FRANKL, *Man’s search for Meaning*, 82–84.

²⁴ FRANKL, *Az ember az értelemre irányuló kérdéssel szemben*, 211.

4. Meaningfulness as a construct

Before we enter into the review of literature concerned with the relation of meaning in life and well-being, we would like to investigate whether in some researchers' point of view meaningfulness is a one-dimensional construct or rather has different aspects. As we mentioned before, Frankl distinguished between the *concrete meaning* of the present moment and the so-called *supra-meaning*, which in his consideration is transcendent and much more abstract than the former.²⁵

Research concerning meaning in life, has focused almost exclusively on the fact whether people find or not their life meaningful. Although it is often studied as a one-dimensional construct, several studies suggest that it may have multiple dimensions.²⁶

Yalom, for example, makes the distinction between *cosmic meaning* which is transcendent and superior to the person, and *terrestrial meaning* (or self-focused meaning) which is personal and entirely secular.²⁷ Mascaro and Rosen also distinguished between several forms of meanings. Besides *personal meaning* (perception of purpose and coherence in one's life) and *implicit meaning* (attitudes that people typically report as contributing to a meaningful life), the authors introduce the concept of *spiritual meaning*, which is defined as "*the extent to which an individual believes that life, or some force of which life is a function, has a purpose, will or way in which individuals participate*".²⁸

Steger and Frazier also speak about two dimensions of meaningfulness: the *presence of meaning* refers to the presence or absence of meaningfulness, and the less studied *search for meaning* dimension (as it appears in Frankl's writings), which refers to people's desire to constantly improve the meaningfulness of their lives. This latter was found fairly independent from the experience of presence of meaning.²⁹ According to studies, presence of

²⁵ FRANKL, *Man's search for Meaning*, 171; FRANKL, *The unconscious God*, 141.

²⁶ T. MARTOS, B. KONKOLY TEGHE, M. STEGER, "It's not only what you hold, it's how you hold it: Dimensions of religiosity and meaning in life", in *Personality and Individual Differences*, 49 (2010), 863–868.

²⁷ LI, 533.

²⁸ N. MASCARO, D.H. ROSEN, "Assessment of existential meaning and its longitudinal relations to depressive symptoms", in *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 27/6 (2008), 579.

²⁹ M. STEGER, P. FRAZIER, S. OISHI, M. KALER, "The Meaning in Life Questionnaire: Assessing the Presence and Search for Meaning in life", in *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 53/1 (2006), 80–93.

meaning is generally higher in independent cultures, while interdependent cultures, like Japan are characterized more by search for meaning.³⁰

According to some authors, these distinction between several forms of meaning may affect their association with other mental health constructs, but so far the empirical investigation of these implications is missing.³¹

5. The relation between religiosity and meaning in life

We propose to make a bypass to touch on the relation of meaningfulness and religious faith. In Frankl's theory the Transcendence plays an important role. He himself was a believer and in the beginning he even used the terms Transcendent and God interchangeably – he received a lot of criticism for this. However, he states that logotherapy is not only for believers but for every human being.

The majority of studies concerning this relationship agree that individuals often consider religious and spiritual beliefs and experiences as important sources for meaning in life through positive beliefs, social support, rituals, symbols etc.³² Support for this notion can be found in positive associations between meaning in life and various measures and indices of religiosity.³³ As Peterson and Roy comment, “*one function of religion is to provide a source of meaning and purpose for people*”.³⁴ It seems that religion provides a frame and structure which makes easier to understand and interpret life at difficult times.

However, religion is not the only source of meaning, and one does not have to be religious in order to discover meaning in life. It is important to emphasize that meaning in life and religion are not identical concepts. There are religious people who don't find their life as meaningful and nonreligious people

³⁰ M. STEGER, Y. KAWABATA, S. SHIMAI, K. Otake, “The meaningful life in Japan and the United States: Levels and correlates of meaning in life”, in *Journal of Research in Personality*, 42 (2008), 660–678.

³¹ MARTOS, KONKOLY TEGHE, STEGER, 863.

³² S.K. FLETCHER, “Religion and life meaning: Differentiating between religious beliefs and religious community in constructing life meaning”, in *Journal of Aging Studies*, 18 (2004), 171.

³³ MARTOS, KONKOLY TEGHE, STEGER, 863; S. ZIKA, K. CHAMBERLAIN, “Religiosity, Life Meaning and Wellbeing: Some relationships in a sample of women”, in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 27 (3), 1988, 411–420.

³⁴ ZIKA, CHAMBERLAIN, “Religiosity, Life Meaning and Wellbeing”, 412.

who experience high meaning in life.³⁵ As regard to this chain of meaning in life – religiosity/spirituality – wellbeing, recent studies suggest that meaningfulness would mediate the link between religiousness and psychological well-being.³⁶ This hypothesis was tested using measures of religiousness and well-being, and found that meaning in life indeed mediated the relationship between religiousness and self-esteem, life satisfaction and optimism.³⁷ Zika and Chamberlain came to the same conclusion claiming that the relationship between life satisfaction and religious practice is mediated by meaningfulness.³⁸ In Steger and Frazier’s opinion, these findings suggest that “meaning in life may be an effective conduit through which counselors and clients can discuss ultimate matters, even if they do not share similar perspectives on religion”.³⁹

6. The role of meaningfulness in well-being: review of empirical research

6.1. Psychological well-being

Empirical research has mainly focused on the relation of meaningfulness and the psychological aspects of well-being, mostly referring to physical health as a causal factor able to influence meaningfulness. A number of researches have already reported meaning in life to be a strong and consistent predictor of psychological well-being.⁴⁰

In their well-known study Zika and Chamberlain examined how meaning in life relates to three major dimensions of well-being: life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect. They also explored its association of meaning in life to negative aspects of well-being, like depression and anxiety. They found that life meaning related at least moderately to every component of well-being. The authors emphasized that meaning in life relates more strongly to the positive aspects of well-being than to the negative aspects, by this suggesting a more *salutogenic* approach to investigating mental health.⁴¹

³⁵ Á. SKRABSKI, M. KOPP, S. RÓZSA, J. RÉTHELYI, R.H. RAHE, “Life meaning: An important correlate of health in the Hungarian population”, in *Internatioanl Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 12/2, 2005, 83.

³⁶ M. STEGER, P. FRAZIER, “Meaning in Life: One Link in the Chain from Religiousness to Well-being”, in *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52/4, 2005, 574–582.

³⁷ STEGER, FRAZIER, 574–582.

³⁸ ZIKA, CHAMBERLAIN, “Religiosity, Life Meaning and Wellbeing”, 415.

³⁹ STEGER, FRAZIER, 574.

⁴⁰ LI, 533.

⁴¹ S. ZIKA, K. CHAMBERLAIN, “On the relation between meaning in life and psychological well-being”, in *British Journal of Psychology*, 83 (1992), 133–145.

One study has demonstrated a negative correlation between meaningfulness and substance abuse.⁴² Another study also demonstrated an inverse relation between life-meaning and suicide ideation, revealing that meaning in life functions like a buffer, moderating the impact of coping style on suicidal ideations.⁴³

Mascaro and Rosen found that spiritual meaning had inverse relationships with depression, anxiety, and antisocial traits, and a positive relationship with hope.⁴⁴ In another study, the same authors examined the role of meaning in relation to stress. The conclusion was that spiritual meaning weakened the relationship between stress and depression, while its absence strengthens it. With other words stress leads more likely to depression in case of individuals with low levels of spiritual meaning. According to the authors although “both spiritual and personal meaning are inversely related to depression and positively related to hope, only spiritual meaning moderates the relationship between daily stress and depression”⁴⁵ Likewise, another study examined the moderating effects of self-transcendence meaning in the relationship of college stress and well-being in case of college students. The authors defined self-transcendence as “a higher living state that is beyond self, within which people search for self-detachment and boundless self”.⁴⁶ The findings of the study demonstrated that self-transcendence meaning is able to reduce the impact of stress in causing depression and impairing self-esteem, which means that students under high levels of college stress are likely to benefit from self-transcendence meaning of life.

In their study Ho et al. examined the role of meaning and optimism in promoting well-being among Chinese adolescents. Their results showed that meaning in life correlates positively with life satisfaction and negatively with psychosocial symptoms, like avoiding social situations and having strong fears of being humiliated. On the contrary, meaning in life does not seem to relate

⁴² I. VILLE, M. KHLAT, “Meaning and coherence of self and health: An approach based on narratives of life events”, in *Social Science & Medicine*, 64 (2007), 1001–1014.

⁴³ M.J. EDWARDS, R.R. HOLDEN, “Coping, Meaning in life and Suicidal manifestations: examining gender differences”, in *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 57/12 (2001), 1517–1534.

⁴⁴ N. MASCARO, D.H. ROSEN, L. MOREY, “The development, construct validity and clinical utility of the spiritual meaning scale”, in *Personality and Individual Differences*, 37/4 (2004), 845–860.

⁴⁵ N. MASCARO, D.H. ROSEN, ”The role of existential meaning as a buffer against stress”, in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 46/2 (2006), 168–190.

⁴⁶ LI, 535–537.

significantly to satisfaction with health, which means that people who experience high meaning in life are not necessarily involved in activities that promote health. The role of optimism in this sequence of meaning in life – optimism – psychosocial symptoms can be understood as follows: individuals who have meaningful goals experience a more positive emotional state, which in turn improves well-being.⁴⁷

Numerous studies demonstrated that meaning mediates the reaction of the individual to different negative life events. This means the same circumstances can evoke different levels of stress depending on the meaning attached to the stressors.⁴⁸ The onset of a life-threatening illness can be such a stressor: but its impact is shaped by the meaning that the person ascribes to it, which determines his responses to the illness. This meaning ascribing process could take the form of discovering a purpose in the loss or the occurrence of the illness.⁴⁹ Another study showed that patients with limited life expectancy, who are able to find a meaning in life, are still able to consider their life as worth living. Instead the lack of meaning brings in the wish to hasten death or a request for euthanasia.⁵⁰

Jim et al. conducted a study in which they investigated the mediating effect of meaning in life in the relationship between social and physical functioning and distress in breast cancer survivors. In the cross-sectional study, meaning in life was partly responsible for the effects of functioning impairments on heightened distress. The authors concluded that “the negative social and physical sequelae of cancer are associated with heightened distress, and this association appears to be accounted for, in part, by patients’ loss of meaning in their lives”.⁵¹ Also in the field of psycho-oncology, Simonelli et al. examined physical consequences and depressive symptoms in breast and gynecologic cancer survivors. Their results indicate that “survivors with more

⁴⁷ M.Y. HO, F.M. CHEUNG, S.F. CHEUNG, “The role of meaning in life and optimism in promoting well-being”, in *Personality and Individual Differences*, 48 (2010), 658–663.

⁴⁸ B.L. FIFE, “The role of constructed meaning in the adaptation to the onset of life-threatening illness”, in *Social Science & Medicine*, 61 (2005), 2132.

⁴⁹ FIFE, 2133.

⁵⁰ M.J. FEGG, M. KRAMER, S. L’HOSTE, G.D. BORASIO, “The schedule for meaning in life evaluation (SMiLE): Validation of a new instrument for Meaning-in-Life research”, in *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*, 35/4 (2008), 356–364.

⁵¹ H.S. JIM, B.L. ANDERSEN, “Meaning in life mediates the relationship between social and physical functioning and distress in cancer survivors”, in *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 12/3 (2007), 363–381.

physical sequelae also reported lower levels of meaning of life, which was associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms”.⁵²

6.2. Physical well-being

As we could see above, the majority of studies concerned with meaningfulness, discuss it in relation with psychological aspects of well-being: life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, anxiety, self-esteem, psychological adjustment to illness etc. The literature examining the meaningfulness – physical well-being relation is sparse, but there are studies in this field. An often cited study examined meaning in life (measured by Life Meaning subscale of Rahe’s brief Stress and Coping Inventory) in relation to mortality rates and health status in a large sample of Hungarian participants, selected to represent the country’s population. Researchers found life meaning “to be inversely related to oncological, female cardiovascular, and total premature mortality rates in the 150 subregions of Hungary and on an individual level to participants’ reported health status”⁵³. They also found that meaning in life is positively associated with indices of psychological well-being like self-efficacy, problem-oriented coping and social support.

7. Meaning-oriented interventions in coping with disease

For the huge importance that experienced meaningfulness plays in both psychological and physical well-being and coping with disease, psychotherapeutic interventions in palliative care has recently included meaning in life as a central component.⁵⁴ In Viktor Frankl’s logotherapy meaning is not something that can be created or constructed by the individual, rather something pre-existent, objective reality, given to the individual by life.⁵⁵ In contrast, other researchers regard meaning in life “as a personal construct that is actively constructed or created”.⁵⁶ Thus meaning-oriented interventions by now have mainly focused on constructing the meaning of a certain situation (e.g. illness). Just to mention the area of psycho-oncology, the treatment and management of cancer continues to evoke difficult existential questions that are challenging. Lee and al. state “the ability to successfully reconstitute a global

⁵² L.E. SIMONELLI, J. FOWLER, G.L. MAXWELL, B.L. ANDERSON, “Physical sequelae and depressive symptoms in gynecologic cancer survivors: Meaning in life as a mediator”, in *Annual Behavioural Medicine*, 35 (2008), 275–284.

⁵³ SKRABSKI, KOPP, RÓZSA, RÉTHELYI, RAHE, 78–85.

⁵⁴ FEGG, KRAMER, L’HOSTE, BORASIO, 357.

⁵⁵ MASCARO, ROSEN, 847.

⁵⁶ FEGG, KRAMER, L’HOSTE, BORASIO, 357.

meaning of life following a cancer diagnosis has been associated with general measures of psychological adjustment, self-efficacy, self-esteem and optimism”.⁵⁷ They conducted a randomized controlled trial to study the effect of a Meaning Making Intervention for patients with cancer, initially developed for patients with post-trauma disorder. During the four individualized sessions, participants were guided to review their experience with cancer with the aim of chronologically embedding the illness in their lifespan. Patients who received Meaning Making Intervention, showed a significant improvement on both self-esteem and self-efficacy compared to those who received usual care.⁵⁸

Apart from psycho-oncology, another study proposed to investigate the effectiveness of a Logo-autobiography Program in enhancing meaning in life and mental health in case of wives of alcoholics. Logo-autobiography is a type of group psychotherapy, combining guided autobiography and logotherapy, in which clients search for meaning in their lives by sharing their own private life stories. The major finding of this study was that the LAP was effective at improving meaning in life measured by Purpose in Life Test⁵⁹, and mental health subsymptoms like somatization, interpersonal sensitivity, depression and hostility.⁶⁰

Ville and Khlát examined narrative recounting focusing on significant life events, as a meaning making intervention which “allows us to create order from disorder, to make sense of the chaos resulting from the flow of situations in which we find ourselves. We try to give unity to our life history, constantly revising the plot in order to incorporate new events.”⁶¹ The authors concluded that the process of narrative recounting might bring beneficial contributions to coping research.

8. Conclusion and future directions

In the foregoing we examined the construct of meaningfulness, man’s deepest need, as it appears in Frankl’s logotherapy. Among others, we conceptualized meaningfulness as a psychosocial factor which is able to influence both psychological and physical well-being. Then, without the claim

⁵⁷ V. LEE, S.R. COHEN, L. EDGAR, A.M. LAIZNEN, A.J. GAGNON, “Meaning-making intervention during breast or colorectal cancer treatment improves self-esteem, optimism, and self-efficacy”, in *Social Science & Medicine*, 62 (2006), 3134.

⁵⁸ LEE, COHEN, EDGAR, LAIZNEN, GAGNON, 3133–3145.

⁵⁹ Developed by Crumbaugh and Maholick (1964).

⁶⁰ S. CHO, “Effects of Logo-autobiography Program on meaning in life and mental health in the wives of alcoholics”, in *Asian Nursing Research*, 2/2 (2008), 129–138.

⁶¹ VILLE, KHLAT, 1004.

of completeness, we attempted to review the literature concerned with the role of meaningfulness in different aspects of bio-psycho-social well being. It is noticeable that the majority of studies focused on the relation of meaningfulness and the psychological aspects of well-being. In contrast, the impact of experienced meaning on physical well-being is a much less studied phenomenon. The few existing studies investigating meaning in relation with physical health measured the subjectively rated health of the participants and mortality rates.⁶² In our consideration, more research is needed to investigate the relation of experienced meaning in life, and both subjective and objective indicators of physical health, for example, the prevalence of psychosomatic symptoms like sleeping disorders, changes of appetite, different aches, fatigue, etc. Findings in this area could have practical implications in the health care system.

Considering the existent literature about the importance of meaningfulness in general well-being, future research could aim to implement and standardize meaning-oriented interventions in mental hygiene, either as a prevention for at-risk populations (e.g. persons who attempted suicide, who suddenly lost their job, are widowed, etc.) or as a psychotherapeutic intervention destined to augment medical care of patients with chronic or incurable diseases (e.g. cancer). An intervention like this could have practical implications for Catholic pastoral care too, supposing it could make use of the spiritual meaning,⁶³ or, as Frankl calls it, Supra-meaning or Ultimate Meaning⁶⁴, when trying to help believers searching the support of a religious community to go through critical periods of time.

Both medical care and pastoral care should always have in view to help the sufferers as much as it is in their power. For this purpose, we consider that meaning-oriented interventions, which aim either at discovering or constructing meaningfulness in people's lives, could bring enormous contributions for improving general well-being.

⁶² SKRABSKI, KOPP, RÓZSA, RÉTHELYI, RAHE, 80.

⁶³ MASCARO, ROSEN, MOREY, 845–860.

⁶⁴ FRANKL, *The unconscious God*, 13, 141.

IS THERE A GAP BETWEEN THE INTEREST FOR SPIRITUALITY AND THE COMMUNICATION OF CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS TODAY?

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Abstract. 114000 matches are found to the word “spirituality” on Google in Hungarian language, and further more (35 900 000) in English. Many of these websites are speaking about spirituality in the context of esotery or even witchcraft. The theme is also linked with metaphysical expectations, longings of people who are seeking to solve their restlessness about the question of life after death. This problem and this quest is present in the Western world as well as in our own Eastern-European and Transylvanian context. Institutionalized, traditional churches and religiousness is not attractive anymore, but this does not coincide with the rejection of spirituality. On the contrary, there is a huge interest for alternative forms of spirituality. Those who know Christian spirituality in depth find this sad, annoying or surprising, because they are aware of the well-defined form and content of Christian spirituality throughout the ages. They define the problem as a gap between the traditional knowledge and contemporary culture/people.

The present research tries to survey this particular gap. In order to reach a reasonable result, we start from the following assumptions: 1. the traditional religion and religiosity has the repository of approaches towards spirituality, and also of forms that are suitable for use/practice; but 2. these had become estranged for people nowadays due to several factors, one of these being the gap between the theological and the intellectual approach and the vernacular religiosity taking into account the psychological needs of the individual and of the religious group.

As a conclusion of the research we will also try to present a solution, a possibility that could help the institutional church to communicate its “offer” in a more adequate way for the benefit of spirit and soul.

The research is designed in an interdisciplinary frame: we apply the methods and outcome of cultural anthropology, folklore, the study of vernacular religiosity, communication. The research thus refers to the study of sacral and church communication, and thus can formulate the needed answers.

Keywords: churches, religion, spirituality, new religious forms, civil religion, esotery.

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1. Foreword

Living in Transylvania one can experience, think and feel many things. Wherever one lives in Transylvania, no matter in which part of the region, one feels the limits and borders that surround him/her. These limits or borders can be perceived as a protecting wall. During Transylvanian history there was injustice, yet the protecting wall was always there. It works as a wonder-maker: no wonder Transylvania was called a fairyland (*Tündérkert*, as the title of a famous Hungarian novel calls it). But this protecting wall around Transylvanians can also work as a blinker. There are severe social taboos. Such taboos are the problems within the churches or some social issues. Transylvanians do not like to speak about these. “Whatever we do, we do not mention it, we pretend it does not exist”, they think.

In the beginning of September 2010 the pastoral conference of the Alba Iulia Archdiocese was held. One of the speakers was Márió Nobilis, lecturer at the Pastoral Theology Department of the Sapientia University in Budapest. In an interview in the Catholic newspaper *Vasárnap*, he affirmed that secularization and globalization originating in Western Europe had not yet reached Transylvania, but this fact did not mean it would never ever reach it. He added that local people had the advantage of being able to learn from the mistakes of the Westerners. Thus they could be faster in overcoming the problems.¹

Some might ask why Transylvanians, Eastern Europeans should learn from the example of the West. There were problems in the church in previous ages, yet they were always solved creatively – let us only mention Reformation that caused Catholic Counter-Reformation or Renewal, and then the Baroque followed.

Analyzing the contemporary religious questions, Samuel P. Huntington states two important things that concern the theme of this paper. One of these is that he considers fundamentalism escalated within the traditional religions and churches. The other thing Huntington states is that if the traditionally dominant religions do not fulfil the emotional and social needs of rootless people, then other religious groups will step out to do so, and in the meanwhile they will also increase their social and political influence.²

The goal of this paper is to draw attention upon the theme. The traditional historical denominations have to realize that new religious groups are formed

¹ DÉNES G., “A közösség szellemében” (1), in *Vasárnap* XX/38. (2010. Sept. 19.), 11.

² S.P. HUNTINGTON, *A civilizációk összecsapása és a világrend átalakulása* [The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, 1996], Budapest, 2008, 150.

and/or are present in Transylvania, too. Believers, members of the different traditional denominations and churches can choose whether they want to stick to their religious group or they want to switch to another one. The main issue is why they chose any of these. Can this process be influenced or anticipated and prevented? What should the Catholic Church do in order to solve the possible discontent that can cause people leaving their church?

2. Terminology

First of all it is important to give a definition to the term “religion”. There are as many definitions as the attitudes toward religion differ. Some think of religion as an act of explanation, rationalization of the universe, the framing of the undetermined elements of the universe (Niklas Luhman). Others consider religion a total of irreducible guidelines concerning lifestyle and conduct (Ulrich Berner). There are some who think of religion as a system that narrows universal history and human life to some basic, central, ultimate questions (Thomas Shirmacher). Religion is considered a meaningful basis, either from the perspective of this world or a transcendent one, according to one’s ideology (H. R. Schlette).³ The simplest and most general definition is that of van der Leeuw. He uses the approach of phenomenology of religion. According to him religion is both horizontal and vertical phenomenon. On the horizontal level religion means mankind’s permanent strife to give meaning to his life, to construct a meaningful whole out of it and not just live it somehow. In this strife it guides the individual toward the will to become almighty, to be able to understand everything. Thus the individual wants to comprehend the ultimate ratio and thus he/she becomes *homo religious*. The vertical level means a descent, a downward path, but also a bottom-upwards one. This foreshadows revelation. It cannot be experienced in a direct way. It is the answer of the individual to the very different force that interferes (on a vertical level) with his/her life. This answer is annoyance at first, which is then followed by faith.⁴

Very few communities called “churches” in everyday speech are actually named churches in Catholic theological terminology. Ever after the Second Vatican Council the term “sect” is not used and it is considered pejorative, implying very negative connotation. “Church/religious community” is the term preferred instead. Sociologists of religion speak about several forms of religious communities. For them theological terminology is not relevant, as

³ About this question see T. SCHIRRMACHER, *Marxismus – Opium für das Volk?* Berneck, 1990, 46–47.

⁴ G. VAN DER LEEUW, *A vallás fenomenológiája* [The Phenomenology of Religion], Budapest, 2001, 589–591.

they consider different criteria when speaking about churches, sects, denominations and sects on their way to become religious denominations.⁵ For the Catholic terminology religious community, sect and neoprotestant movement as well as neoprotestant community/small church mean the same reality. In this article I use the Catholic terminology, thus I speak about churches, church communities and denominations.

3. A switch in Catholic attitudes

The Catholic Church manifests great tolerance toward other churches, church communities, denominations since the Second Vatican Council. (UR 2.) Denominational diversity, the presence of different trends and tendencies within the Christian church were a reality from the very beginning of Christianity. Without getting into a detailed analysis of its history, let us move to the present situation: there are many trends and tendencies within Christianity nowadays. The policy of the Catholic Church is very permissive toward the different movements today. This is a huge difference in contrast with the 16th century. This tolerance is applied to those movements that come into being within the Catholic Church and do not intend to become independent, to split, to leave the church, although there are some movements that chose to manifest in quite an extreme or exaggerated way. One can now think of those “very charismatic” groups that include prophecies inspired by the Holy Spirit, extreme ecstatic states, screaming and weeping, and other phenomena that are more similar to young neoprotestant group manifestations than to any of the traditional churches. One can always come up with the argument that in St. Paul’s letters all of these behaviours are present. Others can argue against them with the same Paulian references. One can also find very conservative “secret societies” or tendencies (Opus Dei) within the same Catholic Church. It is not this article’s or the author’s place to present or evaluate the necessity or role of all these different movements, yet it is interesting to note the variety existent within the Catholic Church. Yet we should note that an official Vatican document states the following:

With the Second Vatican Council, the Comforter recently gave the Church, which according to the Fathers is the place “where the Spirit flourishes” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 749), a renewed Pentecost, instilling a new and unforeseen dynamism. Whenever the Spirit intervenes, he leaves people astonished. He brings about events of amazing newness; he radically changes persons and history. This was the

⁵ B.M. HAMILTON, *Vallás, ember, társadalom* [Religion, Humans, Society], Budapest 1998, 236–264.

unforgettable experience of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council during which, under the guidance of the same Spirit, the Church rediscovered the charismatic dimension as one of her constitutive elements: “It is not only through the sacraments and the ministrations of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the people, leads them and enriches them with his virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he wills (cf. 1 Cor 12:11), he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank.[...] He makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church” (*Lumen gentium*, n.12).⁶

4. Why to switch denominations?

The denominations known today were formed in different stages of church development and in different times of church history. They probably were destined to address different problems/situations. As András Szalai states: when subject to a close scrutiny, all of these denominations are variations to the same main theme.⁷ Nevertheless there are people who break away from the historic church/denomination they “were born into” and wander from one alternative religious group to another. Why do they act that way? In order to find an adequate answer to this question one needs a representative sociological survey involving such people—those of them who willingly share their own conversion story. At the given moment no such survey is available for us. Yet there is a very recent research made in Hungary that analyses the role of churches in society, asks about people’s view on church and also examines the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of people with their own church.⁸ In the context of the question asked in this article there are two aspects of this Hungarian

⁶ POPE JOHN PAUL II., *Meeting With Ecclesial Movements and New Communities*, <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/1998/may/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980530_riflessioni_en.html>

⁷ SZALAI A., *Más Jézus, más Lélek, más Evangélium* [other Jesus, other Spirit, other Gospel], Budapest, 1998, 32.

⁸ The respondents do not belong to the same church/denomination. There were Roman Catholics (578 people, 57,7 %), Greek Catholics (26 people, 2,6 %), Reformed/Calvinists (172 people, 77,5 %), Lutherans (24 people, 2,4 %), Orthodox (2 people, 0,2 %) and others (31 people, 3,1 %) among them.

When asked about their own religiosity, they named the following categories: religious in accordance with the teachings of their own church: 187 people (18,7 %), religious in their own way: 484 people (48,4 %), less religious: 115 people (11,5 %), not religious: 152 people (15,2 %). See KORPICS M., WILDMANN J., *Vallások és egyházak az egyesült Európában: Magyarország* [Religions and churches in the unified Europe: Hungary]. Budapest, 2010, 22–23.

research that are relevant. There are two questions asked concerning our quest, and the answers given to these specific questions show a total agreement of the respondents. These questions and answers were chosen as they show the motivation of the positive answer as well. These can give a better insight and thus help this research, too.

The first question refers to the way people see their church. 76,9 % of all the respondents said the church wants to educate people to love God and their fellows. 72,8 % answered it gives spiritual support to people. 41,3 % of the respondents agreed with the statement that the church is the voice/advocate of the poor and the needy. 26,3 % agreed that the church respects those who have other opinions or convictions. 38,2 % agreed that the church knows how people can be happy in their lifetime.⁹

There were also other kinds of answers, formulating a more critical opinion. One of these stated that the life of the church is governed and lead by priests: 44,7 % agreed with this statement. Another critical statement said that for the church its own benefit was on the first place: 25,4% agreed with it. There were several other critical statements formulated: the only thing that was important for the church was the external, the formal, the parade and magnificence: 22,2 % agreed; the church was backward: 20,2 % agreed; the church was far from the questions of real life and was only concerned with religious matters: 17,8 % agreed; the church was opposed to progress: 13,3 % agreed.¹⁰

Although the participants in this research were not necessarily those who actually switched denominations, one should consider the motives that occur in the critical statements. This is necessary as one of the consequences of some serious critiques would be to turn away from the criticised community. Starting from a close analysis of church history one can see that formulating critical opinions can end in two different ways. One is the path of the great reformers that stay within the church: that is the case of Francis of Assisi, Ignatius of Loyola, Joseph of Calasanz (in the Catholic Church). They noticed the abuses but stayed within their community. There they wanted to change all those negative things they had observed. Another form is the one represented by Martin Luther, Jean Calvin, who also wanted to change something, but they decided to leave their initial community when noticing the negative features. Thus they left the Catholic Church in the hope of reforming it from outside.

⁹ KORPICS, WILDMANN, 273–275.

¹⁰ KORPICS, WILDMANN, 281–282.

5. New religious forms and contents

Let us see how Miklós Tomka uses the term and category called “new religious phenomena”.¹¹ He considers that today religiosity as such looks and reaches beyond the churches and the more or less institutionally secured traditional notion of religion. Tomka thinks losing Christian hope is the main cause of the apparition of the new religious phenomena and the deepening crisis of the churches.¹² The Hungarian sociologist links agnosticism, religious indifference, secularism, globalization, individualism, existential distress and also all that he considers as results of the former things such as the decrease of fertility, shrinkage of priestly vocations, the crisis of families. He also sees drug abuse, the interest in Eastern philosophies, esoteric teaching, New Age trends as signs of a diminishing Christian hope. The fact that people are looking for (and some of them find) their happiness in all these practices can be interpreted as the decrease or less influence of Christian doctrine and practice. The above enumerated categories are all favorite terms in the contemporary Hungarian Catholic media. All of them are keywords that are not totally and adequately perceived, yet they are almost exclusively used as negative terms.

The present article does not get into a detailed explanation of all these notions and categories, but wants to draw attention to the fact that all the new religious phenomena cannot be the exclusive result of the social change and the abdication of Christian hope. People, individuals, though subject to a very strong social influence, are able to make up their own minds and decide on their own about their own happiness, the choice of the path that they think can lead them to happiness. The train of thought followed in this article leads us to argue that the spiritual needs of the individuals can lead them to change their conviction, or to change the community where they seek the realization of this conviction. People always had their questions and quests: nowadays they are more open to follow their own ways without any restraint. Thus, in order to achieve a greater spiritual satisfaction, they might end up in switching religious groups, or follow their own personal religious paths. Does this mean that all the religious phenomena that were not known some decades ago are wrong and have a negative influence on individuals, on their personal development and on communities? On behalf of the churches, is the best way to deal with any new religious phenomenon to dismiss and even demonize it?

¹¹ TOMKA M., *Vallásfilozófiák az ezredfordulón* [Religious Philosophies at the Beginning of the 21st Century], <http://www.phil-inst.hu/projects/kecske.met/tomka_el.htm>

¹² POPE JOHN PAUL II., *Ecclesia in Europa*, 7–10.

<http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20030628_ecclesia-in-europa_en.html>

The following part intends to present some relevant phenomena such as “civil religiosity”, esoterical approach present in the individual life as well as the rediscovered or represented transcendence in arts.

5.1. Civil religion

The term “civil religion” means sacralization of social-political relations and functions, persons and ethnicity, nation and class, regional relationships. The sacralization can happen either under democratic or dictatorial circumstances. In the perception of the sociology of religion there is a traditional opinion that the social organization is interconnected with the development of religion. The separation of religion and politics, church and state, the dominance of pluralism forces the different social movements (and the state as well) to explicitly utter religious references and draw religious claims in order to obtain their goal.

5.2. Esoteria

Miklós Tomka states that the modern religious phenomenon is popular among those who are far from any traditional religion. These people need spiritual experiences and they actually gather such through their relationship with nature, through psychic and physical self-developing activity, through any kind of (provoked) daze, through the use of the notion “science” in a very wide sense (meaning science fiction), through a certain relationship and collaboration with the spirits.¹³ Nowadays all these are gathered together in the collective definition of New Age, a term that is despised and dismissed. The question is whether the criteria of truth and the norms of the religious denominations are the ultimate standard for scientific definitions or there is always an open door to false legitimation and offenses lacking real knowledge of the facts. This is a real case scenario when one thinks of how little society knows about the traditional terminology, yet calls its own a religious one.¹⁴

5.3. Art and transcendence

It is an approximately new phenomenon that a universal approach and attitude which was specific to religion or took place in a religious context gets beyond its initial context. It happens mostly on the field of art, but it also occurs in such fields as ecology, politics, science or philosophy. So the initially religious approach and attitude on the one hand transcends its own boundaries, on the other hand it breaks into a field that is not traditionally its own, that was formerly considered to be exclusively “religious”. Art becomes a way to

¹³ See TOMKA M.

¹⁴ See TOMKA M.

transcendence, this is not a new phenomenon, but it gets the attributes that belonged to the religious function before, and this is a new experience, and also other fields are associated to religious themes and functions.¹⁵

6. The success of the alternatives

It is worth meditating on the following question: is it just the loss of Christian hope that leads people to seek the help of fortune-tellers, to apply spells and magic (sometimes beside their good Christian practices), or there is something else behind all this?

From January 2011 it is a regular job to be a witch in Romania. Witches are obliged to pay taxes according to media reports.¹⁶ *Cotidianul*, a Romanian newspaper refers to an example from the Netherlands where the same happened to prostitutes. The hope was that the taxes thus obtained would increase the state budget.¹⁷ Although the author of the report does not compare the motivations of the two different cases, one can guess that that is the motivation of the actual fact as well.

But if the Romanian government decided to legalize witchcraft, it means there are not only one or two regular witches in the country. Witches earn their living by their clients. If there was no request for the service of the witches, there would be no witches. One cannot find a major newspaper where the editor omitted the advertisement of the witch, the fortune-teller or the horoscope.

Occultism, fortune-telling and magic are interesting for the readers. This interest is not related to any kind of scientific curiosity. Electronic chain letters can be included in the same category. With the internet becoming popular, many mystical, superstitious, close-to-religious contents are present on the worldwide web and end up in people's personal mail. Zsuzsánna Luka analyzed the phenomenon in 2008.¹⁸ She states that the religious chain letters can ask the addressee to forward it or not. The ones that contain the sentence: "Send this message to your loved ones", are generally positive and promise a wonderful (near) future or are very negative and menace with something awful happening to those who do not forward the message. Older people would immediately

¹⁵ TOMKA M.

¹⁶ <http://observator.a1.ro/social/Impozit-pe-vrajitoare_23597.html>.

¹⁷ A. CUPOLA, "În România, vrăjitoarele vor plăti impozit, în Olanda, prostituatele" [In Romania witches would pay taxes, in the Netherlands prostitutes do], in *Cotidianul*, 12.01.2011.

¹⁸ LUKA Zs., *Vallásos jellegű elektromos lánclevelek elemzése (szakdolgozat)* [The Analysis of Electronic Religious Chainletters (BA Thesis)], Babeş-Bolyai University, 2008.

recall those letters they had found in their mailbox 20-30 years ago in a simple envelope, no sender on it, and the letter was about St. Anthony promising a miracle if the addressee would send a similar letter to the other people...

The popularity of such things shows a very human need to transgress the world that is dominated by science, rational thought and open up to the invisible transcendent world.¹⁹ The characteristic of such phenomena is that the religious need does not refer to God anymore. It becomes a fake religiousness; people sink into superstition and often become victims of cheaters and abusers.

The official Catholic document entitled *Jesus Christ, the bearer of the water of life* accounts for the success of different neoprotestant ecclesiastical (church-like) communities. The reasons this document finds for the success are the following: familiarity, personal contact, the experience of a living community, the greater implication of the individual into community life, the greater creativity, and the possibility of involvement in the missionary tasks.²⁰ The impetus and enthusiasm that is specific to any new small community is one of the reasons these new communities are so attractive. The other reason can be the one mentioned in the Vatican document: familiarity. This can be in a huge contrast with the kind of institutionalized form the traditional churches adopt and that is still very strongly present in the Catholic public opinion. Pastoral theologians mention a changing paradigm and speak about a communion-church, and many communities try to actually apply it. But in many communities, parishes lay people as well as clerics have several deficiencies that block this ideal from realization, although *Lumen Gentium*, the document of the Second Vatican Council, in its first paragraph specifically asked for it.

When speaking about neoprotestant communities, one must mention that they also have a sympathetic “theology”. There is a positive tone in *New Age* criticisms of “the materialism of daily life, of philosophy and even of medicine and psychiatry; reductionism, which refuses to take into consideration religious and supernatural experiences; the industrial culture of unrestrained individualism, which teaches egoism and pays no attention to other people, the future and the environment.”²¹

¹⁹ G. DE ROSA, *Vallások, szekták és a kereszténység* [Religions, Sects and Christianity, Hungarian translation by PUSKELY M.), Budapest 1991, 224.

²⁰ See *Jesus Christ, the bearer of the water of life*.
<http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_inte_relg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html#1.5. A positive challenge>.

²¹ See *Jesus Christ, the bearer of the water of life*.

7. Possibilities, solutions

This article does not want to argue whether the traditional churches are culpable or not in the whole question presented above. The fact is that there are quite important masses that seek their happiness and answers to their questions elsewhere, outside the traditional churches. So theologians should think about how it could be possible for those who are in a quest to know or find out more about the real possibilities that are present within the traditional churches, in our case within the Roman Catholic Church.

The above mentioned papal document, the apostolic exhortation states the only possible solution: a change of paradigm. The Vatican document entitled *Jesus Christ, the bearer of the water of life* proposes the following solution:

If the Church is not to be accused of being deaf to people's longings, her members need to do two things: to root themselves ever more firmly in the fundamentals of their faith, and to understand the often-silent cry in people's hearts, which leads them elsewhere if they are not satisfied by the Church.

Let us now analyze one of the causes mentioned before: that the members/believers have a greater possibility to get involved, to be creative and it is their will to do so. As it was mentioned before, the traditional church form (where there is a priest in a central and active role, and he is surrounded by a mass of people exclusively passive²²) or paradigm is still present and appreciated in the public opinion of ordinary church members.²³ Although pastoral theologians speak of a change of paradigm and the church of communion,²⁴ István Kamarás, a sociologist from Hungary draws the attention to the fact that the change has not yet occurred and the mentalities mentioned before are very much alive. Kamarás speaks about the role and possibilities of Hungarian priests. He states that there are still priests who are reluctant in working together with lay people even though they are experts in a certain

²² P.M. ZULEHNER, "Isten népének lelki hivatala" [The Spiritual Role of God's People], in *Egyházfórum*, 4 (1990), 21–33.

²³ TOMKA F., *Lelkipásztori teológia és új evangelizáció* [Pastoral Theology and New Evangelization], Budapest, 2008, 51.

²⁴ *Lumen Gentium* 1

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html>,

Christifideles Laici 18-31

<http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html>.

field, while others would willingly give up even preaching.²⁵ Many priests repress that part of their personality that could take on more adequate roles or under pressure they simply take on roles that are not at all adequate with their personality. But this is always risky. Kamarás describes the case of a priest who has a natural talent for dealing with people. He could be an excellent spiritual director but instead he is forced to work as a parish manager, coordinates the construction of the church, is the founder of a school, and so on. He does all this well, as many priests do, but it has a price: the many cigarettes he smokes, and then, because of it, the remorse he has that smoking might cause gastric ulcer and/or heart attack.²⁶

Returning to the question of lay involvement it must be stated that the success of it does not only depend on the priest or the lay Christian. In many parishes almost all is done exclusively by the priest either because he does not accept help or because he is open to engage others, lay people, but there is no one there. Sometimes there would be someone and the priest would really like to involve that person into the pastoral care, but the traditional community or the consumist mentality of the church attendees cannot accept him/her. If that is the case, and the community rejects the service of the lay Christian, the priest is not prepared to manage the conflicts and so he gives up. There are some other cases where there is an active group around the priest, but they are surrounded by a passive mass. In such a case the priest mainly delegates certain tasks. A third case is the one where the parish community is more or less democratic. In this case the priest not only delegates a task but shares responsibility and works together with lay Christians in pastoral care. This is also the case of a well functioning advisory board: the priest can work together with them; based on them the priest can build up several teams that can reach the majority of the

²⁵ Kamarás tells several stories. One of his priest acquaintances has learned several professions during his 25 years as a priest. These professions vary from electrician to informatician, family therapist, choir director, actor and accountant. Another one “bounced” with his team of 25 who took over the parish and are good at 35 kinds of jobs, thus he can stay “just” a priest as this profession is quite a good one. A third priest can delegate 2/3 of the strictly pastoral tasks within his parish to lay assistants who are better than he is. Among these jobs that are overtaken he enumerates religion teaching, theologizing, forming the community and even spiritual guidance. He could also find a lay person to preach better than he does, he actually tried that but his bishop warned him that that one was a priest’s task yet. Knowing half a dozen of such priests it was not difficult for the sociologist author to depict a parish utopia and an utopical parish priest. Kamarás affirms that nowadays there are very few (a few hundred) priests who give space and not only delegate tasks but work together as equals with lay Christians. KAMARÁS I., *Kis magyar religiográfia* [A Brief Hungarian Religiography], Pécs, 2003, 53.

²⁶ KAMARÁS, 58.

believers in the parish. The best possible scenario is a parish that is built around working, living small communities.²⁷

Based on his research, Paul M. Zulehner names those key elements that need to be changed within the Catholic Church in order to make it an authentic community. Zulehner enumerates the following key elements: the lay Christian should be the ordained priest's equal, instead of or at least beside speaking about *priestly vocation* the term *spiritual vocation* should be used, there is a great need of authentic Christians, leaders should be nominated and elected, the main goal of pastoration is to encourage and cultivate the simple people's spiritual vocation within the church, the priest belongs to the people and his main task is to build/form the community, it is not the institution/office/function in itself that is dangerous but the official, formal(ized) style, priest and lay should be each other's equals, brothers and sisters in human dignity, learning communities should be formed, the community itself should decide whom to educate on its expense, the notion of salvation should be linked with a worldwide responsibility and service, if there are communities, there will be also priests, but married people, women as well should be ordained.²⁸

8. Conclusion

As a result of a Google search one can find 114000 Hungarian and 35 900 000 English matches to the word *spirituality*. Most of these results guide the enquirer to esoteric web pages. That means spirituality is regarded as something linked to witchcraft, magic, esoteria. No one in "good Catholic" circles can rest and say: this phenomenon is only happening somewhere far from us, in the wicked West or within Eastern Orthodoxy. Institutional and traditional Western Churches—our own Catholic Church included—and all that they can offer is not very attractive on a religious market. If the Catholic Church wants to convince the consumers and the church members not to switch church and stay within this community, as the Catholic Church still has a lot to offer to them and their spiritual needs, some new, yet gentle methods should be applied. Paul M. Zulehner stated for Catholics some key elements that need to be changed within their own approach and the cleric–lay relationship. There is no ready recipe yet. The market of religions and religious phenomena challenges the Catholic Church today. An answer, any kind of answer is expected. Such an answer could be the shift from an institutional parish office to a communion-church that some Catholic parishes/movements/communities have already successfully applied. Another right answer could be to forget

²⁷ KAMARÁS, 59.

²⁸ ZULEHNER, 21–23.

about the omniscient priest who has a solution for every/any problem. Clerics and lay Christians could be equally involved and responsible for their church, their community, they could work together in harmony and respect for each other. Or is that just another Utopia?

BOOK REVIEW

**Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski, *Universitatea azi. Universităț
Heute, Cluj Napoca: Editura Fundatiei pentru Studii
Europene, 2010.***

Es ist mehr und mehr offensichtlich, dass die Universität die Kraft verloren hat, Menschen zu versammeln, die mehr wollen als eine Ausbildung. Von Universitätsangehörigen wird oft die schleichende Krise als Folge des Bürokratismus, der ökonomischen und politischen Abhängigkeiten und der aktuellen staatlichen Finanzkrise interpretiert. Gäbe es also genug Geld, wäre alles wieder gut. Diese eindimensionalen Begründungen delegieren alle Verantwortlichkeiten nach oben oder nach außen. Die Finanzknappheit bringt allerdings an den Tag, was in früheren Zeiten weniger auffiel: die inhaltliche Krise der Universitäten selbst.

Wenn wir die Gefahren in Verbindung mit den gegenwärtigen Bildungsreformen – wo hauptsächlich über eine „Vermarktung“ und „Verzweckung“ des Wissens und der Bildung die Rede ist – vermeiden möchten, ein Denker und ein Hauptverantwortlicher der Bildung im Vatikan kommt uns zu Hilfe, mit seinem Buch *Universitatea Azi – Universităț Heute*.

Das Buch enthält einen Querschnitt von Aufsätzen von seinen Eminenzen Zenon Kardinal Grocholewski, der als Kurienkardinal der römisch-katholischen Kirche zugleich Präfekt der Kongregation für katholische Bildungswesen, amtierender Magnus Cancellarius der Päpstlichen Universität Gregoriana und weitere päpstlicher Institute (des Päpstliches Instituts für Arabische und Islamische Studien, des Päpstlichen Bibelinstituts, des Päpstlichen Instituts für Kirchenmusik, des Päpstlichen Instituts für christliche Archäologie) sowie Patron des Lateinamerika-Instituts und der Fakultät für die christliche und klassische Literaturwissenschaften an der Universität der Salesianer ist.

Der Autor lenkt unsere Aufmerksamkeit auf die Erziehung „als Weitergabe der Grundwerte des Lebens und eines aufrichtigen Verhaltens an die jungen Generationen“. Dabei verweist er auf den ursprünglichen Wahlspruch unserer Universität: „*Traditio nostra unacum Europae virtutibus splendet*“, zu deutsch: „Unsere Überlieferung möge zusammen mit den Tugenden Europas leuchten“.

Der Autor in seinen Überlegungen möchte vor allem die Verbindung zwischen Bildung und Wahrheit aufzeigen. Seine zentrale These ist, „dass Wahrheit und Bildung untrennbar zusammengehören. Einerseits kann es keine Bildung ohne Wahrheit geben: Sie ist Ziel, an dem sich alle Bildung orientieren

muss und Kriterium, dem sie stets verpflichtet bleibt. Nur so kann Bildung für die Gesellschaft wirksam und fruchtbar werden. Nur so vermeidet sie ein Abgleiten in einen moralischen Relativismus oder in einen Utilitarismus, der die Ziele der Bildung nur in dem erkennt, was gerade nützlich erscheint, ob das nun ökonomische Überlegungen sind oder die Postulate eines totalitären Systems, das Bildung als Indoktrinierung seiner eigenen Ideologie missbraucht.“

Beim Lesen des Buches fiel mir das lateinische Sprichwort ein „pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli“, was wörtlich heißt: „über die Auffassung des Lesers haben die Bücher ihre Schicksale“ oder wie wir heute sagen würden, das Schicksal der Bücher hänge davon ab, was die Leser kapieren oder „gerafft haben“.

Ich denke, wenn jemand das Buch liest, kann er davon viel „kapieren“, und im Prozess der Reformen zur eigenen und zur institutionellen Erneuerung gut verwenden. Das wünsche ich uns allen!

Reviewed by László Holló