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## EDITORIAL

### STILL STUDYING THEOLOGY?

KORINNA ZAMFIR

Reading through the historical retrospectives, theological and interdisciplinary essays and inaugural speeches comprised in this festive issue of *Theologia Catholica Latina*, on the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology, one cannot help looking at theological formation and at the seemingly unrelenting desire to study theology with a changed perception. Some of the critical assessments of contemporary society appear to suggest that the modern and post-modern society, permeated by atheism and relativism, has doomed theology. Is therefore nothing else to do, than to mourn at the tomb of the once glorious Theology? Or, on the contrary, should we rejoice at the birth of new forms of interest for the religious phenomenon in the post-post-modern era? Theology is dead, long live the Religious Studies!? Or is there still a future for theology?

The historical approaches of József Marton and György Benyik on theological education in Transylvania and in Hungary, respectively, illustrate that (Catholic) theology has already been on several occasions in a hopeless condition. The Jesuit academy of Kolozsvár (Cluj) was condemned when its staff was expelled, the reborn institution was downgraded in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and theology was barred from the town up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Far from us to regard the foundation of the Roman Catholic Theological Faculty at the Babeș-Bolyai University as the redeeming event which saved Transylvanian theology. Yet, twenty years ago we have not even dared to dream that once theology will be taught at a state university, moreover with the concerted support of the academic and religious authorities. Nor did we think that the study of theology would be accessible to laypersons as well. The situation was very similar in Hungary, where although once doomed by the totalitarian regime, now theological studies are offered at a broad range of institutions and levels, and the Catholic University has become one of the leading establishments of higher education.

Are we than supposed to be optimistic? Should we not also face the diminishing number of students, the challenges that confront theologians, in their quality of scholars and teachers, in a dramatically changing world?

Should we not take into account the decreasing possibilities of our graduates to find a position, due to demographic and religious changes? Should we not regret that talented young men and women who complete postgradual theological studies seem not to be needed in the local church, as they are regarded as “overqualified”? Should we on the other hand imagine that the diminishing attractiveness of theology, and the increasing interest for religious studies, phenomena pertinently analysed by Erik Eynikel, will not concern us sooner or later, posing serious questions as to the future and meaning(fulness) of our work? It would be tragical, if we would fail to understand that the perception of the role of religion and theology, as well as the attitude toward traditional values is already shifting in Eastern Europe. This self-deception is characteristic for the Eastern Europe Churches. However, this is not about optimism or pessimism. It is just about the fact that history places us in a privileged position. At least because we no longer imagine that we are the first ones to be confronted with a crisis apparently without issue.

For sure, this insight does not spare us the task to reflect upon our changing world, upon the trends that affect theological education as well. Conversely, it should raise the awareness of the (needed) prophetic function of theology. I understand by this the ability theology should possess to reflect upon the social and political changes, and the potential to inquire for new answers, based on a critical assessment of the new situation. We should recall the manner in which Old Testament prophetism was able to re-evaluate and reformulate its faith in situations of crisis. Resignation, idealisation of the past, deploration of the golden age or embittered criticism of contemporary evolutions is of no use. What we need is finding solutions. Some of the priorities of contemporary theological education are ably pointed out by Frans Hoppenbrouwers.

The questions are in any case numerous. What should the relationship between theology and the *universitas scientiarum* be? Csilla Gábor and Alexandru Boboc point to the possibilities of an interdisciplinary approach, where theology is joined by other disciplines of humanities. But what kind of theology should we practice? Probably for all (or most?) of us the answer is at hand. We aim at a scholarly exercise, which respects the reason’s quest for truth, performs research according to the methodology of human sciences, and is open to questions and problematization. Should this mean a kind of “emancipation” from what Jean-Claude Périsset defines as practising theology as ecclesial ministry, that draws from revelation? We will no go that far, since our desire is to integrate the teaching of theology in

the service of our (ecclesial) community, and to respect the personal dimension of religion. Yet, theology should preserve its prophetic function and its disponibility for critical reflection.

The essays included in this issue are heterogenous, both with respect to the field they cover and the expressed views. Yet they reflect some of our concerns, as well as our endeavour to open up to dialogue with other scholarly traditions, conceptions, and our attempt to inquire for new paths.

Is there still need for studying theology? We are convinced about the lasting importance of theology. Nonetheless it is certain that Transylvanian (Roman) Catholic theology will have to discover new models and new answers.

## KIRCHE UND KULTUR IN DER HEUTIGEN WELT

ALEXANDRU BOBOC<sup>1</sup>

**Zusammenfassung.** Der vorliegende Artikel stellt ein Plädoyer für die Legitimität der Kirche und Theologie in der modernen Gesellschaft. Das Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts ist eine von dem Streit zwischen Postmoderne und Moderne gekennzeichneten Epoche. In dieser neuen Epoche erscheint ein neuer Zeitgeist, der die Werte und das klassische Modell über die „humanitas“ in Frage stellt. Damit tritt ein neues Zeitalter der Geschichte ein, das vor allem durch die Pluralität der Erfahrungsformen und der Wahrheit gekennzeichnet ist. Nun assistieren wir am Zerfall von *Glauben* und *Wissen*. Es entsteht eine starke Kluft zwischen Religion und Philosophie (beide auch als Hauptformen der Kultur verstanden); zwischen Theologie und Metaphysik (als Formen des hermeneutischen Vorgehens) und nicht zuletzt zwischen der Kirche und dem Kulturleben. Es wird nach einer missionarischen Kirche und Theologie verlangt, die sich auf die göttliche Präsenz in der Welt besinnen und sich verantwortungsvoll und aktiv im Prozess gesellschaftlicher Umwandlungen engagieren.

### 1.

Das Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts, eine von dem Streit zwischen Postmoderne und Moderne gekennzeichneten Epoche, scheint es von einem tiefen Gefühl der Unzufriedenheit und zugleich von einem Übermaß von geschichtlichen Bewusstsein dominiert gewesen zu sein. Das betrifft nicht nur die eine oder die andere Seite der Moderne, sondern auch den Denkstil und zugleich das Niveau der sich in Weltanschauungs- und Lebensformen zeigende geistigen Leistungen. In einer seltsamen Form sind in diesem Zeitraum das Wahre, die Werte und das klassische Modell über die „humanitas“ in Frage gestellt. Der Geist befand sich in einer Besorgnislage oder wurde wenigstens von einem Erstaunensgefühl ergriffen, folge deren einige für die postmoderne Zeit typische Phänomene, wie: Unordnung der Sprache, Mangel an Kommunikation und trotzdem Streben nach Besinnung und Redlichkeit, sichtbar geworden sind. „Nondum omnium dierum solem occidisse.“<sup>2</sup>

Der entscheidende Schritt in ein neues Zeitalter der Geschichte ist getan worden. Die Umformung des menschlichen Verhaltens und die, vom Standpunkt der Wahrheit erforderte Stellungnahme bezüglich der Kulturwerte ist nun die bevorstehende Aufgabe geworden. Der vom Hegel formulierte Satz: „Der Mensch, da er *Geist* ist, darf und soll sich selbst des Höchsten würdig

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<sup>1</sup> Mitglied der Rumänischen Akademie, Bukarest.

<sup>2</sup> Titus LIVIUS, *Ab urbe condita*, 9, 36.

achten; von der Größe und Macht seines Geistes kam er nicht groß genug denken."<sup>3</sup>, bekam eine voraussagende Resonanz.

Es darf nicht vergessen werden, dass am neuen Erwartungshorizont des Menschen an der Stelle der vom Max Weber genannten Erscheinung der sogenannten „Entzauberung der Welt“ ein umgekehrtes Phänomen hervortritt, nämlich: die Wiederverzauberung der Welt. Beweise dafür sind: verschiedene Formen der Verlust vom Wertgefühl; Ausgleiten aus dem eigentlichen Lebenssinn; Verfall der Sprache des öffentlichen Diskurses; globale, unnuancierte Schätzungen; unbedeutende Beschäftigungen für Identität, Ideale und Permanenzen der Geschichte; ein „Überzeugung“, dass etwas von uns beschlaggenommen worden ist. Bedeutsame Erscheinung ist das sogenannte „Vorbeigehens-Phänomen“: „Die Lebenswege kreuzen sich mannigfach. Unzählige Menschen begegnen dem Menschen. Aber wenige sind es, die er wirklich ‚sieht‘ im ethischen Sinne, wenige für die er den teilhabenden Blick hat [...] Und umgekehrt, wie wenige, von denen er selbst ‚gesehen‘ wird.“<sup>4</sup>

## 2.

Die Frage nach der Erneuerung im menschlichen Leben stellt sich zuvörderst als Frage nach der neuen Form der Beförderung des Geschmacks für Kulturwerke und Selbstdenken dar. Der Antrieb eines berühmten Philosophen könnte vielleicht auch heute als guter Rat gelten: „Die Krise des europäischen Daseins hat nur zwei Auswege: Den Untergang Europas in der Entfremdung gegen seinen rationalen Lebenssinn, den Verfall in Geistfeindschaft und Barbarei, oder die Wiedergeburt Europas aus dem Geiste der Philosophie durch einen Heroismus der Vernunft.“<sup>5</sup>

Das Wichtigste besteht folglich in einem Zusammentreffen der Wahrheit mit der Vernunft. Das führt zu einen durch die „Erfahrung von Wahrheit“ (von den Vertreter der Hermeneutik, besonders von Gadamer näher analysiert) aufgelösten Pluralität der Erfahrungsformen. In diesem Sinne ist das von Gadamer vorgeschlagene Programm und Ziel jeder echten Untersuchung: „Erfahrung von Wahrheit [...] überall aufzusuchen, wo sie begegnet und auf die ihr eigene Legitimation zu befragen. So rücken die Geisteswissenschaften mit *Erfahrungsweisen* zusammen, die außerhalb der Wissenschaft liegen: mit der Erfahrung der Philosophie, mit der Erfahrung der Kunst, mit der Erfahrung der Geschichte

<sup>3</sup> G.W.F. HEGEL, *Heidelberger Niederschrift* (1817), in *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, Bd. 18, Frankfurt a. M., 1971, 13–14.

<sup>4</sup> N. HARTMANN, *Ethik*, Berlin – Leipzig, <sup>2</sup>1935, 12–13.

<sup>5</sup> E. HUSSERL, *Die Krisis des europäischen Menschentums und die Philosophie*, in *Husserliana. Edmund Husserls Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. VI, Den Haag, 1962, 347–348.

selbst. Das alles sind Erfahrungsweisen, in denen die Wahrheit kundtut, die nicht mit den methodischen Mitteln der Wissenschaft verifiziert werden kann.”<sup>6</sup>

Die Vernunft gilt es als Grundgesetz des menschlichen Lebens, so wie alles geistigen Lebens: „Ohne die Wirksamkeit dieses Gesetz kann ein Menschengeschlecht gar nicht zum Dasein kommen”; „das einzige wahrhaft Edle im Menschen, die höchste Form der, in sich selbst klar geworden, Idee ist die Religion. Sie ist Licht und Wahrheit im Geiste.”<sup>7</sup>

### 3.

Es ist zu bemerken, dass der Mensch unserer Epoche eine tiefe Bewusstseinsänderung erlebt. Dies betrifft erstens das Bewusstsein des Zusammenwirkens von „Typen der Rationalität“ und von „Erfahrungstypen“. Die eigene Stellung des Menschen im Universum der Kulturen ist folgender Weise zu charakterisieren: „Die verschiedenen Erzeugnisse der geistigen Kultur, die Sprache, die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis, der Mythos, die Kunst, die Religion werden so bei all ihrer inneren Verschiedenheit, zu Gliedern eines einzigen großen Problemzusammenhangs, – zu mannigfachen Ansätzen, die alle auf das eine Ziel bezogen sind, die passive Welt der bloßen *Eindrücke*, in denen der Geist zunächst befangen scheint, zu einer Welt des reinen geistigen Ausdrucks umzubilden.”<sup>8</sup>

Das Verständnis der Kultur „als die in spezifischen autonomen Wert-modalitäten strukturierte dynamische Gesamtheit“ – die Hauptthese der modernen Philosophie der Kultur<sup>9</sup> könnte so als eine für die folgende Debatte angenommene Voraussetzung werden. Dies wäre vermutlich nur einen Anfang, aber ein viel versprechender, denn: „*Omnia rerum principia parva*“.<sup>10</sup>

### 4.

Seit mehr als einem Jahrhundert ist immer dringender nach der Beziehung von *Glauben* und *Wissen* gefragt worden. Das Thema, das schwer fixierbar ist, fordert aber eine nähere Erörterung der folgenden „Beziehungen“: zwischen Religion und Philosophie (beide auch als Hauptformen der Kultur verstanden), zwischen Theologie und Metaphysik (als Formen des hermeneutischen Vorgehens) und zwischen der Kirche und dem Kulturleben im allgemeinen.

Zunächst ist darauf hinzuweisen, daß der aktuelle Zustand der Welt eine ständige Beförderung des interkulturellen Dialogs und der geistigen Kommu-

<sup>6</sup> H.-G. GADAMER, *Wahrheit und Methode*, Tübingen, <sup>4</sup>1975, XVII–XVIII.

<sup>7</sup> J. G. FICHTE, *Die Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* (1806), Hamburg, 1978, 12, 260.

<sup>8</sup> E. CASSIRER, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, I: *Die Sprache*, Darmstadt, 1964, 12.

<sup>9</sup> A. BOBOC, *Formă și valoare în orizonturile filosofiei culturii. / Form und Wert im Horizonte der Philosophie der Kultur*, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, 59ff.

<sup>10</sup> CICERO, *De Finibus*, V. 21

nikation erfordert. Die Idee eines Kulturpluralismus soll Leitmotiv der neuen Bildungsprogramme werden und auf die sich immer neu stellenden Formen vom Zusammenleben aufmerksam machen. Mit all dem ist, wenn auch nur impliziert, das, was in der heutigen Forschung nicht-generischen Universalität genannt worden ist, gemeint. Am Horizont der Ordnung und der Wertehierarchie sind Wahrheit und Rettung zusammengebracht worden. Das verlangt aber nach den ewig geltenden Werte und einer, im Glauben erlangte Würdigkeit des Menschen. Alles aber dem Gottes Willen gemäß. Denn: Es ist ein Gott, „der will, daß alle Menschen gerettet werden und zur Erkenntnis der Wahrheit gelangen“ (1Tim 2,4).

Demzufolge geht dem heutigen Theologen darum, den tieferen Sinn der heiligen Texte hervorzuheben und zugleich die Textbedeutung für das Leben des Menschen auszulegen. „Da jeder Epoche einen besonderen kulturellen Problematik eigen ist, ist es die Theologie gerufen den von einen bestimmten gegebenen Zeitalters spezifischen Fragen entsprechende Beantwortungen zu finden; die fruchtbare Erfüllung dieser Bestimmung der Kirche ist aber nur durch die auf die göttliche Revelation ständige Begründung gesichert.“<sup>11</sup> In der Tat, „ohne Anstellen eines wirklichen Dialogs mit der Kultur könnte die Theologie die für die Mission der Kirche wahre Beantwortungen nicht zu geben; für seinen mit der Kultur und den Fragen der Epoche Übereinstimmung ist die Theologie zu einer permanenten Erneuerung gerufen.“<sup>12</sup>

In einem anderem Text ist dieselbe Notwendigkeit unterstrichen worden: „Die Kirche ist die die Menschen zum Heil führende Gemeinschaft, und zugleich eine sich den gesellschaftlichen Umständen stellende tätige Institution. Sie hat nie als direktes Ziel gehabt die Kultur, am derer Schoß sie wirkte, gänzlich umzustellen, doch hat sie eine erheblichen Beitrag im Umwandlungsprozess der Kultur geleistet.“<sup>13</sup>

Es ist zu bemerken, dass jeder Dialog zwischen Theologie und Kultur von nun an nur auf der Ebene einer klaren Wertauffassung und deren Wirkung im Zusammenhang der Kulturformen verstanden werden wäre. Das wäre vielleicht den günstigen Weg zum Verständnis der Stellung der im System der Kulturwerte im allgemeinen bestehenden religiösen Werte, der Stellung der Religion im Rahmen der Hauptformen der Kultur (Sprache, Mythos, Kunst, Religion, Wissenschaft, Philosophie, Technik) und der Funktion des theologischen Verfahren im Vergleich zu anderen (wissenschaftlichen, erkenntnistheoretischen u.a.) Vorgehensstypen, die sich auf den wertvollen Inhalt der Werten-Kultur und nicht der „säkularisierten Kultur“ beziehen.

<sup>11</sup> D. POPESCU, *Teologie și cultură*, București, 1995, 5.

<sup>12</sup> POPESCU, 5.

<sup>13</sup> MARTON J., *A Keresztény Ókor. Egyháztörténeti tanulmány*, Marosvásárhely, 2004, 11. (Die aus dem Ungarischen auf Deutsch erfolgte Übersetzung unternahm der Autor des Artikels.)



Von solch einem Verständnis aus, wäre die folgende Gegenseitigkeit *sui genesis* zu verstehen: Die gegenseitige Beziehung der Mystik und der Vernunft, der theozentrischen und anthropologischen Weltauffassung, der theologischen und metaphysischen Sicht der Transzendenz. Damit wäre, in einem bestimmten Sinne, die „Zweiweltentheorie“ abgebaut und die Kluft zwischen einer sakralisierten und einer als säkular angenommenen Welt aufgelöst.

Für alle Begrenzungen und Gegenseitigkeiten könnten wir aus dem Kantianischen Programm über die kritischen Abgrenzungen eine Lehre ziehen: „Ich musste also das *Wissen* aufheben, um zum *Glauben* Platz zu bekommen.“<sup>14</sup> Man solle also sich zwischen der theoretischen Erkenntnis und dem Glauben unterscheiden.

## 5.

Diese, oben geschilderten, die moderne Gesellschaft prägende Kennzeichen und ihr charakteristische Schwierigkeiten, haben allmählich die Form einer Krise angenommen, und stehen in enger Verbindung mit dem Zerfall der etablierten kulturbildenden und politischen Modelle. Sie stellen sich am Horizont der Bejahung eines „neuen wissenschaftlichen Geistes“ und der Laisierung der europäischen Kultur.

Wir könnten auf die folgenden Komponenten der Krise aufmerksam machen: Der aufrichtige Sinn des Evangeliums ist heute durch den wissensgierigen „laizierten“ Geist, durch den Scientismus eingeschränkt. Die Wirkungssphäre der religiösen Erfahrung ist auch vielfach eingeschränkt. Zugleich sind auch andere Formen der Erfahrung an der Peripherie der Wahrnehmungspalette gedrängt. Am Lebenshorizont zeigt sich eine, von den Werten entfremdenden „Struktur“ des Menschlichen, die sich vom Christentum weit entfernt hatte. Sie verbietet jede Möglichkeit eines neuen „Versuches“ zur Sinnfindung. Etabliert hatte ein neuer, schon von Nietzsche angekündigte „europäische Nihilismus“. Ihm fehlt das Ziel, die Antwort auf das „Warum?“ Folglich haben sich die obersten Werte der Gesellschaft entwertet<sup>15</sup>. Es macht sich ein niedriges Niveau der Religiosität spürbar, derer Merkmal ein Wertmangel an der Struktur des menschlichen Geistes ist. Der Geist der Liebe und der Freude lässt sich kaum mehr fühlen. Die Entfernung vom Christentum scheint die Gefahr der Selbstentfernung in sich einzuschließen.

Zum Glück gibt es aber auch positive Seiten dieses, durch Krisen gekennzeichnete, Wachstums. Die für die Gläubiger geltenden Werte wirken noch im Rahmen anderer Kulturwerte. Im Prozess der erfordernden geistigen (besonders moralischen) Erneuerung der heutigen Welt sind diese Werte die

<sup>14</sup> I. KANT, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Hamburg, 1976, 28.

<sup>15</sup> Fr. NIETZSCHE, *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, (Hrsg.) von G. COLLI und M. MONTINARI, Bd. 12, 1980, 350.

wahren Träger der kulturellen Identität und derer Behauptung in der neuen Geschichte Europas geworden.

Die Kirche ist nun dazu gerufen sich mit missionarischem Eifer in dem Bildungswesen zu engagieren. Sie solle den, der abendländischen Kultur spezifischen Geist der Ordnung, Disziplin, Forschung und Analyse zu entwickeln. Dank diesem Geist ist auch bislang dieser Kultur gelungen, viele für die ganze Welt nützliche bemerkenswerte Leistungen im Bereich der Wissenschaft und der Technologie aufzuzeigen. Das ist aber nicht nur dem Geist dieser Kultur zu verdanken, sondern auch und vor allem dem Heiligen Geist, der ein Geist der Ordnung und zusammenwirkenden Kommunion, und nicht Geist der Unordnung ist.<sup>16</sup>

## 6.

In der Erfüllung der missionarischen Sendung besinnt sich die Kirche auf ihren Anfang: „Im Anfang war das Wort und das Wort war bei Gott und Gott war das Wort. Dieses war im Anfang bei Gott. Alles ist durch dieses geworden, und ohne es ward auch nicht eines von dem, was geworden“ (Joh 1,1-3). Aller Anfang beginnt also bei Gott.

Der Wert, die Stärke, die Schönheit der Kirche bestehen in ihrer Einheit, die wesentlich die Einheit des Glaubens ist. Diese Einheit ist keine juristische, äußere Angelegenheit, sondern „Ausdruck ihrer ontologischen im Christ innerlichen Einheit“.<sup>17</sup> Die Kirche, die Versammlung der Gläubiger „ist von der Kommunion nach dem Gesicht der Heiligen Struktur der höchsten Liebe. Die Offenbarung ist nur innerhalb der Kirche wirksam und die Kirche ist nur innerhalb der Offenbarung lebendig. Die Kirche ist im Christ das Immanente, welche in ihr das Transzendente, die Kommunion der Personen von unendlicher Liebe für die Welt erfüllt.“<sup>18</sup> Die Treue zu ihrem Ursprung, zum göttlichen Wort, zur göttlichen Communio ist Aufgabe der Kirche. Selbst der Fortschritt der Theologie besteht in der Treue zum in der Heiligen Schrift und in der Tradition wirksamen Geist. Diese Treue weckt Wachsamkeit, Kraft zur Erneuerung und Verantwortung in jeder neuen kulturellen Epoche.

In diesem Kontext ist auch die Rolle der Liturgie innerhalb der Kirche zu unterstreichen. Sie ist Ausdrucksform der „Treue zum Evangelium“ (vgl. 2Tim 1,6-14;3,10-16). Die Liturgie hat eine wahre Vermittlungsrolle in der Wortverkündigung. In diesem Sinne deckt sich die Wahrheit der Behauptung:

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<sup>16</sup> Vgl. POPESCU, 53–54.

<sup>17</sup> D. STĂNILOAIE, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, Bd. II, București, 1987, 266.

<sup>18</sup> STĂNILOAIE, 208.

„[...] ohne Bibel gibt es keine Liturgie“.<sup>19</sup> Und folglich: „Die Bibel und die Liturgie dürfen eigentlich nicht als nebeneinander stehende Realitäten, sie bilden nämlich eine untrennbare Einheit; und dementsprechend sollte man nicht über Bibel *und* Liturgie reden, sondern über Bibel in der Liturgie und Liturgie in der Bibel“.<sup>20</sup>

## 7.

Die durch Kirche verkündigte Wahrheit ist Bindeglied und Brücke zwischen Gott und seiner Schöpfung. Sie ist Zeuge der ewigen Geltung der biblischen Botschaft. Dies zu erfüllen ist die Aufgabe der Kirche und ihrer Theologie in der Welt von heute.

Eine ähnlich wichtige Aufgabe der Kirche und Theologie ist das ökumenische Bemühen, das auch die gegebenen historischen-kulturellen Bedingungen berücksichtigen soll. Die christliche Einheit erfordert nämlich auch eine ausführliche Erörterung der Geschichte verschiedener Völker.

In der Erfüllung seiner Mission soll sich die Kirche das Modell der trinitarischen Kommunion als Bezugspunkt nehmen. Als Werkzeug Gottes soll sie an der Überwindung der entstandenen Schwierigkeiten beizutragen. Ihre „missionarische Aufgabe“ kann sie aber nur aus der Kraft der Liebe durchführen, im Geist des Mitwirkens und Dialogs mit den anderen Religionen und überhaupt mit den Menschen guten Willens. Dies spricht gegen die „säkularisierte Mentalität“ des Menschen und „säkularisierte Kultur“. Sie bestreitet die Legitimität ungeordneter Einheit, und sagt zugleich jede Tendenz der Uniformität ab. Statt dieser will sie die Eigentümlichkeiten der Einzelnen bewahren und zugleich zur ausgeglichenen Harmonie führen.

## 8.

Die Theologie bindet das Religiöse und das Kulturelle zueinander. Als theoretischer Diskurs operiert sie mit allgemeinen kulturtheoretischen Konzepten; ihr eigentlicher Boden bleibt aber die religiöse Erfahrung. Da die Religion eine Hauptform der Kultur ist, befindet sie sich in Zusammenwirken mit den anderen Kulturformen (Wissenschaft, Kunst, Technik u.a.).

Die besondere Komplexität der Kultur-Phänomene fördert Dialog und Kommunikation unterschiedlicher gesellschaftlichen Erscheinungen. Nur das kann zum Verstehen der konkreten Problematik der Epoche führen. Wenn man die Rolle der Theologie in einer Welt der technischen Wissenschaften festlegen will, soll man einsehen, dass sie nicht eindeutig auf der Ebene der Diskussionen

<sup>19</sup> A. M. MARTIMORT, *Das Wort Gottes und die Liturgie*, Mainz, 1960, 9. Zitiert nach MARTON József (Hrsg.) *Emlékkönyv a 250 éve alapított Gyulafehérvári Papnevelde Jubileuma alkalmából*, Kolozsvár, 2003, 179.

<sup>20</sup> EGELI F., *Biblia és Liturgia*, in MARTON, 191.

über Glauben und Wissen gesucht werden soll. Theologie ist unter den Zeichen der Rationalität bestehenden Einheit zu diskutieren. Denn, jenseits der Differenzen, bewahren alle Formen der Rationalität die Idee einer einheitlichen und rationalen Ordnung.

Ganz allgemein kann behauptet werden, dass sich kulturelle Bedürfnisse und Ideale des Menschen aufeinander treffen. Differenzierte Sprachen drücken fast den gleichen Inhalt aus. Man wird, zwar unterschiedlicher Weise, doch dem gleichen Grund der Rationalität teilhaftig. In dieser Fragestellung wird der Inhalt des Textes durch das Beispiel des Redners bekräftigt. Denn: „Longum iter est per praecepta, bene et efficax per exempla.“<sup>21</sup> Ergebnis dieses Aufeinandertreffens ist die Kommunikation unter den Denk- und Erlebnis-Typen. Dadurch werden die Gegensätze überwunden und die ersehnte Einheit erzielt.

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<sup>21</sup> SENECA, *Epistulae ad Lucilium*, 6,5.

## THE HISTORY OF ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN TRANSYLVANIA

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**Abstract.** This essay offers an overview of the development of Roman Catholic theological education in Transylvania up to the twentieth century. During the Middle Ages theological disciplines were taught in some places in the chapter schools of at Csanád, Nagyvárad, Gyulafehérvár. The Transylvanian theological education started at Kolozsvár (today Cluj-Napoca, Romania) in 1585, with the foundation of the Jesuit academy by Prince István Báthory. The institution had a thorny history in the 16–17<sup>th</sup> century, especially during the Reformed Principality, but contributed immensely to the development of higher education. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Empress Maria Theresa had a major role in the enlargement of the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) and in the promotion of Catholic theological education. Due to the foundation of the seminary in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), and later on due to the educational policy of Joseph II, theological education in Kolozsvár (Cluj) came to an end. Up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the main centre for theological formation was Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia). The establishment of the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology at the Babeș-Bolyai University inaugurated a new phase in the theological education.

The first Hungarian king, Saint Stephan founded three bishoprics in the eastern side of the country: one in Transylvania, one in the Bihar region and one in Csanád. In these dioceses the chapter schools aimed at preparing future priests; teaching did not attain scholarly levels, but provided, beside pastoral training a basic knowledge of theological disciplines.

The first bishop of Csanád (region also known as Marosvár or Morisenum), Saint Gellért, was formed as a theologian at the school of the San-Giorgio monastery and in the higher theological school of Bologna. The writings of Saint Jerome have aroused his desire to take a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to visit the places where the great church father had spent his life.<sup>2</sup> The 25 years old scholar, accompanied by two of his colleagues, departed for a trip on the sea, to reach the Holy Land, but they arrived instead to the country of Saint Stephan. Here he became the tutor of prince Imre, and as bishop of

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<sup>2</sup> KOVÁTS S., *A csanádi papnevelde története*, Temesvár, 1908, 6.

Marosvár he founded a theological school for priests-to-be,<sup>3</sup> mentioned also in his great legend.<sup>4</sup> He may be regarded as the first theologian of our region. Although his only surviving work is “*Deliberatio Gerardi, ecclesiae Morosensae Eppi, supra hymnum trium pueorum, ad Isengrinum, liberalem*”, an allegorical interpretation of the “Three young men in the white-hot furnace” (Dan 3,1-97), this writing already indicates Gellért’s deep theological knowledge. This is shown by the multiple references to the works of some great church fathers, such as Jerome, Gregory the Great, Ambrose, Augustine.<sup>5</sup>

In the statute of the chapter of Nagyvarád (Oradea), dating from 1374, we find precious information related to the chapter school, its teachers, students and curriculum. The chapter school of Nagyvarád (Oradea) flourished during bishop János Vitéz, when humanists coming from abroad created a real academy around him, practicing theology at a scholarly level.<sup>6</sup> Miklós Oláh, bishop of Esztergom (1506–1512), as well as Miklós Gerendi, bishop of Transylvania (died in 1527) have studied here at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup>

At Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), in 1446, the rector of the chapter school (*rector scholarum*) was prebend Stephan, *baccalaureus artium*.<sup>8</sup> From the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the school flourishes, gathering personalities like János Megyericsei (died in 1517), the first Transylvanian specialist in ancient epigraphy, the canon Mátyás, collector of Italian printings, the great humanist Péter Várady (prebend between 1476–1480, subsequently archbishop of Kalocsa), prebend Antal Verancsics (1504–1573), later archbishop of Esztergom, the humanist János Lászlai canon of Telegd (died in 1523), and canon Thomas Pelei, whose writings reveal a broad knowledge in spite of the fact that poverty prevented him from studying abroad. In 151 he bought Erasmus’ *Adagia*, which he annotated with further references and citations from the author referred to in the work. These citations are telling about the level of knowledge that may have been acquired at the school of Gyulafehérvár

<sup>3</sup> Cf. WEISBENDER, Joseph., *Szentek élete I.*, (Trans. and ed. DIÓS I.), SZIT, Budapest, 2001, 692–694.

<sup>4</sup> *Szent Gellért püspök legendái* (Trans. SZABÓ Flóris), in *Árpád-kori legendák és intelmek*, Osiris, Budapest, 1999, 79.

<sup>5</sup> KOVÁTS, 7.

<sup>6</sup> BÉKEFI R., *The káptalani iskolák története Magyarországon 1540-ig*, Budapest, 1910, 145–159.

<sup>7</sup> MÉSZÁROS I., *Az erdélyi katolikus felsőoktatás múltjából*, in FARAGÓ J., INCZE M., KATONA SZABÓ I. (Eds.), *Az erdélyi magyar felsőoktatás évszázadai – Emlékkönyv*, Association of the Friends of the Bolyai University, Budapest, 1996, 174.

<sup>8</sup> BÉKEFI, 114.

(Alba Iulia).<sup>9</sup> This school was still flourishing during the two decades following the battle of Mohács (1526), but after 1540 the signs of disintegration appeared.<sup>10</sup>

Till the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, the Transylvanian Catholic Church lost all the institutions of theological education. Nonetheless by end of the century, in the so-called Báthory-period, theological studies had gained new fields with the entrance of the Jesuit fathers, lead by János Leleszi, in 1579.

The statute of the university, signed at Vilna on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May, 1581, by István Báthory (Prince of Transylvanian between 1571–1586, king of Poland between 1576–1586) states the king's wish to establish a *studium generale* similar to that of the other European universities. The aim of the institution was to train

the Transylvanian youth should learn both in the sacred sciences and in the *studia humanitas*, so that some may fulfill the priestly vocation, while others may acquire knowledge of the secular disciplines... In order to provide our college with all the rights, ranks and prerogatives enjoyed by all the other universities of the Christian world, by our royal mercy, we decide and dispose that those who want to deepen their knowledge in the fields of theology or philosophy, after the study of Hebrew, Greek and Latin literature, and after they present their reasons for studying, they should be able to attain the Bachelor, Master or Doctor degree according to the statues of the college. This promotion is to be connected with the same rights, respect, honour and dignity that any other university from Italy, Gallia, Spain or Germany might give.<sup>11</sup>

Pope Gregory XIII confirmed the foundation of the university on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February, 1582, offering a generous financial subsidy of 1200 golden scudi.<sup>12</sup>

Although the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum* was finalised only in 1599, the curriculum of the Jesuit Academy of Kolozsvár (Cluj) was almost identical with the later *Ratio*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> MARTON J., *Papnevelés az erdélyi egyházmegyében 1753-tól 1918-ig*, Budapest, 1993, 32–33.

<sup>10</sup> BITAY Á., *Az erdélyi Róm. Kat. Status Gyulafehérvári „Mailáth” főgimnázium megalakulása*, Arad, 1930, 6.

<sup>11</sup> LUKÁCS L. (Ed.), *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae*. II. Tom (1580–1586), Roma, 1976, 62–66, Hung. SZÖGI László, in *Régi magyar egyetemek emlékezete*, Budapest, 1995; VINCZE K. (ed.), *A magyar királyi Ferenc József-Tudományegyetem Évkönyve az 1940-41. tanévről*, Kolozsvár, 1942, 4.; MÉSZÁROS I., 175.

<sup>12</sup> BISZTRAY Gy., *Az erdélyi tudományos élet egyetemi gondolat*, in BISZTRAY Gy., SZABÓ T. A., TAMÁS L. (Eds.), *Erdély magyar egyeteme*, Kolozsvár, 1941, 46; D. RADOSAV, I. COSTEA (eds.), *Scientia et pietatis. Collegium Claudiopolitanum Societatis Jesu (1581)*, Cluj, 2005, 207–212.

<sup>13</sup> The *Ratio Studiorum* confirmed the teaching system of the Collegium Romanum founded in 1551 (three years philosophy and three years theology). Cf. MIHÁLYFI Á., *A papnevelés története I.*, Budapest, 1896, 152.

The institution opened its doors in November 1581 with a *disputatio*,<sup>14</sup> and it acceded to the university level in 1585, through its departments of philosophy and theology. The institution was open to every Transylvanian young man, regardless of his religious belonging. Probably the openness of the university and its success in the midst of mostly Protestant society was the cause of its tragedy.<sup>15</sup> The Protestant leaders of the time considered that the Jesuit academy was perturbing the religious balance of the country, therefore the Diet of Medgyes (Medias, 1588) expelled the Jesuits from Transylvania. This decree was withdrawn in 1595, allowing the Jesuit teachers to pursue their instruction in schools. But the strong feelings regarding their didactic activity were still present in that time. Only a short period of time, from 1598 till 1603, could they teach at the university, because the instigated Protestant mob destroyed their building on 9<sup>th</sup> of June, 1603. The Jesuits found a transitory shelter at the Dominican order, but as a consequence of István Bocskai's order, they had to leave the country in 1605.

We need to mention some of the greatest teachers of that time: István Szántó (Arator), teacher of Péter Pázmány, Jacob Wujek (Vangrovatius), the Polish Bible-translator, first rector of the university, the German Jesuits Wolff Schreck and Johann Pusch, who distinguished themselves as polemicists, Jan Campania, rector of the University of Prague, and Ferdinand Capecius from Naples, the second rector of the institution.<sup>16</sup>

The Jesuit *Ratio* comprised three years of philosophy, followed by a four-years theology course. Teaching of the scholastic theology was based on Thomas Aquinas' *Summa*. Nonetheless the *Ratio Studiorum* demanded from professors to take into account the local theological particularities, allowing them to depart from the *Summa* as long as the catholic faith remained unaltered. Old and New Testament exegesis was taught for two years on daily basis. Professors were expected to use the Vulgate, but they had to refer to the Hebrew and Greek text as well. Patristic interpretation had to be taken into account, and rabbinic exegesis could also be used, although professors were not supposed to offer too much attention to the latter. Exegesis followed the *sensus litteralis*, but the allegorical interpretation had to be addressed as well. The *Casus Conscientiae* was a distinct discipline, focusing on casuistics, and including a compendium of dogmatic, moral, pastoral theology and canon law. The discipline was taught for

<sup>14</sup> The theses of the debate appeared also in print. Cf. FRAKNÓI Vilmos, *A hazai és külföldi iskolázás*, 111.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. the note written in 1588 concerning the situation of the Collegium Claudiopolitanum. Published by VERESS E., *Litterae Societae Jesu 1579–1613*, Budapest, 1921, 19–21 (Hung. transl. SZÖGI László, in *Régi magyar egyetemek emlékezete*, Budapest, 1995; VESZELY K., *Erdélyi Egyháztörténeti adatok*, Kolozsvár, 1860, 188–217: the documents of the Diet of Medias in 1588.

<sup>16</sup> BISZTRAY, 46–49.



two or three years, during daily courses. Canon law was taught initially for one, later for two years. Church history was not included in the Jesuits curriculum. Even at the Collegium Romanum, it was introduced only in 1742 by Pope Benedict XIV, and in Transylvania it became part of the study programme during the epoch of the Enlightenment.<sup>17</sup>

After the end of the Transylvanian principality, Jesuits were allowed to return to Kolozsvár (Cluj) after 90 years of exile, taking over again their institution. Due to the disposition of Emperor Leopold I, the Jesuits opened their Academy on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November, 1698, with two faculties: philosophy and theology, and were entitled to give doctoral degrees.<sup>18</sup> They re-established instruction followed the principles of the *Ratio Studiorum*, and the curriculum included dogmatic theology, exegesis, moral theology and polemics. Hebrew was taught as well. The length of philosophical courses decreased from 3 to 2 years during Maria Theresa.

Oddly, several Transylvanian historians emphasize merely the importance of the 18<sup>th</sup> century for the history of the university of Kolozsvár (Cluj). This applies even to the most recent work on the topic.<sup>19</sup> This important period of the development of the university is unfortunately neglected.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Jesuits laid down the basis of the infrastructure of their university. They started to build their new institute on the ground of the actual university's main building in 1704 and finished it in 1765.<sup>20</sup> They also founded the Báthory-Apor seminary (1734) and the college for young men of the nobility (1735). The university church was built between 1718–1724. The Jesuits rebuilt and developed their library (destroyed in 1603), and they re-established their print (that had previously functioned between 1581–1588), as well as their pharmacy (starting with 1731).<sup>21</sup>

In 1753 Empress Maria Theresa restored the university status of the institution. In the same year, bishop Zsigmond Antal Sztoyka founded the seminary at Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), for the training of the future priests. This made unnecessary the existence of the faculty of theology at Kolozsvár (Cluj).

The limits of this essay do not allow a full overview of those reputed professors who lectured at the university during these years. The most renowned, the world-famous astronomer Maximilian Hell (1720–1792) became later the director of the observatory of the University of Vienna; he founded

<sup>17</sup> Cf. MIHÁLYFI, 153–161.

<sup>18</sup> BISZTRAY, 82.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. JAKÓ K., *Bevezetés az erdélyi magyar felsőoktatás évszázadaihoz*, in *Az erdélyi magyar felsőoktatás évszázadai*, 11.

<sup>20</sup> VINCZI, 5.

<sup>21</sup> BISZTRAY, 84.

and equipped the observatory of Kolozsvár (Cluj).<sup>22</sup> The church historian Ferenc Fasching wrote several works on the history of Transylvania.<sup>23</sup> György Rajcsányi (died 1734) authored eleven philosophical, religious and historical writings. Mihály Salbeck, professor of polemics, was involved for seven years in the training of Romanian-speaking priests. András Illia (died 1754), of Romanian provenance, taught philosophy and casuistics; he wrote the *Ortus et progressus variarum in Dacia gentium et religionum cum principibus ejusdem usque ad annum 1722*. The Jesuit István Csete (1848–1718) distinguished himself in the restoration of the university. He entered Transylvania during Prince Mihály Apafi in the habit of secular priests, under the name Zsigmond Vízkeleti. His contemporaries called him the Transylvanian Hungarian Cicero because of his rhetorical skills. The Historian István Kaprinai (1714–1786) taught at the university starting with 1750. He was one of the pioneers of Hungarian historiography; he authored an excellent work on the epoch of King Mátyás Hunyadi. After 1760, for a short time the Jesuit poet Dávid Szabó Baróti (1739–1819) taught in the preparatory course for the academic studies. He is one of the promoters of classicist poetry.<sup>24</sup> After the dissolution of the Jesuit order, from 1776 the university was run by the Piarists, among whom one of the most important was István Pállya (1740–1802).<sup>25</sup>

In the sixties, the Protestant Churches promoted the idea of an interconfessional university, while the Saxons were advocating for a German university. However, in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the new policy of education, aiming at establishing non-confessional state universities, gained ground in Transylvania as well. The Catholic bishop J. Antal Bajtay (1760–1772) argued for the further development of the university of Kolozsvár (Cluj), according to the model of the classical, full-fetched university. In 1767 Empress Maria Theresa rejected the Protestant plan, and promoted the further development of the university of Kolozsvár (Cluj). After the suppression of the Jesuit order (26<sup>th</sup> of October, 1773), due to the support of Maria Theresa, the Jesuits could teach as secular priests, until the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, 1778, when the Piarists took charge of the university. In 1774 and 1776 the Empress ordered the establishment of two new faculties (Law and Medicine, respectively). She also granted to the institution the right to elect the rector. In order to strengthen the faculty of theology, she moved the professors and students of the seminary of Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) to Kolozsvár (Cluj).

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<sup>22</sup> MÉSZÁROS, 178.

<sup>23</sup> Dacia vetus; Dacia nova; Dacia siculica.

<sup>24</sup> His volume, *Új mértékre vett különb verseknek három könyvei* (Kassa, 1777) is a masterpiece of the classicist literature. Through its conception, noble feelings and poetical language, the allegory *A ledőlt diófához* (*To the broken walnut-tree*) is a remarkable piece of poetry.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. BISZTRAY, 86–101.

Although, at the end of 1776 it seemed that the complete university, with four faculties (Theology, Philosophy, Law and Medicine) was established, the process was undermined by the subsequent changes in the imperial education policy, that affected especially the fate of the faculty of theology. When the University of Nagyszombat was moved in 1777 to Buda, Vienna considered that this university, now located at the centre of the Carpathian Basin satisfied the needs for higher education in the area. Therefore the efforts to the attempt to organise the medical faculty in Kolozsvár (Cluj) were stopped, and the faculty of theology was moved back to the episcopal sea, at Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), between 1778–1784. The faculty of law continued to function as independent Academy of Law.

Thus the theological education in Kolozsvár (Cluj) lasted until 1778, when bishop László Kollonics was compelled to assent to the imperial decision and move the theological training to Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia). Moreover, in 1784 Emperor Joseph II downgraded the institution to the rank of college (*Lyceum Regium Academicum*).<sup>26</sup> In 1784 Joseph II moved the theology students of all Transylvanian dioceses to Kolozsvár (Cluj) till 1786, and subsequently to the central seminary of Pest. This meant the end of the faculty of theology at the university of Kolozsvár (Cluj), which nonetheless was re-established after exactly 210 years, in 1996, as Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology, which now celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Beginning with the 18<sup>th</sup> century theological education in Transylvania coincided with the training of priests at the various seminaries. At Nagyvárad (Oradea), Miklós bishop Csáky opened the Seminary in the fall of 1740. At Szatmár (Satu Mare), the first bishop, István Fisher opened the seminary in 1806, in the ancient building of the Jesuits. In the same year, bishop László Kőszeghy founded the Seminary of the diocese of Csanád. At Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), after a complicated trajectory, theological education was re-established in 1792.<sup>27</sup>

During the Josephinian period, Catholic theological education in the seminaries of Transylvania and at the General Seminary of Pest was greatly influenced by the priest-professors, who had been educated at Western universities, in the spirit of rationalist thought, the main ideology of that period. Thus of that time various currents, such as deism, indifferentism, quietism, probabilism, jansenism, gallicanism, episcopalism, left their imprint on theological formation and thinking.<sup>28</sup> Thus the currents and methods resulting from a new approach, enlightened by reason, which promoted the development of

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<sup>26</sup> MÉSZÁROS, 178–179.

<sup>27</sup> MÉSZÁROS, 180–183.

<sup>28</sup> HOLL B., *A teológiai gondolkodásmód alakulása a kora felvilágosodás-kori magyar katolikus papság könyvkultúrája tükrében*, in *Laus librorum*, METEM, Budapest 2000, 176.

natural sciences, also influenced theological education, and became the drive for theological sciences.<sup>29</sup> (Church) history won more attention. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century seminary training gave more attention to philosophical formation. The new trends were influenced by the challenges given with the emergence of liberalism and anticlericalism, as well as by the reform of high-school education (the *Organisations-Entwurf*), introduced in 1849. The reform promoted by Vienna established an eight-year gymnasial cycle, which included in the curriculum of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class the disciplines of natural sciences previously taught in the last two years of the lyceum, but dropped philosophy (with then exception of logics and psychology). This explains the increased interest for philosophical formation at the seminaries. The curriculum of the theological education itself was modernised. More attention was given to biblical studies, dogmatic theology, apologetics, liturgy, pastoral theology, as well related disciplines, such as pedagogy, catechetics and rhetorics / homiletics.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the newly established Hungarian university of Kolozsvár included four faculties (law, medicine, philosophy-history, natural sciences). No theological faculty was founded.<sup>30</sup> The existence of this university was interrupted after World War I.

In 1919, the Board of the University prepared a project envisaging the creation of an interconfessional Hungarian University. The project was finalised by the 10<sup>th</sup> of June. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of June the three Hungarian bishops of Transylvania announced the foundation of the university to the Minister of Public Education, but the project was not authorised.<sup>31</sup> In 1921 the Ferenc József University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) temporarily moved to Szeged. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of October, 1940, due to the disposition of governor Horthy Miklós, the Hungarian University of Kolozsvár was reorganised. A new faculty of economic sciences was established. The inauguration of the university, which included 84 departments took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, 1940.<sup>32</sup>

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 1945, the prefect of Cluj (Kolozsvár), Vasile Pogăceanu ordered the temporary suspension of the academic autonomy, the dissolution of the University Council. The Romanian University was reopened.<sup>33</sup>

The Minister of education, Ștefan Voitec introduced two bills to King Mihai I. The first one pronounced the return of the North Transylvanian educational institutions, temporarily moved during the reestablishment of Hungarian rule between 1940–1944, to their former centre. The second one

<sup>29</sup> HOLL Béla, *A teológiai gondolkodásmód*, in: *Laus librorum*, 176.

<sup>30</sup> VINCZI, 8.

<sup>31</sup> VINCZI, 9–10.

<sup>32</sup> VINCZI, 12.

<sup>33</sup> BODOR A., *A Bolyai Tudományegyetem*, in *Az erdélyi magyar felsőoktatás évszázadai*, 71.

regarded the fate of the Hungarian University: the Bolyai University was established with four faculties: philosophy, law, natural sciences, medicine.<sup>34</sup> In 1956 the Hungarian-speaking Bolyai University was merged with the Romanian Babeş University, with the establishment of the Babeş-Bolyai University.

Theological training during this period was confined to seminaries. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the use of Latin in teaching was replaced by vernacular.<sup>35</sup> Starting with 1933/1934 theological education in seminaries took five years. In 1952 the Transylvanian seminaries were forced by the State to merge, establishing the Theological Institute of Alba Iulia, and the seminary of Iaşi was founded. From this year, priest-training was extended to six years.

Roman Catholic theological education in Cluj (Kolozsvár) was re-established in 1996 at the Babeş-Bolyai University, with the foundation of the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology.

It is a difficult task to evaluate the Transylvanian Roman Catholic theological education, and especially its last decades, given the short time elapsed. I can only confirm the conclusion of my dissertation, written fifteen years ago: theological education, although developing within narrow boundaries, was altogether fruitful.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. BODOR, 72–77.

<sup>35</sup> MÉSZÁROS, 184–185.

<sup>36</sup> MARTON, 233.

## SPIRITUALITÄT, LITERATUR, THEOLOGIE. VERSUCH EINER INTERDISZIPLINÄREN ANNÄHERUNG

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**Zusammenfassung.** Der vorliegende Artikel untersucht durch die Analyse der spätmittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Texte (Meditationstheorien) die sakrale und ästhetische Sphäre der Meditationstexte. Diese beide Sphären melden sich als *eine* Erscheinung des Realen. Die Untersuchung führt die literaturwissenschaftlichen und theologischen Aspekte aus. Sie setzt sich der Meditationsreihe von Thomas Kempis: *Conciones et meditationes triginta-sex utilissimae* an, und analysiert sie unter der Betrachtung der theologischen und didaktischen Aspekte. Wobei die *Scala meditationis* von Johannes Wessel Gansfort untersucht wird, wird auf die rhetorischen Ansätze der Meditationenpraktika konzentriert. Bei der Untersuchung der *Rhetorica caelestis* von Jeremias Drexel will der Artikel die Ähnlichkeiten und die Unterschiede der Redens- und Gebetsrhetorik ausstellen. In dem letzten Teil des Artikels wird die Meditationsreihe *De ascensione mentis ad Deum* von Roberto Bellarmino analysiert.

### Eingangsgedanken zur Problemlage

In einer Aufzeichnung von Pilinszky János findet man einen vielsagenden Satz: „Für mich hat die Kunst grundsätzlich eine religiöse Herkunft, und wahrscheinlich daher betrachte ich alle Werke, die religiösen Charakter haben im gewissen Sinne als Paraphrase.“<sup>2</sup> Diese Behauptung spiegelt die Einstellung Pilinszkys in der Frage Kunst zurück. Diese persönliche Stellungnahme eines tiefgreifenden Denkers, eines, die Geheimnisse erforschenden und deutenden katholischen Dichters des 20. Jahrhunderts, der die grundsätzliche Zusammengehörigkeit des Sakralen und Ästhetischen behauptete, gelang zur Erkenntnis bis dahin unentdeckte Wahrheiten. Doch wusste er gut, dass die erkannte Wahrheit nicht seine eigene ist, indem sie auf eine auf Jahrhunderte zurückgreifende Tradition ruht. In der Reihe der traditionsgutbildende und ihren Glauben bekennende Denker steht der Hl. Augustinus, dessen gut bekannten Satz als lebendigen Zeugen herbeizitieren können: „Dich, Schönheit, die so alt und zugleich so neu bist, habe ich viel zu spät angefangen zu lieben – viel zu spät!“<sup>3</sup> Das Argument des Thomas von Aquin scheint der Gedanke über den Paraphrase-

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<sup>2</sup> PILINSZKY J., *A „teremtő képzelet” sorsa korunkban*, in *Ders., Kráter: Összegyűjtött és új versek*, Budapest, 1981, 101.

<sup>3</sup> „Sero te amavi, pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam nova, sero te amavi!“ AUGUSTINUS, *Confessiones*, X., 27, 38. [Lateinisch–Ungarische Ausgabe: *Szent Ágoston Vallomásai*, übersetzt von BALOGH J., Budapest 1995, II. 280–281.]

Charakter des Schaffens von Pilinszky zur Hilfe zu kommen. Thomas behauptet, treu der Aristotelischen Terminologie und Denkweg, dass der Gedanke zumindest als Form existiert zuerst im Denkvermögen des Schöpfers; im schöpferischen Akt wird diese a priori Form verwirklicht. Dieser Schöpfungsprozess gleicht dem schöpferischen Akt Gottes: „In quibusdam enim agentibus praeexistit forma rei... sicut similitudo domus praeexistit in mente aedificatoris... Quia igitur mundus non est casu factus..., necesse est quod in mente divina sit forma, ad similitudinem cuius mundus est factus.”<sup>4</sup>

Die Zusammengehörigkeit des Sakralen und des Schönen, die sowohl in der Theologie als auch in der Philosophie als Grundthese steht, soll an dieser Stelle nur erwähnt werden. Die auf die Metaphysik des Schönen beziehenden Forschungsergebnisse sind allgemein bekannt: Falls die Scholastik über das Schöne redet, denkt zugleich an eine Eigenschaft Gottes;<sup>5</sup> die Schönheit des Geschaffenen heißt eigentlich Teil-haben an dem ewig Schönen;<sup>6</sup> die in der Welt feststellbare Ordnung (*numerus, pondus, ornatus*) ist eine Art Spur (*vestigium*) des im All schöpferisch tätig seienden Gottes<sup>7</sup> und das ist nichts Anderes, als das intelligibile (aber nicht empirische, doch unserer Erkenntnis greifbare) Schöne. Dies ist dem Menschen des Mittelalters eine geistige und psychologische Realität. Daher ziehen wir unsere Konsequenz: Das ästhetische Interesse des Mittelalters ist wesentlich umgreifender und kompakter als es öfters angenommen wird. Die Annahme des Schönen als eine metaphysische Kategorie fordert Hinschauen und Schönheits-Betrachtung.<sup>8</sup>

Das ausgeführte Zitat Pilinszkys scheint zuerst die Geltung unseres Vortragthemas anzuzweifeln. „[...] wenn alle Kunstarten religiöser Herkunft sind, dann kann man überhaupt nicht mehr von religiöser Kunst und gar nicht von religiöser Literatur reden [...]“<sup>9</sup> Man soll doch beachten, dass die Affirmation Pilinszkys gegen die Anstrengungen gewisser kunsthistorischen Denkmodelle des 20. Jahrhunderts gestellt worden ist, die ihrerseits „religiöse“ und „weltliche“, „heilige“ und „profane“ Kunst, Kultur und Literatur voneinander zu trennen versuchten. Hinter dieser Denkweise verbirgt – meistens ungewollt, spontan und unreflektiert – solch eine Einstellung, die anhand zeitlichen Angaben hierarchische Ordnung aufstellt (je älter ist etwas, desto

<sup>4</sup> S. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa theologiae. Prima pars*, q. 15., Art. 1.3. [Lateinisch-Ungarische Ausgabe: AQUINÓI Szent Tamás, *A teológia foglalata Első rész*, übersetzt von TUDÓS-TAKÁCS J., Budapest 1995, 88–89.]

<sup>5</sup> E.R. CURTIUS, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, Bern 1948, 123.

<sup>6</sup> BOLBERITZ P., *Szent Tamás filozófiája*, in BOLBERITZ P., GÁL F., *Aquinói Szent Tamás filozófiája és teológiája*, Budapest 1987, 157.

<sup>7</sup> Vgl. Weis 11,21: „omnia mensura et numero et pondere disposuisti“.

<sup>8</sup> Texte von U. ECO, *Kunst und Schönheit im Mittelalter*, München 2000, 17.

<sup>9</sup> PILINSZKY, 101.

primitiver und wenig wertvoller soll es sein) und den geschichtlichen und geistigen Kontext, letztendlich die Spiritualität und die Wiege der untersuchten Epoche, in der das Kunstwerk entstand, außer Acht lässt.

Die Evolution betonende Zivilisations-, Literatur- und Kunstgeschichte berichtet, dass die sakrale und ästhetische Sphäre, auch in den wenig entwickelten Phasen, eine untrennbare Einheit bildeten; dass in allen Kulturen die Kunstarten und Wissenschaften undifferenziert nebeneinander standen. Die Untersuchungen, die den kulturellen und theologischen Kontext des Vergangenen forschen, kommen in dieser Frage im gewissen Sinne auf folgenden Konsequenzen: in einem universellen, globalen Kontext führen sie das Geschaffene auf den schöpfenden Akt Gottes zurück und bauen damit die Trennungswand zwischen dem Heiligen und Profanen, dem Sakralen und Ästhetischen ab. Dies scheinen auch Pilinszky und die heutigen interdisziplinären Forschungen zu erkennen.

Aus dem oben Ausgeführten ergibt sich: auf der Forschungsebene des Heiligen, wie z.B. des Stundenbuches oder der christlichen Hymnologie, sowohl der Liturgie- und Theologiegeschichtler als auch der Literaturgeschichtler etwas zu sagen haben. Während der erste die Ordnung des geschichtlichen Ablaufs des Gottesdienstes seinen Untersuchungen unterzieht und die einzelnen Inhaltspunkte des heiligen *officium-s* betrachtend Anhaltspunkte für das heutige Glaubensleben herausstellt, versucht der andere die Schaffensmodi des Gebetsaktes zu begreifen und deutet auf die Sprachstrukturen hin, die ermöglichen, dass ein theologisches System zum Gedicht umgewandelt werden kann. Dies zufolge wird der Denker zum Dichter: „Der größte Philosoph des Mittelalters spielt wie ein Troubadour auf die Reime.“<sup>10</sup>

### **Geschichte der Spiritualität und geistliche Literatur als Aufgabe**

Dieser Vortrag versucht ein mögliches Thema des interdisziplinären Übergangs zwischen Theologie und Literatur vorzustellen. Die Gedanken werden auf die Vielschichtigkeit des Untersuchens der geistlichen Literatur hingelenkt. Unsere Untersuchung begrenzt sich auf die meditative Literatur der frühen Neuzeit. Unserer Fragestellung nach wird die Meditationsliteratur des 16-17. Jahrhunderts literatur-, dogmen-, bzw. geistesgeschichtlichen Aspekten untergestellt.

Die multi- bzw. interdisziplinäre – gesellschafts-, kirchen- und politisch-geschichtliche, folkloristische und kulturgeschichtliche – Untersuchung der Devotionen und Meditationsliteratur hat vorzügliche Forschungsergebnisse im deutschen Sprachraum ergeben. Die dort angewandte Methodologie kann wohl in das ungarische Sprachgebiet übertragen werden. Gewisse Untersuchungen

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<sup>10</sup> Zur Stellungnahme von Babits zu den Hymnen von Thomas von Aquin: BABITS M., *Bevezetés*, in Ders., *Amor sanctus: Szent szeretet könyve*, Kolozsvár, 1996, 21.



bezüglich der Spiritualität der Barockzeit findet man auch in Ungarn. In diesem Sprachraum werden vor allem die denkgeschichtlichen, folkloristischen Hintergründe dieser kulturgeschichtlichen Epoche untersucht. Spezielle Aufmerksamkeit widmen die Forscher den bislang außer Acht gelassenen Quellen, wie Publikationen religiöser Gruppierungen, die Wunder-Literatur, die emblematische Kunstarten<sup>11</sup> um dadurch eine umfangreichere und gut begründeten Gesamtbild über die Barockzeit zu liefern. Diese Quellen wurden „den Vorwürfen unterschiedlichen wissenschaftstheoretischen Modellen“ des 19. Jahrhunderts zum Opfer gefallen und in ihrem Wert wesentlich gemindert.<sup>12</sup> Dieser praktizierte wissenschaftliche Umgang mit dem Erbe der Vergangenheit brachte dazu, dass das erforschende Bereich des Religiösen auch in Zwielficht gestellt worden ist. Ein echter Forscher geht religiöse Themen, zu denen er keinen persönlichen Zugang hat, gewiss nicht mit „frommen“ Geschmack an. Ein solcher Umgang, sei er zubilligend oder kritisch, kann der objektiven wissenschaftlichen, methodologisch rechtfertigten Auswertung schaden.<sup>13</sup>

Die „Frömmigkeitsforschung“ untersucht – allgemein betrachtet – die Traditionen und Konventionen des individuellen und kollektiven Glaubenslebens, und dessen gesellschaftlichen Schichtung und Ordnung. Sie bezweckt, sich auf geschriebene Quellen und auf objektive Befunde der bildenden Künste berufend, die inneren Zusammenhänge der Glaubensausübung und der Dogmen, bzw. der Machtstrukturen der Gesellschaft zu beleuchten. Die geschichtliche Untersuchung des Glaubenslebens kann die gesellschaftlichen und institutionellen Hintergründe der untersuchten Zeit nicht außer Acht lassen. Sie läuft dementsprechend im Rahmen dialektischer Gegebenheiten ab: zwischen Religiosität und gesellschaftlicher Kontrolle, religiöser Doktrin und Frömmigkeit, religiöser Bildung der Laien und aktiver Teilnahme am Glaubensleben.

<sup>11</sup> Die Bedeutung dieser Forschungsergebnisse werden an dieser Stelle nicht extra behandelt. Diesbezügliche Angaben findet man: TÜSKÉS G., *Búcsújárás a barokk kori Magyarországon a mirákulumirodalom tükreben*, Budapest, 1993; KNAPP É., *Pietás és irodalom: Irodalomkínálat és művelődési program a barokk kori társulati kiadványokban*, Budapest, 2001; TÜSKÉS G., KNAPP É., *Népi vallásosság Magyarországon a 17–18. században*, Budapest, 2001; KNAPP É., TÜSKÉS G., *Populáris grafika a 17–18. században*, Budapest, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> Damit versucht Éva Knapp die Vernachlässigung der kirchlichen Literatur der Barockzeit zu erklären. Sie behauptet, dass erst „heut zu Tag die Rehabilitation der gegenreformatorischen kirchlicher Literatur, und des Schriftgutes der katholischen Aufklärung zustande gebracht wird.“ KNAPP (2001), 5.

<sup>13</sup> D. BREUER, *Absolutistische Staatsreform und neue Frömmigkeitsformen. Vorüberlegungen zu einer Frömmigkeitsgeschichte der frühen Neuzeit aus literarhistorischer Sicht*, in Ders. (Hg.), *Frömmigkeit in der frühen Neuzeit: Studien zur religiösen Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland*, Amsterdam, 1984, 5–6.

Im Folgenden gehen wir die Meditationspraktika der Spätmittelalter und der frühen Neuzeit an und untersuchen derer geistesgeschichtliche und aus der Geschichte der Rhetorik ableitende Zusammenhänge.

### **Meditation – im Anziehungskraft der Theorien über das Heilige und das Schöne**

Das Anstreben Meditationstexte der frühen Neuzeit aufzuarbeiten hat sowohl im Lande (Ungarn, bzw. Rumänien) als auch im Ausland in seiner Intensität stark zugenommen. Neben den sich mit Teilaspekte auseinandersetzen den Artikeln, findet man diesbezüglich auch umfangreichere Monographien, u.a. von Klára Erdei<sup>14</sup> und Gábor Tüskés<sup>15</sup>. Sie bieten Ergebnisse der ganzen Forschungspalette an und betonen die Notwendigkeit des textkonzentrierten Arbeitsumgangs. Wissenschaftlich legitimiert wird die Untersuchung, wenn der Forscher sowohl das theoretische als auch „konkrete“ Material in sein Konzept hineinbezieht.

An dieser Stelle scheint sinnvoll zu sein manche meditationstheoretische Traktate vorzustellen. Wir greifen auf das späte Mittelalter zurück. Thomas Kempis (1379–1471), Autor des berühmten und allgemein bekannten Werkes: *Imitatio Christi*, was Predigte und Meditationstexte über das Leben und die Passionsgeschichte Jesu beinhaltet<sup>16</sup>, bietet in seinem Werk, (mit dem Untertitel *De septem notabilibus punctis cogitandi, de passione Christi* versehenen Teil<sup>17</sup>), mit der Hilfe der Haushalt der Dialektik, in sieben Schritte eine methodologische und systematisierende Anweisung zur Meditation.<sup>18</sup> Die Nützlichkeit dieser Schritte sieht er darin, dass durch sie dem Menschen dazu geholfen wird, den Stoff der Meditation besser und tiefgreifender aufarbeiten zu können.<sup>19</sup>

Thomas stellt uns den vorgeschlagenen Meditationsweges vor: Schritt zum Schritt führt er den Angesprochenen – den er direkt, „persönlich“ anspricht und der sich hier „angesprochen“ fühlen soll, (Thomas verwendet den direkten Modus des Ansprechens: Singular/ zweite Person) – auf den Weg der

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<sup>14</sup> K. ERDEI, *Auf dem Wege zu sich selbst: Die Meditation im 16. Jahrhundert. Eine funktionsanalytische Gattungsbeschreibung*, Wiesbaden, 1990.

<sup>15</sup> TÜSKÉS G., *A XVII. századi elbeszélő egyházi irodalom európai kapcsolatai*, Budapest, 1997.

<sup>16</sup> Die Texte werden aus dem Ausgabe aus 1660 (betreut und herausgegeben von Henricus Sommalii SJ) zitiert: Thomas KEMPIS, *Conciones et meditationes triginta-sex utilissimae = Vener. viri Thomae A Kempis' cvm docti tvm religiosissimi viri, ordinis Canonicorum Regularium D. Augustini Opera Omnia ad autographa ejusdem emendata, atque Etiam teria fere ex Parte nunc aucta & correctata*, Coloniae Agrippinae, 1660, I. 157–294.

<sup>17</sup> KEMPIS, 250–266.

<sup>18</sup> „Pensa igitur primo, quis est, qui haec patitur: secundo, à quibus patitur: tertio quanta patitur: quarto, pro quibus patitur; quinto, quam longo tempore patitur: sexto, in quibus locis patitur: septimo, in quibus membris patitur.“ KEMPIS, 250.

<sup>19</sup> „Multum enim juvant ad intimam compassionem, si haec septem notabilia per ordinem considerentur.“ KEMPIS, 250.

„*amplificatio*“, und bietet die Möglichkeit eines persönlichen Erlebnisses bezüglich der biblischen Passionsgeschichte an, anstatt sich in allgemeine theologische Reflexionen zu verwickeln. Die Meditation läuft zwischenpersönlich ab und fordert einen persönlichen Einsatz. (Veranschaulicht kann man das mit dem folgendem Beispiel: In dem vierten Punkt, in dem er zum Meditationsstoff das Thema: *Für wen Jesus gelitten hat* anbietet, spricht er den Meditierenden an, und versucht ihn, durch die Beantwortung der Fragestellung: „Für dich hat er gelitten“, ins innere Geschehen einzuziehen. Das Geschehene wird damit vergegenwärtigt und der Meditierende sieht sich mit dem Grundparadox der Christologie, mit der Menschwerdung, und der Selbstentäußerung bis zum Tod am Kreuz konfrontiert.<sup>20</sup>

Dieser Mustertext ist in seiner Art der Veranschaulichung und Vermittlung sehr „produktiv“. Wobei der Mensch Einblick in die Inhalte der Christologie bekommt, entpuppt sich aus dem Hintergrund ein klares theologisches System. Der Mensch erfährt die zwingende Kraft der Christologie und doch wird die Freiheit des Meditierenden bewahrt und der eigenen Deutungsmöglichkeiten Raum gelassen.

Ein anderer Theoretiker der *devotio moderna* lenkt das meditative Geschehen noch stärker in die Richtung der Systematisierung hin. Dieser Theologe aus den Niederlanden, der weder Priester noch Mönch, sondern ein Laie ist, ist Johannes Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489). In seinem Werk *Scala meditationis*<sup>21</sup> macht er sich neben der Rhetorik, auch dem Begriffsvorrat der Dialektik und der Philosophie nützlich.

<sup>20</sup> „Nunc ergo attende, & quasi praesentem intueri Christum, qui pro teista patitur. Primo cogita dignitatem personae, & contristare vehementer, quia Deus in carne tam contumeliose tractatur. Ecce altissimus super omnes, infra omnes deprimitur: nobilissimus, dehonestatur; speciosissimus sputis inquinatur; sapientissimus, deridetur; potentissimus ligatur; innocentissimus, flagellatur; sancissimus, spinis coronatur; mitissimus, colaphizatur; ditissimus depauperatur; largissimus spoliatur; castissimus, denudatur; dignissimus, blasphematur; optimus, vituperatur; doctissimus, fatuus reputatur; amantissimus, oditur, veracissimus, abnegatur; dulcissimus, felle potatur: benedictus maledicatur, pacificus, molestatur; justus, accusatur; innoxius, condemnatur; medicus, vulneratur; Dei filius, crucifigitur; immortalis, occiditur; Dominus pro servo suspenditur.“ KEMPIS, 251.

<sup>21</sup> Zum Werk: ENENKEL, *Wessel Gansforts Stellungnahme zum vita activa–vita contemplativa-Problem: De stabilitate meditationum et modo figendi meditationes, Buch I.*, in F. AKKERMAN, A.J. VANDERJAGT (Hg.), *Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and northern humanism*, Leyden–New York–Köln, 1993, 44–70. Die aus dem XVII. Jh. stammende Ausgabe des Textes: *Tractatus de cohibendis cogitationibus, & de modo constituendarum meditationum, Qvi Scala Meditationis vocatur; cum subjecto exemplari, Fratribus in Monte D. Agnetis prope Swollam dedicatus. Nunc primum ex Manuscripto erutus, et ante hac nunquam impressus in M. VVESSELI GANSFORTII GRONINGENSIS, rarae & reconditae doctrine virii, Qui olim LVX MVNDI vulgo dictus fuit, OPERA*, Groningen, 1614.

Das rhetorische Nutzwerk funktioniert bei ihm als Ordnungsprinzip und sogar als Bremse im Fluss der Gedanken.<sup>22</sup> Die Rhetorik hilft die sprachliche Vielheit zur Harmonie. Sein Werk [durch die Vermittlung eines von Joannes Mauburnus (nach 1460–1501) verfassten systematischen, handbuchartigen Buches, was die Methode Gansforts übernahm<sup>23</sup>] übte auf die nachfolgende spirituelle Literatur starken Einfluss aus.<sup>24</sup> Es scheint uns wichtig gewisse Konsequenzen aus seinem Buch abzuleiten und auszuführen.

Mit den speziellen Fragen der Meditation und des meditativen Prozesses setzt sich das IV. Buch der *Scala meditationis*. Ausgangspunkt der Meditationskala ist in die Seele hineingeprägte Ordnung und die Sinnfrage des Menschen.<sup>25</sup> Die meditative Fähigkeit setzt tief, wie das Denk- und das Urteilensvermögen, im Menschen.<sup>26</sup> Den, der die Meditation auf dem vorgeschlagenen Weg übt, beschenkt der Herr mit dem Geschmack seiner Güte.<sup>27</sup> Der Genuss, der Geschmack (*gustatio*) führt zur biblischen und monastischen Tradition zurück, indem der Begriff eine aus der Bibel, genauer, aus dem Psalm 34 (33) stammende Metapher ist: der Geschmack, der Genuss der Güter des Herrn rettet die Seele von den unreinen und schmutzigen Gedanken und wie das reine wiederkäuende Tier, so bekommt die Seele des Menschen die Güte des Herrn zu spüren.<sup>28</sup> Dieses Bild ist urchristlicher Herkunft. Die *ruminatio* wurde von der Benediktin'schen Spiritualität aufgegriffen, in der das biblische Bild<sup>29</sup> mit den Schritten der Meditation zusammengeführt wurde<sup>30</sup>. Die allegorische Schriftauslegung beruft sich auf diese Tradition und wagt die Andeutung, dass der

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<sup>22</sup> „Quod conferunt loci Rhetoricales ad fluxum mentis refranandum, et quam utilia sunt copia seminaria sapienter mentibus.“ GANSFORT, 225.

<sup>23</sup> Das Buch erschien 1494, hat später mehrere Auflagen erlebt. Die hier verwendete Ausgabe: Joannes MAUBURNUS, *Rosetvm exercitiorvm spiritivalim, et sacrarvm meditationvm*, Duaci 1620.

<sup>24</sup> Den Einfluss Gansforts kann man bis zum *Exerziensbuch* des Ignatius de Loyola eindeutig feststellen.

<sup>25</sup> „Scala autem [...] rationalis vel interna scala dicitur, quia totis gradibus intra nos est.“ GANSFORT, 281.

<sup>26</sup> „[...] in nobis est meditandi potestas, considerandi et cogitandi.“ GANSFORT, 285.

<sup>27</sup> „exercitanti se in scala dabit Dominus gustare, quoniam suavis est Dominus.“ GANSFORT, 282.

<sup>28</sup> „Dabit profecto Dominus vacanti ab immundis et sordidis cogitationibus, tanquam animali mundo et ruminanti, gustum suavitatis, ut sentiat de Domino in bonitate, et gustet quoniam suavis est Dominus.“ GANSFORT, 282.

<sup>29</sup> Vgl. Lev 11,3 und Deut 14,6: laut alttestamentlicher Vorschriften durften die nicht un-reinen wiederkäuenden Tiere gegessen werden.

<sup>30</sup> Klassische Schritte der Benediktinischen Gebetsart – wie bekannt – sind: *lectio, meditatio, contemplatio*. Sie versuchen durch das Lesen im Geist des Gebetes und die den Intellectus erfordernden Meditation, den Menschen umwandelnden, in die Nähe Gottes führenden Prozeß zu artikulieren.

Mensch, der sich immer mit dem Wort Gottes auseinandersetzt, dem Wiederkäuenden ähnelt.<sup>31</sup>

Unser nächster Theologe bindet Gebet und Rhetorik zusammen. Der Jesuit Jeremias Drexel (1581–1638) aus Bayern geht in seinem 1636 entstandenen Werk *Rhetorica caelestis*<sup>32</sup> aus einer „speziellen“ Prämisse aus. Seiner Meinung nach, waren an der himmlischen Rhetorik, nicht nur besondere und gebildete Redner, wie Cyprian, Augustinus, Hieronimus, Ambrosius, Lactantius u.a. beteiligt, sondern alle heilige (= die Heiligkeit anstrebende) Menschen auch.<sup>33</sup> Die Gabe des Meditierens und des Gebetes entzieht Gott von keinem Menschen.<sup>34</sup> Das auf einer anspruchsvollen lateinischen Sprache erfasste Werk bevorzugt das theologisch begründete humanistische Ideal, was sich sowohl in der Struktur des Werkes, als auch in den dem Leser gegebenen Ratschlägen bezüglich des Verrichtens des Gebetes merken lässt. Die angezielte *ordo*, die klare Systematisierung durchzieht das ganze Werk. Wir kommen zeitlich nicht dazu das außerordentliche Symbol- und Darstellungssystem des Werkes anzugehen, wir beziehen uns auf am Rande des spirituellen und literarischen Wertesystems zur Erscheinung kommende Ordnung.

Das 10. Kapitel des I. Buches, im dem die Elemente des Gebetes angegangen werden, zieht gewisse Parallelen zwischen dem Gebet und der rhetorischen Rede. Wie man in der Rhetorik über vier Redeteile reden kann, so in den des Gebetes auch. Bevor der Autor dieses Parallel angeht, zitiert er einen in der Sache der Jura beheimateten berühmten Menschen: „Wir Deutschen [...] auf gefährlicher und unkluger Art an die Zukunft orientiert, bevorzugen unsere Söhne in ferne Länder zu schicken, und bringen damit nicht nur ihre moralische Reinheit, sondern auch ihr Leben in Gefahr. Was für einen Nutz diese Wallfahrten haben? Dass sie die Sprache unterschiedlicher Nationen lernen. [...] Wenn sie Heim kehren, vernachlässigen die Sprache ihrer Heimat und ihres Volkes, sie können nicht mehr auf Deutsch reden, nur stottern als Kinder vor sich hin.“<sup>35</sup> Die Erklärung zu diesem Exemplum: Es ist lobenswert, wenn irgend-

<sup>31</sup> Beispieltex-te in: Fidelis RUPPERT, *Meditáció – rumináció*, in SOMORJAI Á. (Hg.), *Szerzetesség, monasztikum, bencésség*, Pannonhalma 1999, 170. Vgl. auch: AUGUSTINUS, *Enarr. in Ps XXXVI, Sermo III. 5*, in: CCSL 38, 371.

<sup>32</sup> Jeremias DREXEL, *Rhetorica caelestis*, in *Ders., Opera omnia dvobvs volvminibvs*, Moguntiae, 1645, 94–196.

<sup>33</sup> „In forensi Rhetorica excelluerunt Cyprianus, Augustinus, Hieronymus, Ambrosius, Lactantius: in Rhetorica caelesti, non ii solum, quos modo nominavi, sed omnes omnino sancti homines eminuerunt.“ DREXEL, 98.

<sup>34</sup> „Donum orationis nemini Deus denegat.“ DREXEL, 96.

<sup>35</sup> „Nos Germani [...] prudenter sed periculose fatui, filios nostros in regiones exteras amandamus ingenti sumptu, & saepe cum iactura pudicitiae, nonnunquam etiam vitae. Quis harum peregrinationum finis? ut diversarum nationum idioma condiscant. [...] Cum redeunt, linguam patriam & vernaculam ignorant, germanice loqui nesciunt, cum infantibus balbutiunt.“ DREXEL, 124.

jemand unterschiedliche Nationen auf ihrer eigenen Sprache begrüßen kann, umgestritten wird der Wert dieser Kenntnis, wenn wir vernachlässigen mit Gott zu reden. Dies verlangt nach einem anderen Stil, anderer Sprache und Rhetorik. Wir wissen vieles, dessen Nicht-Wissen viel nützlicher und heiliger wäre.<sup>36</sup>

Nachdem der Autor die wesentlichen Unterschiede zwischen der himmlischen und irdischen Rhetorik festgelegt hatte, führt er Parallele Zweitheiten aus: *exordium* und *humilitas*, *narratio* und *attentio*, *confirmatio* und *fiducia*, *peroratio* und *patiens perseverantia*.<sup>37</sup> Er systematisiert und erklärt jede einzelne Zweitheit. Die Zusammengehörigkeit oder die Möglichkeit des Zusammenpassens der angeführten Begriffe, bzw. Verhaltensweise versucht er mit biblischen und patristischen Argumenten unterzumauern und zu beweisen. Er bedient sich auch hagiographischen Argumenten und Bildern der antiken Welt. Er strebt sich an sich dem Vorwurf zu entziehen, dass seine Parallele eigensinnig seien. Wie die Einführung (*exordium*) die Grundvoraussetzung einer erfolgreichen Rede ist, so ist die Demut (*humilitas*) Grunderfordernis in der Ansprache Gottes. Das Objekt (*narratio*) der Rede und die Aufmerksamkeit (*attentio*) im Gebet werden in einen intellektuellen Moment zusammengeführt. Den Beweis (*confirmatio*) und das Vertrauen (*fiducia*) bindet der Glaube zusammen. Zwischen dem Schluss (*peroratio*) und der geduldigen Ausharren (*patiens perseverantia*) findet er gerade in dem zwischen den Beiden bestehenden Widerspruch: der Schluss beendet einen Gedankengang oder eine Rede, die *patiens perseverantia* lässt den Weg zur Transzendenz auch nach dem religiösen Akt offen. In diesem Offen-Sein erreicht der Betende den Stand des unaufhörlichen Betens.<sup>38</sup>

Uns bleibt an dieser Stelle nichts Anderes übrig, als die Zusammengehörigkeit des Heiligen und des Schönen wieder in Erinnerung zu rufen. Die angesprochene Zusammengehörigkeit ist in der Gottesebenbildlichkeit des Menschen verankert, und ist nicht zu wundern, dass manche Meditations-theorien behaupten, dass das Verlangen nach Gott – die himmlische Rhetorik oder das richtige Gebet – eine Tugend und zugleich Kunst: *ars devotionis* ist.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> „Enimvero dicite, hi linguarum tam gnari, cum Deo quo loquuntur sermone, num patrio & nativo, an peregrino? Certe alius hic stilus, alia lingua, alia est Rhetorica. Heu quam multa scimus, quorum ignorantia utilior esset ac sanctior.“ DREXEL, 124.

<sup>37</sup> DREXEL, 123–128.

<sup>38</sup> Vgl. Lk 18,1.

<sup>39</sup> Vgl. DREXEL, 174: „nos istud laboris exhausimus, ut ostenderemus caelestem Rhetoricam, seu recte orandi scientiam, & artem, et virtutem esse utilissimam.“

## Heiligkeit und Schönheit: Robert Bellarmin – über die Sein-Stufen der geschaffenen Lebewesen

Das Werk des in der Lehre tätigen Jesuiten, Robert Bellarmin (1542–1621), der den Kardinaltitel erhalten hat und 1930 heilig gesprochen worden ist, wird in Bezug zur Kontroverstheologie und aus kirchenpolitischen Aspekten ausgewertet. Sein Hauptwerk, ein dreibändiger theologischer Traktat *Disputationes de controversiis christianae fidei adversus huius temporis haereticos* (Ingolstadt 1586, 1588, 1593) errang trotz Widersprüche aus dem Kreise katholischer Theologen und von manchen seiner Ordensbrüder<sup>40</sup> auch im Kreise vielen Protestanten hohes Ansehen. Viele fanden den Weg zur Katholischen Kirche dank diesem Werk zurück.<sup>41</sup> Seine Dispute sind zum unerlässlichen Handbuch in der theologischen Bildung geworden. Nicht zu wundern, dass dieses Werk von einem der führenden Diplomaten der Jesuiten, Antonio Possevino (1553–1611) als das „*opus absolutissimum*“ genannt worden ist. Péter Pázmány brachte aus seiner Romfahrt (1632) 20 Exemplare dieses Werkes für die Universitätsbibliothek von Nagyszombat nach Hause.<sup>42</sup>

*De ascensione mentis in Deum* gehört zu seinen späteren Werken. Es ist sowohl seiner literarischen Gattung als auch seiner Thematik nach, wenn auch nicht einzigartig, doch sehr bedeutend und hat sich in kürzester Zeit hohes Ansehen erworben. Wie es der Autor zugibt, wurde das Werk während der im S. Andrea zu Rom gehaltenen Exerzitien 1614 fertig gestellt.<sup>43</sup> Aufgelegt wurde 1615 gleichzeitig in mehreren Städten. Seine Popularität bezeugt die Tatsache, dass kurz nach seiner ersten Auflage schon auf Englisch übersetzt worden ist. In den folgenden 4 Jahren wurde öfters auf Latein neu aufgelegt und auf Italienisch, Spanisch, Portugiesisch, Französisch, Tschechisch, Chinesisch,

<sup>40</sup> Texte, vor allem über die mit dem Jesuiten Szántó Arator István geführte Polemik, in: T. LÖHR, P. Stephan Szántó S.J. und die Theologie, in *Korrespondenzblatt für die Alumnus des Pontificium Collegium Hungaricum* 1 (1986) 27–58; BITSKEY I., *Bellarmino-Rezeption und Antibellarminismus in Ungarn 1590–1625*, in D. BREUER (Hrsg.), *Religion und Religiosität im Zeitalter des Barock*, Wiesbaden, 1995, 809–815.

<sup>41</sup> Allgemein bekanntes Beispiel für diese Art Umkehr ist die von Vörösmarti Mihály, der in trüber Gefangenschaft nach dem Werk Bellarmins griff um daraus Kraft zu schöpfen. Siehe dazu: JANKOVICS J., NYERGES J. (Hg.), *Vörösmarti Mihály kálvinista prédikátor megtérése históriája*, Budapest 1992, bes. 34–40.

<sup>42</sup> Vgl. ÖRY M., *Pázmány Péter tanulmányi évei*, Eisenstadt 1970, 96–97.

<sup>43</sup> Dies berichtet er selber in dem Empfehlungsbrief: „Superiore mense Septembri, libellum, de ascensione mentis in Deum per scalas rerum creatarum, ut potui, Domino adiuvante, confeci.“ = *Libellum hunc de ascensione mentis in Deum, per rerum creatarum scalas, reverendissimi card. lis Bellarmini [...] E Typographia nostra Coloniae Agrippinae, ipso S. Ruperti die sacro. Anno MDCXV*, 3. Die lateinischen Texte werden aus dieser Ausgabe übernommen. [Im Folgenden: BELLARMINO]

Griechisch, Deutsch, Russisch, Polnisch und Eillyrisch übersetzt.<sup>44</sup> Die ungarische Übersetzung ließ auch nicht lange auf sich warten: 1639 übersetzte das Werk Bellarmins Tasi Gáspár, Hofsekretär des Esterházy Miklós.<sup>45</sup>

Dem Grundgedanke des Büchleins nach ist die Suche Gottes eine unerlässliche, moralische, heilsnotwendige Erfordernis. Die Gotteserkenntnis erfolgt den Gedanken über die geschaffene Welt zufolge. Die hierarchische Ordnung der Welt, die steigernde Stufen [„garádichok“] der Schöpfung führen zu Gott. Man merkt leicht, dass der Autor des Werkes mit einem enormen theologischen Geschick schöpfungstheologische und eschatologische Thesen zusammenführt um daraus logische Konsequenzen für die Gotteslehre zu ziehen und moralische Lehre für die Nachfolger Christi festzulegen. Sein Werk ist systematisch aufgebaut. Um die eigene Zwecke besser herauszustellen und die Leser auf den Weg des Verstehens zu helfen, greift der Autor auf die biblischen Pilgerpsalmen<sup>46</sup> zurück. Er übernimmt die Zahl dieser Psalmen und dementsprechend teilt sein Werk in 15 Kapitel [15 symbolische Stufen] auf. Die Einteilung in klassischen 7+8 Teile, die wiederum symbolischen Wert besitzt, ist im Werk leicht zu merken. Die ersten sieben Teile sind dem Menschen und der sichtbaren Welt gewidmet. Die folgenden 8 Teile beschreiben die metaphysischen Sphären und beziehen sich auf den „vernünftigen Geist“, auf die Engel und auf die Wesens- und Wirk-Eigenschaften Gottes. Diese Struktur geht in ihrem Aufbau der patristischen Tradition nach. Die Zahl „7“ bezieht sich auf die Tage der Schöpfung, die „8“ deutet auf die Seligpreisungen hin. Der Autor will den Blick des Lesers auf die innere Dynamik der Bibel richten; und den Aufschwung von dem Alten ins Neue Testament herausheben.<sup>47</sup>

Dermaßen selbstverständlich ist dem Autor die allgemeine Gültigkeit der von Pseudo Dionysius gestellten Wege zur Erlangung der Gotteserkenntnis<sup>48</sup>, dass er diese Quelle der übernommenen Thesen gar nicht erwähnt.

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<sup>44</sup> J. BRODRICK, *Robert Bellarmine: Saint and Scholar*, Westminster–Maryland 1961, 387, und C. SOMMERVOGEL (Hrsg.), *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, I., Bruxelles, 1233–1236.

<sup>45</sup> *Elménkek Istenben föl-menetelérül a' teremtet állatok Garádichin. Robertus Bellarminus Jésuiták Rendiböl-való Cardinal könyvekhéje. Mellyet mostan Magyarúl irt és ki nyomtattott Tasi Gáspár Bartfán. Klösz Jakab által, 1639 eszt.* (RMNY 1761). [Im Folgenden: TASI]

<sup>46</sup> Die mit dem 120. (119.) Psalm begonnene Sammlung trägt die lateinische Überschrift: *cantica ascensionum* oder *cantica graduum*. Sie beinhaltet Psalmen aus der Zeit nach dem babylonischen Exil. „Es mag sein, dass die jüdische Tradition sich danach gerichtet hat, dass die Leviten diese Psalmen an gewissen Feiertagen auf die Stufen der zum Tempel führenden Treppen [in Zahl 15] gesungen haben“. Siehe: DOBSZAY L. (Hrsg.), *Zsoltárelmékedések, zsoltármagyarázatok*, Budapest, 1997, 193.

<sup>47</sup> DOBSZAY, 196.

<sup>48</sup> Die klassischen Wege der Gotteserkenntnis: 1. *via affirmationis vel attributionis*: in der Welt erfahrenen einfachen Vollkommenheiten (Weisheit, Güte, Schönheit u.a.) übertragen wir auf Gott. 2. *via remotionis vel negatíva*: alle Unvollkommenheiten (z.B.: zornig, eifersüchtig, neidisch) sollen wir, was Gott betrifft negieren, und sprechen Gott Eigenschaften ab, die sich



Die einzelnen Kapitel untersuchen die Vollkommenheit und Schönheit der geschaffenen Dinge, der Menschen und der Seelen den spirituellen Kriterien nach. Der Autor macht sich der Fragestellungen und Schemen der dialektischen Methodologie zum Nutzen.

Wir berufen uns nur auf einen einzigen Gedankengang des Werkes. In dem ausgewählten Teil werden die 4 Grundelemente der Existenz ins Zentrum gestellt. Das Büchlein Bellarmins erwähnt zuerst das Fundament der Welt. Da kehrt der menschliche Körper mittels der Anziehungskraft der Erde aus der Luft [Äther] zurück. Aus dem Gesetz der Physik leitet der Autor metaphysische Konsequenzen ab: „Die Seele des Menschen kann weder in der Mächte des Himmels herumschwebend, noch in Reichtümer aus Lehm, noch in den weichen, angenehmen und doch stinkenden Genüssen der Wässer, noch im falschen und selbstgenugsamen Glanz der menschlichen Vernunft zur Ruhe kommen, nur allein in Gott, der Ziel aller Seelen ist, nur in Ihm beruhigt sich wirklich die menschliche Seele.“<sup>49</sup>

In einem zweiten Punkt spricht der Autor von einer anderen Analogie. Wie „eine gute Amme der Menschen und vielerlei lebendigen Tiere“<sup>50</sup> ermahnt er, dass der Mensch nie vergessen darf Sorgen zu tragen um das „Gärtchen der Seele“. Er soll sich alles unternehmen, dass dieser Garten des „himmlischen Sämanns“ keine Dornen oder Klette trägt.<sup>51</sup> Das Irdische, dessen Ertrag Gold und Silber ist, soll eindeutigen und konkreten moralischen Erfordernissen untergezogen werden: Aufgabe des Menschen ist, statt vergängliche Reichtümer nachzulaufen, unvergängliche im Himmel zu erzielen und der Notdürftigen zu helfen.<sup>52</sup>

Der Mensch, der sich an der Schönheit und Ordnung der geschaffenen Welt wundert, erlebt eine eigenartige Dynamik in seiner Gottesbeziehung: die wundernde Natur-Erkenntnis bildet eine Art (Vor)Stufe der Gotteserkenntnis. Die Vollkommenheiten der Welt führen den Menschen im Geiste der *via affirmationis* und *eminentiae* zum vollkommenen Gott. („Er ließ die geschaffenen Tiere vermehren und gab jedem von ihnen aus seiner Güte und Vollkommenheit. Diese bezeugen [bilden die Richtschnur woran die Vollkommenheit Gottes gemessen werden kann] die Schönheit und Vollkommenheit Gottes.“<sup>53</sup>). Um die Gefahr des Pantheismus zu vermeiden fügt der Autor

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aus dem endlichen Seinsmodus ergeben, wie Körperlichkeit, folgerechte Denkweise. 3. *via eminentiae*: die Gott zugesprochenen Eigenschaften werden im höchsten Grad behauptet (z.B. im Unterschied zum Menschen ist Gott unendlich und unbegreiflich Weise). Dazu: WEISSMAHR B., *Isten léte és mivolta*, Róma, 1980, 129–136.

<sup>49</sup> TASI, 69–70.

<sup>50</sup> TASI, 65.

<sup>51</sup> TASI, 80.

<sup>52</sup> TASI, 81–87.

<sup>53</sup> TASI, 40.

diesem Gedanken zu: alles Geschaffne „ist vergänglich.“<sup>54</sup> Die *via remotionis* anwendend spricht er alle möglichen Formen der Begrenztheit, wie etwa die Vergänglichkeit, von Gott ab.

Wenn die irdische Schönheit zur Bewunderung bringt, dann soll unsere Seele die Erkenntnis deren Vergänglichkeit zur Abwendung von dem „Zeitlichen“ hinleiten. „Wenn Gold, Silber, Perlen und Wertsteine in dein Gedächtnis und vor deine Augen kommen, sag in deinem Herzen: Mein Gott, der sich selber schenken will, ist mir lieber und wertvoller als all diese, die ich verachte.“<sup>55</sup> Diese Haltung führt den Menschen auf den Weg der *via eminentiae*. Der Mensch bekennt endlich, dass „Gottes Dasein [...] unendlich vollkommener [als alles Geschaffene] ist.“<sup>56</sup>

Die Thematik des Buches weist erstens auf die Schöpfungsgedanken des Heiligen Bonaventura,<sup>57</sup> von dem der Autor biblische Motive und die theologische These übernimmt, der nach die geschaffene Welt Gottes „Handprägung“ (*vestigium*) in sich trägt. Man findet im Werk, zweitens, gewisse Konnotationen mit dem theologischen Gut der Scholastik und des *doctor angelicus*: Thomas von Aquin.<sup>58</sup>

### **Anstatt einer Zusammenfassung**

Hoffentlich ist diesem Vortag gelungen die gegenseitige Befruchtung der literaturwissenschaftlichen und theologischen Methoden vorzustellen. In vielen Werken des Spätmittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit ist unübersehbar, dass die intellektuell begründete Spiritualität die Reform der angewendeten Rhetorik und der Sprache mit sich brachte. Damit bezeugten die Autoren dieser Zeit, dass die „profane“ Rhetorik zum Träger der theologischen und spirituellen Inhalte werden kann.

Am Beispiel der ausgeführten Texte haben wir das „Schönheitsideal“ der untersuchten Epoche begriffen. Es wurde gezeigt, was die metaphysischen und erkenntnistheoretischen Kategorien des Ästhetischen meinen, und inwieweit der Schönheitsbegriff [des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit] im Bereich der Theologie angewendet werden kann.

Der Vortrag erzielte Interferenzpunkte unterschiedlicher Wissenschaften zu aufzeigen. Gewiss, hätte man viele andere Möglichkeiten der interdisziplinären

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<sup>54</sup> TASI, 83.

<sup>55</sup> TASI, 41.

<sup>56</sup> TASI, 39–40.

<sup>57</sup> Bonaventura: *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*.

<sup>58</sup> Die Jesuiten [und Bellarmin] übernahmen nur nach langen Überlegungen das Erbe des Thomas von Aquin. Thomas galt für sie nicht als die einzige und unbestreitbare theologische Autorität. Vgl. SZABÓ F., *A teológus Pázmány: A grazi „theologia scholastica“ Pázmány művében*, Róma 1990, 42–54.

nären Forschung vorstellen können. Sinnvoll wäre die sprachlichen Grenzen der Übersetzungen der lateinischen Texte aufzuzeigen oder die Ertragskapazität der nationalen Sprachen zu untersuchen. Vielerorts wirkten die lateinischen Texte als Katalysatoren auf die Nationalsprachen.

## CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN HUNGARY

GYÖRGY BENYIK<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** The paper provides a brief overview of the Catholic theological education in Hungary, its organisation, divisions, and topics. A major restructuring began only in the seventies and was finalised only in the mid-nineties. It was only then that staff and student numbers, a logically structured curriculum, and the publication of Hungarian theological textbooks approached the situation in other countries. The establishment of a Catholic university was certainly a highly significant event, even if it was not accompanied by any growth in the size of the Faculty of Theology. Another important development was the foundation of the Institute of Studies for the Religious, which was the first theological institution to encourage a comprehensive study of the history of religious orders in Hungary. Large numbers of lay students now study at the metropolitan and provincial theological schools. Their similarly large presence in the postgraduate sphere has established them as the dominant new force in comparison with which the number of seminarians and religious who are involved in theological study can only drop. Hungarian higher education, the theological sphere included, is uniformly regulated. The system of financial support for theological institutions and students, however, is fragile, and student numbers show no sign of increasing any further.

### Introduction

In the early church, the teaching of theology and the training of priests were, for the most part, separate processes. The teaching of theology was, in fact, far more akin to the training of persons belonging to religious orders, since the latter not only committed themselves to a more ascetic way of life but their independence also allowed them to study the books of the Bible more intensively, and to bear more faithful and convincing witness to the living presence of God. It was for this reason that the theology of the early church were expressed in either hymn form or through synodic texts. The establishment in 1250 of a faculty of theology at the University of Paris, where Saint Thomas Aquinas taught, arguably represents the start of modern Catholic theological education. Many mendicant friars were no longer in distant monasteries but were teaching theology and the ascetic life in the educational institutions of cities. At that time, the faculty of theology, like those of law and medicine, attracted crowds of students, an education in theology having then become virtually synonymous with a training for the priesthood. It was only

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well after the spread of the Reformation that the study of theology by the laity at tertiary level became a feature of the Catholic educational system. This meant that students who did not intend to commit themselves to a religious life through the priesthood or as a religious could, nevertheless, read theology.

In this paper, I do not provide a detailed overview of the historical development of Catholic theological education, nor of international directions in theology in the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> I will restrict myself to the field of Catholic theological education in Hungary, with only an occasional glance at the most important aspects of development internationally. My aim is to make the current situation in Hungary clear to a cultured readership. At the present time, students studying theology are taught according to the agendas of several educational systems. The majority of lay students enrol for the diploma in theological education, which takes four years to complete. Certain institutions, however, such as the School of Theological Studies in Szeged, have been given the right, in addition, to offer a degree in religious education.<sup>3</sup> Two streams exist within the curriculum for the degree, both of which stretch across ten semesters: one focusing upon religious education; and the other upon theology. The latter course of study is linked to training for the priesthood. In this overview, I will not deal with the courses and requirements for the diploma, since, as a general rule, the core units in theology (with distinctions in respect of the work-load and the level of achievement required) are the same for both courses, although the number of contact hours is lower for diploma students. Obviously, the curriculum for the undergraduate diploma in teacher education contains courses in pedagogy and psychology as required by the Department of Education.

The “Bologna-process”, which is currently being introduced nationwide, also affects Catholic theological education at tertiary level. This conceptual system will radically alter the structuring of tertiary education in Hungary. A discussion of its consequences, however, would step outside the scope of this paper.

Since no system has been established to aid the easy sharing of bibliographical information amongst members of different religious denominations, I will list, to the best of my ability, the books which have provided the conceptual backbone of contemporary Catholic theological education.

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<sup>2</sup> For recent theological overviews, see P. EICHERE, *Neues Handbuch theologischer Grundbegriffe*, München, 1991; *The Documents of the Second Vatican Council*, Budapest 1986; H. DENZINGER, *Kompendium der Glaubensbekenntnisse und kirchlichen Lehrentscheidungen*, Freiburg–Basel–Rom–Wien, 1991; H. VORGRIMLER, R. van der GUCHT (ed.), *Bilanz der Theologie im 20. Jahrhundert: Perspektiven, Strömungen, Motive in der christlichen und nichtchristlichen Welt*, Freiburg, 1969–1970.

<sup>3</sup> University education is provided at the theological schools in Nyíregyháza, Győr, and Szeged, these Institutes being affiliated with a university

## **The Parameters of Catholic Theological Education**

### **The Training of Priests**

The teaching of theology within the Catholic Church in Hungary takes place in a large number of tertiary institutions and is, in most cases, conjoined with the education of diocesan priests and religious.<sup>4</sup> This is because, in earlier times, the church was not concerned to provide lay Catholics with an education in theology. The teaching and spiritual training of seminarians took place mostly in buildings that housed between thirty and sixty candidates for the priesthood, who were taught and given spiritual guidance by priests with either a diploma or degree. Part or all of the staff lived under the same roof as the seminarians, taking meals, undertaking spiritual exercises, saying mass, and reciting the office with them. Given that the life of the seminary was a regulated communal one, they had ample time to provide their charges with spiritual guidance. Around four hundred seminarians and religious are still being educated in this manner today. According to the figures for 2005, 283 seminarians were being taught at Catholic theological institutions in that year. If we take into account students from religious orders, the number of those intending to serve the church in a more exclusive and dedicated way at the end of their studies, rises to over three hundred.

### **Lay Theological Education**

The structure and organisation of the traditional cleric-centred system changed fundamentally once lay Catholics began studying theology. In September, 1978, Tamás Nyíri initiated a correspondence course in theology at the Institute of Religious Studies in Budapest, and later, in 1983, in Szeged. From the 1990s onwards, lay students could always be found enrolled at all the Catholic theological institutes in the country;<sup>5</sup> indeed, in some newly-established institutes the teaching of lay students has become the primary aim. In 2005, 35 seminarians, 20 student Franciscans, and approximately 370 lay students attended the School of Religious Studies in Szeged. According to

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<sup>4</sup> The institutes that provide an education in theology are: Apor Vilmos Catholic University College, Zsámbék (formerly Catholic College for Teacher Training of Zsámbék); the Theological Institute of Eger; the Theological Institute of Esztergom; the Theological Institute of Győr; the Central Seminary of Budapest; Martineum Academy for Adult Training, Szombathely; the Faculty of Theology of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest; the Theological Institute of Pécs; the Sapientia Theological Institute for Religious, Budapest; the Theological Institute of Szeged; the Saint Athanasius Greek Catholic Theological Institute of Nyíregyháza (formerly, Greek Catholic Theological); the Saint Bernard Theological Institute of Zirc; the Archbishopial Theological Institute of Veszprém; the Vitéz János Catholic College for Teacher Training of Esztergom.

<sup>5</sup> According to Hungarian church statistics for 2005, there were 6.021.945 Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians, 1992 priests and about one hundred members of religious orders.

certain estimates, around 1800 interested lay people enter the system yearly. If this is taken into account, then around 27,000 students have taken part in Catholic theological education over the last 15 years. They are the students who, within the framework of the five-year course, have completed much the same programme of studies as prospective priests and religious in training. (I will not discuss here the courses in theology that are run by the various dioceses, which attempt to provide training in the teaching of religion within the time-space of one to three years – they involve between 50 and 100 students per diocese. Their diploma is recognised only by the church). Therefore, alongside each priest, there are 13.5 lay Catholics with theological degrees. This represents a completely new state of affairs in the history of the Church in Hungary.

### **Twentieth-Century Conflicts in Catholic Theology**

After the crisis, which affected Catholic theology at the turn of the nineteenth century, it is hardly surprising that the church began to turn in upon itself during the papacy of Leo XIII (1878–1903). In the study of the Bible, early Christianity and the history of dogma protestant researchers outstripped the Catholics. But the church finally became closed in only in the twentieth century, above all when exegesis, research into the legacy of the Church Fathers and interest in the history of religion intensified. For want of space, I will mention only the most significant names. Under the influence of Alfred Loisy (1857–1940), M. J. Lagrange's journal, the "École Biblique", appeared in Jerusalem. J. Huby SJ released his Encyclopaedia of the History of Religions (1919), and serial publications of the writings of the church fathers also appeared, for example, "Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium" (1903). The "Benedictine Review" (1909) began approaching the study of theology in a way that departed markedly from the previous tradition. If the condemnation of modernism brought about a crisis, Pope Pius XII's encyclical, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, brought at least a measure of respite to biblical researchers and theologians.

In the field of moral theology, an oppressive influence, which had never been experienced before came from right-wing and left-wing political ideologies. The Nazi and communist regimes both wanted to make Christian morality serve their own purposes.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, the traditional education in theology failed to address the age's most pressing problems and anxieties.

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<sup>6</sup> The most important official church documents that deal with this question are the papal encyclicals, *Casti connubii* (1930), educating the young people for chastity; *Quadragesimo anno* (1931), which speaks for the first time about the morality of striking; *Nova impendent* (1931), which distinguishes between political and economic motivations for striking.

In Hungary, this was made evident by the fact that students studied in Latin until 1960 and also took their exams (also in Latin) in a theology, which they later never used. The theological periodicals and magazines, on the other hand, under the guise of pastoral and spiritual literature, dealt with completely different concerns. Ottokár Prohászka (1858–1927), the church's best and most influential journalist, was a bishop who, on account of his statements concerning the church's possession of large estates, was investigated by Rome because of what were taken to be his left-wing sympathies. In contrast, the Hungarian press of the first half of the twentieth century branded him as a right-wing ideologue. While Catholic theologians fought against the Third Reich and communism, some from among their ranks were attacked by traditionalists on account of their ecumenical theology. After World War II, the issue of secularism came into the foreground, at least in Europe. The Second Vatican Council can be seen as a form of response which transformed Catholic theology in a way that could hardly have been imagined, and which engendered terror in conservative circles. The leading theologians of the council grouped themselves around the journal, *Concilium*, which, at that time, appeared in four languages. One of its founders was Professor Joseph Ratzinger, who was elected Pope Benedict XVI. in April, 2005. The Hungarian theologians, András Szennai Abbot-Primate of Pannonhalma, and Tamás Nyíri belonged to this circle. In the same period, Ferenc Gál experimented with a new handbook of dogma that was based strongly on scripture and which was relatively low-key in its restrictively dogmatic emphasis. Unfortunately, in the 1950s, the teaching of Catholic theology in Hungary lost contact with developments elsewhere. A revival only began very slowly in the 1970s.

### **Differences in the Education of Lay and Clerical Students**

One of the main differences between the teaching of lay and clerical students is that prospective priests must sit for an examination in what is called 'jurisdiction' before they can be ordained.<sup>7</sup> They have to know the procedures upon which the valid and lawful administering of the sacraments depends, as well as practical aspects of church administration. This is understandable given that pastoral and moral theology do not overlap in every detail. Besides, lay students are not required to take courses in public speaking and they have fewer contact hours in church music. The courses for cantors that are held by the various dioceses also offer students the opportunity to study church music more deeply.

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<sup>7</sup> According to figures, 21.000 students received some form of theological education during the past 15 years. The total number will thus be 27.000 plus 21.000, i.e. 48.000. This number, however, provides a far too promising (indeed, illusory) picture since, in many cases, the same students appear at the different stages of theological education. Of these, only a few hundred take part in theological education at university level.



## **Postgraduate Education**

Postgraduate education is the preserve of the Faculty of Theology at Pázmány Péter Catholic University. As a Catholic university, it has academic relations on an official level with other Catholic universities. The Catholic University of Leuven has an independent school of Hungarian studies where students can be sent.

The majority of Hungarian catholic theologians complete their postgraduate studies in Rome. They have a choice of two colleges; one is the Papal Hungarian College, the other is the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum, which is a Jesuit institution. Students travel from the colleges to study at one of Rome's papal universities, the best known being the Gregorian University, which is also administered by the Jesuits, and which has an independent Institutum Biblicum. Students of canon law, as a general rule, attend the Lateran University. The Benedictines send their students to the University of Saint Anselm.

The religious orders cooperate with one another, and send their students to a university which stands close to one of their religious houses. They study in Vienna, Nijmegen and London. The Jesuits prefer to send their students to Fordham University in New York. Their other traditional centre for postgraduate studies is Innsbruck, but they also send regularly one or two students to the Sorbonne.

It would be difficult to present an adequate summary of international peregrination in the field of postgraduate theological studies in the contemporary world. Lay theological students, with the help of a Fullbright or Tempus scholarship, can now choose which postgraduate institution they would like to attend. A bishop or religious superior sends the seminarians, student religious, or ordained priests to a specified academic institution.

## **Summary**

While the picture that I have given of Catholic theological education in Hungary in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is hardly complete, I hope it provides a glimpse into its organisation, divisions, and topics. A major restructuring – which was necessitated by circumstances that do not need to be spelled out – began only in the seventies and came to an end only in the mid-nineties. It was only then that staff and student numbers, a logically organised curriculum, and the publication of theological textbooks in the native language were on a relative par with the situation in other countries. The establishment of a Catholic university was certainly a highly significant event, even if it was not accompanied by any growth in the size of the Faculty of Theology. Another important development was the foundation of the Institute of Studies for the Religious, which was the first theological institution to encourage a

comprehensive study of the history of religious orders in Hungary. Large numbers of lay students now study at the metropolitan and provincial theological schools, as mentioned earlier. Their similarly large presence in the postgraduate sphere has established them as the dominant new force in comparison with which the number of seminarians and religious who are involved in theological study can only decrease. Hungarian higher education, the theological sphere included, is uniformly regulated. The system of financial support for Theological Institutes, and students, however, is fragile, and student numbers show no sign of increasing any further.

Greater coordination between the educational institutions of the various Christian churches needs to be made a priority. I am certain that the re-establishment of higher education in theology in the sister churches has occurred along similar lines to our own. Perhaps it would force the issue to attempt close cooperation in the re-building phase. What we all have had to live through together, however, is accreditation; namely, to meet an academic standard that is laid down according to conditions very different from our own traditional theological education system. A cooperation that has arisen from the need to defend shared interests could lead to our rethinking the past in a spirit of ecumenism, and to our placing theological education far more in the service of more effective and harmonious Christian missionary endeavour. Theological faculties that focus only upon education will, in the long run, be unable to provide employment for the number of committed students that are required to rebuild our Christian communities and to stay the growth of secularisation. In my opinion, it is crucial for us to recognise that Christian denominations which are isolated from, and in some cases even turned against one another, waste their last opportunities for revival in an age that swings between the extremes of atheism and occultism. As far as I know, no denomination has come to terms with the issue of the further education of those who have completed their theological studies. Catholic theological education has to address a question that, strictly speaking, falls outside of its own particular domain, but which, nevertheless, rebounds back savagely upon it. For whether or not we can create for our students opportunities for a career related to their field of study is surely a pivotal consideration. In a more abstract sense, we might ask ourselves the question: How much does the knowledge of theology help our graduates in their actual lives? It would be a tragedy if a great number of students whom we had educated came later to the conclusion that their qualification in theology was of no practical benefit either in their own lives or in the life of their society. I can only envisage an adequate solution to this very real possibility if teaching staffs, student bodies, and church authorities work very closely together. Lack of co-ordination, and the absence of any carefully thought-out and long-range plan will certainly destroy the possibilities that remain. We must strengthen,

therefore, the sense of responsibility that Christians, both Protestant and Catholic, feel for the one Christian church, and church leaders must encourage and assist student initiatives that are conceived in this spirit.

Besides the dialogue that has traditionally taken place between the leaders of the Christian and Jewish faiths, the Christian churches also need to consider a more intensive theological exchange with Islam. To my knowledge, the Lutheran Church has begun to think along similar lines. What the Islamic faith shares with the Christian charismatic tradition might establish promising common ground for such a discussion. It would undoubtedly condemn the project to failure if the Christians who engaged in this dialogue were to project the vision of only one particular Christian culture and theological system, and not as the servants of the God of all of us. Only the educated, committed Christian of deep faith, through the witness of his or her own character, can win the trust of the secularised members of modern mass-consumer societies, and of those whose religion is not monotheistic.

## WESTERN EUROPEAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

ERIK EYNIKEL<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** The essay focuses on the Western European debates on the role of theology and religious studies, using as reference point the trends at Radboud University (Nijmegen), and the approaches of scholars of this university (J. van der Ven, G. Essen). The growing interest in religious studies has to do with institutional differentiation and globalisation. In Western Christian society Christian theology no longer provides the overarching theory from which universal knowledge is described. These phenomena explain the growing interest in religious studies. Nonetheless, the simplistic view that opposes religious studies, as aiming at objectivity, to theology as partisan and subjective (R. Kloppenborg), needs to be revised. Therefore the previous models of dependence or opposition, used to describe the relationship between theology and religious studies, should be replaced by the model of complementarity. Both theology and religious studies should engage themselves in Christianity *and* the other religions, but each one from a different perspective. The material object of theology and religious studies is the same for both disciplines. However the formal object of theology is taken from an internal (“emic”) perspective, while religious studies take a strict external (“ethic”) perspective. Although scholarly approaches may adopt different premises, they agree in advocating that theology and religious studies are complementary.

I was invited to contribute on Challenges and Prospects of Western European Theological Education, an extremely broad topic that I cannot cover entirely. I therefore will focus on one aspect only and I selected the new development in the Theological education and Religious Studies at my university in Nijmegen. At the Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen we started in September of this year a new Faculty of Religious Studies. Previously religious studies existed in Nijmegen already as a programme in the Faculty of Theology (or at least very narrowly related to the Faculty of Theology). Now Religious Studies has become an independent faculty with a separate dean and separate faculty board<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Professor of Old Testament at Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, Netherlands.

<sup>2</sup> Several colleagues of my faculty and of other universities have published about the relation between theology and religious studies: J. van der VEN, “Theologie beoefenen in een faculteit voor religiewetenschappen”, in: *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 42 (2002) 224–267; Id., *De relatie van theologie en religiewetenschappen in een vergelijkende wetenschapsbeoefening*, in: *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 45 (2005) 119–137; Id., *Waar komen verschillen in religie vandaan?*, in: *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 46 (2006) 161–180; J.-P. WILS, *Religie als*

I think that the development at our university in Nijmegen is symptomatic for other western European Universities and probably in the future for central and eastern European Universities also. My conviction is based on e.g. the papers that have been presented at the Consultation of the Theological Faculties in Europe which was held in Graz 4–7 July 2002. There Sven Erik Brod, the dean of the Theological Faculty of the University of Uppsala gave a lecture entitled: “The Future of Theology in Europe: Theology and Religious Studies” and Konstantin Delikonstantis of the University of Athens spoke about: “Theology and Religious Studies. Sense and Nonsense of a Conflict”<sup>3</sup>.

### Growing interest in Religious Studies

It is clear that the growing interest in religious studies over against theology can create tensions (in Nijmegen three quarters of the students – about 230 – study religious studies and only one quarter – about 70 students – do theology).

What is the explanation for this growing interest in religious studies? It has to do with the societal context: institutional differentiation and globalisation.

Institutional differentiation is a feature of our modern society and is linked to the phenomena of secularisation, individualisation and globalisation.

Secularisation has three aspects:

- A decrease of the importance of religion for the life of the individual believer;
- A decrease of the impact of religion and of the church on social life;
- Secularization affects religion itself because its claims for exclusive truth are threatened (or at least questioned).

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*object van wetenschap – van welke wetenschap?*, in *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 45 (2005) 138–152; G. A. WIEGERS, *Afscheid van het methodisch agnosticisme? Godsdienstwetenschap en theologie aan het begin van de 21ste eeuw*, in *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 45 (2005) 153–167; G. ESSEN, *Wie observeert de religies? Reflecties over de verhouding van godsdienstwetenschappen en theologie in tijden van terreur*, in *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 45 (2005) 168–188; A. F. SANDERS, *Theologie als godsdienstwetenschap*, in *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 45 (2005) 331–338; M. SAROT, *Theologie en godsdienstwetenschappen gescheiden? Pleidooi om beide samen te houden*, in *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 45 (2005) 338–347. I gratefully consulted these publications – especially the articles of my colleague J. van der Ven at Nijmegen University – for producing this article.

<sup>3</sup> These papers are published in German: K. DELIKOSTANTIS, *Theologie und Religionswissenschaft. Sinn und Unsinn eines Konflikts*, in *Ökumenisches Forum. Grazer Jahrbuch für konkrete Ökumene* 25 (2002) 251–262; S.-E. BRODD, *Die Zukunft der Theologie*, in *Ökumenisches Forum. Grazer Jahrbuch für konkrete Ökumene* 25 (2002) 263–274. In both these papers the authors try to define the specific place of theology and of religious studies in the scientific university. They both come to the conclusion that theology is not by religious studies. They define religious studies as complementary to theology because religious studies uses other methods and paradigms. However, what these methods and paradigms are does not become clear in their articles.

Individualisation is the result of the differentiation of the coherent and uniform social system, of Christianity as it existed in e.g. the Middle Ages or as such a system still exists today in Islam in some of Muslim countries, into autonomous systems of technology, economy, politics, jurisdiction and morality.

All people in pre-modern society found their social integration through religion and morality; now in “modern” secularised and individualised society, religion and morality are no longer uniform because many individuals and groups adapt them to specific situations in a variety of ways. This happens because religious mechanisms supporting social integration are no longer functioning. The individual makes his/her own moral judgment – though perhaps in dialogue with a larger community – and makes his/her own choices with regard to religious practice. What we see in practice, especially among the young people who are interested in religion (a growing group), is that the individual, often together with groups with which he/she feels affiliated, chooses for a multiform kind of religion: e.g. he/she identifies still as a Christian but at the same time as he/she is a Buddhist or can even absorb elements of other religions like Hinduism, or Confucianism, etc.

The second factor that explains the growing interest in religious studies is globalisation, which is the result of social and economic processes that started with the colonisation of America, Africa and Asia. A process of de-colonisation followed these colonisations – the colonies achieved or were given independence, but at the same time were re-colonised again economically. Thereupon followed processes of migration, processes to which we are still liable today. All these processes of differentiation and globalisation have led to a mixture of the Western Christian society with other cultures, foremost many with a strong Muslim component.

The Muslims are religiously much more active than the “original” Christian inhabitants of Europe so that on the religious stage, notwithstanding their numerical minority position, they are not perceived as insignificant. Muslims are not only more active in worship but they are also more religiously active than Christians on the social and political scene, because Christians base their activity in the public domain less and less on their Christian identity.

This multi-culturalism and globalisation can lead – and sometimes does lead – to the so-called “clash of civilisations” producing identity crises on both sides<sup>4</sup>. Politics and social work try to solve this clash in a peaceful way, which

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<sup>4</sup> The Clash of Civilisations is a controversial theory claiming that the cultural and religious identity of people will be the primary source of conflict in the post-cold war period. The term is first used by B. LEWIS in the article *The Roots of Muslim Rage*, in *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1990; reprinted in *Policy* 17 (2001–2002) 17–26. The clash was then referred to by B.R. BARBER, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, New York 1995, in which he describes the struggle between globalisation and tribalism as reflected in the struggle between Islam and

is not always easy. But the result is that there are no homogeneous or isolated cultures any more. We all live in a pluralistic and multicultural society, a society that is always in motion: therefore the culture of the West – but soon this will be universal – has to be called a “moving culture.”<sup>5</sup>

### Religious Studies versus Theology

The result of this institutional differentiation and globalisation for the relation between theology and religious studies is that theology (in Europe this concerns Christian theology) is no longer providing the overarching theory from which universal knowledge, including nature, society (including the non-western world), and the cosmos, is described and evaluated. This was usual from the Middle Ages till the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when theology provided the universal view, the horizon on which all knowledge was based. But that horizon is gone. Consequently the old distinction between theology and religious studies, which goes back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, holding that religious studies was the study of the non-Christian religions although from a Christian perspective, while theology was the discipline that studied Christianity – an old model advocating two separate territories – came under fire. Religious Studies – in a way – emancipated itself from being a discipline of theology<sup>6</sup>.

Some specialists in religious studies plead that this separation should be a radical split: e.g. Ria Kloppenborg writes in an introduction to religious studies:<sup>7</sup>

Religious studies needs to take some limitations:

- Religious studies researches religion as a human phenomenon, therefore the question of “truth” (she means religious truth) is not discussed in religious studies. Theologians do discuss this matter
- In religious studies it is not allowed – even in research – to make theological judgements (i.e. ideologically defined judgements based in a religious tradition).
- In religious studies objectivity is to be aimed at.

When we analyse this description of religious studies we see the following opposition:

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the Western cultures. The term was popularised by S.P. HUNTINGTON, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York, 1996.

<sup>5</sup> H. HERMANN, H. KEMPEN, *Moving Cultures*, in *American Psychologist* 53 (1998) 1111–1120; J. JANSSEN, *De jeugd, de toekomst en de religie*, in *Jeugd en samenleving* 18 (1988) 407–426.

<sup>6</sup> This “old model” is still observable in the papers of Sven Erik Brodd and Konstantin Delikonstantis, see n. 2.

<sup>7</sup> R. KLOPPENBORG, *Godsdienstwetenschappen*, in W. van ASSELT, e.a. (ed.), *Wat is theologie? Oriëntatie op een discipline*, Zoetermeer, 2001, 93–103, 94.

WESTERN EUROPEAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:  
CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

Religious studies

the question of religious “truth” is not under discussion
is not based in a religious tradition or ideology
objectivity is to be aimed at

Theology

the question of religious “truth” is discussed
is based in a religious tradition or ideology
operates from a specific perspective

It is obvious that someone who makes such a strict distinction or even opposition between theology and religious studies can easily declare religious studies as scientific and theology as non-scientific. And we are not surprised that some scholars doing religious studies therefore advocate that theology needs to be banished from the universities<sup>8</sup> since universities are institutes for research *pur sang*. Some even argued in favour of withdrawing the state subsidy for theology and putting their resources to use of *real* science, e.g. religious studies.

However, the description of theology and religious studies as given by Kloppenborg is simplistic because 1) theology does scientific research and aims at objectivity within the epistemological frame that is applicable to all sciences and to humanities in particular. 2) Religious Studies itself is also subject to a certain extent of subjectivity, since all humanities are perspectival and related to certain traditions. Therefore the models of dependence (old model) or opposition (Kloppenborg) for describing the relation between theology and religious studies, must be replaced by a new model of complementarity. Both theology and religious studies should engage themselves in Christianity *and* the other religions, but each one from a different perspective.

### Complementarity

Theology and religious studies can be complementary because they share the same goals and have the same material object of research.

The first question to address is then what is the object of Theological and Religious research. An obvious answer to this question would be: “God” but this is not so self evident as it looks at first sight. With Immanuel Kant we have

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<sup>8</sup> R. van de BROEK, *Het goede recht van een faculteit der godgeleerdheid aan een openbare Universiteit*, in F.G.M. BROEYER e.a. (eds.), *Facultas Theologica: Soror Sororum?*, Utrecht 1994, 13–32, 18; H. PHILIPSE, *De teugeloosheid van de theologie*, in *NRC-Handelsblad* 4/1/1996; D. WIEBE, *The Politics of Religious Studies. The Continuing Conflict with Theology in the Academy*, New York 1999.



to conclude that God cannot be the object of scientific research because God cannot be the object of falsification: God always remains beyond all control – also scientific control. God is – or can be – present as the horizon of our theological reflection but this horizon is not part of the object that we research. What we research is the collection of religious practices before God or about God. This definition of the object of theological and religious research is based on the substantial concept of religion. Religious practices before God concern liturgy, prayers or religiously motivated actions. Religious practices about God refer to all speaking about God in religious texts, in education and in the tradition. That is what we see in the day to day business of our theological faculties: exegetes do not study God but study the Bible, church historians do not study God but historical documents and systematic theologians do not study God but theological traditions that speak about God.

Moreover practicing theology is not a religious act. A theologian must possess empathy for the religion that he/she studies and he or she – by definition – takes an internal perspective towards it as I will explain further, but taking such a perspective is not the same as having a personal relationship in that religion, or having a personal relationship with God.

The material object of religion, when defined in terms of its substantial concept is thus: the collection of religious practices before God or about God, which can be specified further in “religious practices” and “religious doctrine”.

Religious practices have several aspects: 1) an experiential aspect: living through religious experiences and perceptions; 2) a cognitive aspect: cherishing and transmitting of religious beliefs and attitudes; 3) a ritual aspect: practicing of religious activities; 4) a moral aspect: executing religiously motivated moral acts; 5) a communal aspect: developing a religious community and 6) an institutional aspect: maintaining and changing the religious organisation. All these aspects concern religious practice, which is the research object of theology and religious studies. It concerns all aspects of people’s active performance of religion, and this regarding both “religion online” and “religion offline” as it is called in cognitive science.<sup>9</sup> “Religion online” refers to actual religious practice as summarised above, “religion offline” refers to the carefully thought-out choice of the individual to participate in this religious practice. This reflected choice has become a necessity in the Western differentiated and globalised society, because a uniform religious horizon is no longer present. “Religion online” and “religion offline” are dialectically related and mutually influence each other within the life of the individual.

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<sup>9</sup> For a definition of the terms “religion online” and “religion offline” see: P. BOYER, *Religion Explained. The Human Instincts that Fashion Gods, Spirits and Ancestors*, London, 2001, 277–285, explains these phenomena of “religion online” and “religion offline” though he calls it the magistic and doctrinal mode of religion.

The object of theological and religious research is thus religious practices as described above and also religious doctrine: the canonical texts and the traditions that are developed from these foundational documents like e.g. authoritative pronouncements (encyclicals, dogmas, etc.).

So far we described the material object of theology and religious studies and we concluded that this material object is the same for both disciplines. Is there then no difference between the two: is theology the same as religious studies? In order to answer that question we need to turn to the formal aspect of theology and religious studies. Formally there *is* a difference between these two disciplines. Not that God is the object of theology and religion is the object of religious studies, nor that Christianity is the object of theology and other religions the object of religious studies; both theology and religious studies have to address the scientific study of religions in the plural, their material object. Formally, however, there is an important difference: the formal object of theology is taken from an *internal perspective* while religious studies takes a strict *external perspective*.

This difference of perspective is explained usually applying of the terms “emic analysis” and “etic analysis”, terms that have their origin in phonology: “phonemic” refers in phonology to the study of a language in native terms (that is in the terms of the users of that language) while “phonetic” refers to the study of the language in more general terms (independent of the users of the language).

The terms “emic” and “etic” are now also applied in the study of religion where “emic analysis” refers to study of religion from the internal perspective (i.e. what theology does, studying a religion by using the semantics, grammar and pragmatics of that religion) while “etic analysis” takes the external perspective, and therefore works on a more universal meta-level, where it transforms, compares and analyses semantics, grammar and pragmatics on a more abstract level that transcend the concrete religion.

According to Hans van der Ven, professor of Practical Theology in Nijmegen and the pioneer in setting up the Faculty of Religious Studies next to the Faculty of Theology, the difference in the internal (theology) and external perspective (religious studies) concerns only the level of abstraction. Theology describes and explains religious practices and doctrines from the internal perspective, while religious studies takes an external perspective because it moves to a higher level of abstraction in order to make the comparisons possible.

That the difference between theology and religious studies only concerns the level of abstraction is however debated – also at the University of Nijmegen. Is this internal perspective of theology and external perspective of religious studies not more substantial than only an abstraction level? According to Georg Essen, my colleague in Systematic Theology, there is a more

substantial difference. He states it is the religion itself that has to give the impetus to the theological reflection on the experiences of religious practices (belief), including the aspect of modernisation and globalisation to which these experiences are liable today. When religion succeeds in integrating the processes of modernity and globalisation and also the related epistemological standards (i.e. a continuing scientific verification of its premises) into its self-description or self-understanding, then belief itself has become reflective.

Therefore according to Essen:

1. By taking the internal perspective, theology describes the self-understanding of religion. Theology studies and explains the *intellectus fidei* and is dialectically related to religious praxis because it on the one hand originates from it and on the other hand affects it again through scientific reflection on it. Theology concentrates on the performative aspect of religious praxis and therefore cannot dissociate itself from the normative nucleus of religion. The task of theology is to study actual transmitted belief but theology needs always to assess belief in terms of the critical norms provided by the religious praxis itself as the basis for this belief and the truths it claims. In other words the engagement of theology with religious praxis implies that it operates critically toward this practice. Because theology always has to test religious praxis in the light of the normative fundamentals at its roots, theology can confront it with aberrations and with positive developments of the past and warn against future aberrations or foster future positive developments. This way religious self-understanding in theology will not close itself in as it does, for example, in religious fundamentalism.

2. It is an epistemological fundamental that one can only achieve reflective self-understanding when it is clearly positioned in its relations to its environment. Only through the positioning of the self vis-à-vis the environment is the self as a separate substance recognisable and identifiable. This is also the case for the theological self-understanding. This reflection on the self-understanding of religion in theology is only possible when this self-understanding is defined over against what it is not, what is different. Furthermore for theological interpretations it is even more important to be confronted with what in scientific circles is recognised as objective and valid, because otherwise religious and theological pronouncements will be classified as purely subjective truths or personal opinions, i.e. an internal discourse that is only meaningful for insiders. Therefore it is necessary for theology that its pronouncements can be verified with what is considered real and true in scientific research (objective). If religious and theological interpretations stand the test of this scientific verification, they cannot be classified as part of an internal discourse completely isolated from the scientific debate. It is therefore imperative that theological pronouncements be subject to scrutiny by auto-

mous reason. Therefore philosophy is entitled to be the critical function for theology, operating as its conscience, to prevent theological self-understanding from locking itself off from general scientific knowledge and into a closed, self-created system (as in fundamentalism).

If this is theology's agenda, what then about religious studies? What is its business?

There is, according to the sociologist of religion Luhmann<sup>10</sup>, the possibility to approach religions from an external perspective. In that case we are not dealing with religious self-understanding but with observation from an outside position, and not focussing on the identity or identity building elements of the religious system that is being studied. Luhmann calls this "second order observation". This type of religious research can then be equated with the more abstract level of the "ethic analysis" as described above. As we have seen religious studies is today defined as the study of religion from an external perspective, meaning that it observes religion "in the second order".

### **Conclusion**

There are many reasons why religious studies receives a lot of attention today: the number of students is rising, many publications about religions appear (religion is 'in' again) and new chairs for religious studies are established at the universities. People are confronted with religions almost on a day-to-day basis in the media and in their daily encounters, but these religious experiences are subject to differentiation and globalisation. The religious culture is no longer homogeneous.

While theology describes and researches scientifically what a religion understands as the content of its belief, religious studies takes an external perspective. It is not so much interested in the self-understanding of religion. It operates methodologically different from theology. This difference in method is described by van de Ven – simply – as a different level of abstraction. My colleague Essen has articulated a more fundamental difference between theology and religious studies. If religious studies takes an external and observing position, theology concentrates on the performative act of religion. It reflects on the way that religion understands and presents itself in its semantics, grammar and pragmatics; but these reflections need to do be checked continuously with the philosophical instrument of autonomous reason.

Although both approaches, van der Ven's and Essen's, are different in their premises, they agree in advocating that theology and religious studies are both needed and that they are – indeed – complementary.

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<sup>10</sup> N. LUHMANN, *Die Religion der Gesellschaft*, Frankfurt 2000, 24.

## TRADITION AND MODERNITY TASKS FOR CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY AND THEOLOGIANS

FRANS HOPPENBROUWERS<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** Modernity challenges contemporary faith in various ways. In this context, this article wants to provide an outline of the tasks for modern theology and theologians. There are some underlying assumptions. First, the transmission of faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot do without an active appropriation by the believers themselves. Second, theologians, among others, should facilitate this process of appropriation by providing a large variety of different ‘products’. To that extent, a critical yet constructive and sympathetic dialogue with modernity remains an essential notion. The Thomistic perspective on nature and grace, adopted here, facilitates this much needed attitude of dialogue which may take place on many different levels. Furthermore, participation in the public debate, feminisation and themes relating to the social question are identified as important Church issues. They challenge modern theology and theologians to develop activist, world open spiritualities next to quietist, contemplative versions thereof. Meanwhile, Christian tradition provides many examples.

In spite of the proclaimed demise of religion in a once near future of classless society (Karl Marx), in spite of the apparently increasing awareness of the death of God (Friedrich Nietzsche) and in spite of the supposedly ongoing suppression of man’s intellectual laziness (Sigmund Freud), faith, the Roman Catholic Church, is still very much alive today. Consequently, every now and then, one would want to draw up the balance of all our labouring as theologians. But not only would we want to see if the treasure which was confided to us was well kept and if our investments paid off. We would like to find out also if our business plan is still accurate. Are we on the right track and are we well equipped for our task? What is more, could we somehow improve our performance?

We draw on the richness of tradition which could be described with a metaphor: tradition as a bundle of threads or strings. Some of them are short, but others are very long. Some consist of a single thread, whereas others have been strunged together to form a longer one. Some got knotted, while others need to be unravelled. Some have been cut short in history, but they could or should be extended to the present. Anyway, it must be clear that tradition is not a simple object like a velvet cushion, a nail file or a hammer.

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<sup>1</sup> Communicantes, Nijmegen, Netherlands.

The recent Regensburg address by Pope Benedict XVI could serve as an example of that. On a visit to Germany, the Pope referred to Greek philosophy as a necessary foundation of Christian rationality,<sup>2</sup> but, to be honest, this has not always been self-evident. Early Christian writers like Tertullian (ca160–230) would have been surprised, to say the least, because to him philosophy was a “doctrine of men and demons.”<sup>3</sup> Pope Benedict’s criticism of medieval nominalism, according to which God acts unreasonable if he feels like it, seemed justified. But, this strand of theology, as it does with William of Ockham, arose out of an authentic inspiration. God, first of all, is omnipotent, and, for that reason, good is whatever God wants it to be, even if human reason perceives it as evil. Another example is the *limbus puerorum* with its discussions about the whereabouts and the punishment of the unbaptised children.<sup>4</sup> It became the object of a theological slimming-down process, in which considerations tend to spill over from the realm of dogmatic theology into that of pastoral theology. Consequently the limbo becomes a hypothesis or is reinterpreted as a mere metaphor, used in a pastoral setting. This development itself seems to be part of a general tendency to give less vivid depictions of the *tractatus de ultimis* (treatise on Last Things).<sup>5</sup> Thus, it becomes clear that the Church’s teachings are not just a matter of *sic et non* (yes and no) but of hermeneutical discernment as well.

### In the Face of Modernity

*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis* – Times change and we change with them, the old Latin saying goes. As a matter of fact, time changed to such an extent that if we look at our world of today we seem to look in a broken mirror. Fragments appear, fragments of us, our fellow man, the natural world, our worldview and of God. I will give you some examples.

First, the days have long gone, when the Church could actually impose its teachings on believers, on non-believers and on the whole of society as well. Long gone is the rather morose mentality of the 1864 encyclical *Quanta Cura*

<sup>2</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Faith, Reason and the University: Memories and Reflections* (12 September 2006). With alterations at [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2006/index\\_en.htm](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/index_en.htm).

<sup>3</sup> Compare TERTULLIAN, *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, VII. 1. “Hae sunt doctrinae hominum et daemoniorum.”

<sup>4</sup> P. GUMPEL, *Limbus*, in J. HÖFER, K. RAHNER (ed.), *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, vol. VI, Freiburg–Basel–Vienna, <sup>2</sup>1961, 1057–1059.

<sup>5</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Heaven is fullness of communion with God*, in *L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English* 28.07.1999, 7; *Hell is the state of those who reject God*, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 4.08.1999, 7; *Purgatory is necessary purification*, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 11/18.08.1999, 7. Compare keywords such as “metaphor”, “depiction”, “idea”, “symbolical language” and so on.

(With how great care) and the enclosed *Syllabus Errorum* (Syllabus of Errors).<sup>6</sup> It withered away. Today, dialogue with modern society and with modern man through massive condemnations is considered to be an unfruitful approach to things which also darkens the genuine inspiration the Church could draw from what it is not. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican council testifies to this by encouraging the faithful to read the signs of the time<sup>7</sup> and as a consequence to do away with the image of the Church as a perfect society (*societas perfecta*), which is closed within itself and surrounded by a society which is imperfect or even hostile. Hence, even without the trade mark *Roman-Catholic*, something may still be of value. The draft European Constitution, for example, did not become worthless, once it was decided that Christian tradition and the invocation of God should go unmentioned in the preamble. It may be deficient, but worthless, no. What is more, it is a valuable document and, paradoxically, its social paragraphs proclaim, albeit *sotto voce*, God and European Christian heritage.

Second, historians and social researchers have shown how believers identify with Christian tradition. The appropriation thereof is fragmented, partial or even superficial. It may be a conscious decision or not, sometimes more emotional than intellectual. Meanwhile this partial identification often remains cloaked under a veil of public religious practice. Of course, this fragmentation is not a completely modern phenomenon. In *The Cheese and the Worms* historian Carlo Ginzberg describes the unpresumptuous, 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian miller Menocchio who invents a cosmology of his own, with bits and parts from Christian tradition.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the Church did not strive for comprehensiveness. Uneducated believers best remained unaware of “more difficult and more subtle questions”<sup>9</sup> and bible reading in vernacular was being scrutinised. More importantly, in the last two centuries the traditional and in large parts medieval Roman Catholic worldview lost its credibility and fell to pieces. By the way, fragmentation could explain why a closed and world denying fundamentalism becomes attractive. In order to provide more internal coherency, the fundamentalist believer may incorporate modern technology on the one hand, while he or she rejects the scientific insights on which this technology rests on the other.

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<sup>6</sup> H. DENZINGER, *Enchiridion Symbolorum, Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum* [*Kompendium der Glaubensbekenntnisse und kirchlichen Lehrentscheidungen*], P. HÜNERMANN (ed.), Freiburg–Basel–Vienna 40<sup>th</sup> 2005, 2890–2896 and 2901–2980. Compare error 80: “Romanus Pontifex potest ac debet cum progressu, cum liberalismo et cum recenti civilitate sese reconciliare et componere.” For a translation of all errors into English, see: [www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/creeds2.v.i.iv.html](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/creeds2.v.i.iv.html).

<sup>7</sup> *Gaudium et Spes. Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World*, chap. 4.

<sup>8</sup> C. GINZBERG, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, Baltimore 1980.

<sup>9</sup> Thus the Fathers of the Tridentine council in the Decree on Purgatory (DH 1820).

In our days, tradition, the Church's relationship to society, other confessions and non-believers, and the beliefs of the faithful themselves strike us as flexible to different degrees. Tradition is subject to changing interpretation, as is its content, and this becomes more obvious when the time gap between past and present widens. Apparently, the Christian worldview lacks cohesion, and therefore believers must apply a certain amount of DIY (do-it-yourself) when confronted with tradition.

Most likely, the explanation lays in the modern phenomenon of "self-reflexivity",<sup>10</sup> i.e. the ability to reflect upon oneself or the group to which someone belongs, to put questions to ourselves like: where do we come from, who are we and who do we want to be, what do we stand for, which goals do we want to attain and in which manner? Human and social sciences, theology, historical awareness and managerial skills, for instance, facilitate individuals and institutions to find the answers and, once underway, to make adjustments. But, at the same time, science induces fear and uncertainty, because choices are clearly relative, subjective and tentative. We want to be this and not that. We opt for this specific tradition and discard another. We aim at this and this and not at the other thing. In addition, knowledge of possible, desired, unwelcome and real outcomes influences the decision making process, because we would want to develop procedures which prevent negative results to come about. Results can be ambiguous, positive and negative at the same time. In brief, it becomes difficult to foresee one's actions.

As a consequence, it is tempting to take refuge in a quietist attitude, as theological escapism takes hold: a relativistic *anything goes* attitude; nostalgic wallowing in kitschy images of the past; calls for clarity and clear-cut authority. However, the more we flee from complex reality – that is my concern – the more the differences between Church and world will grow. Church becomes a sub-culture and its impact inevitably diminishes. It will find its authority further undermined. Quietism or escapism, however, do not suit modern day theology and theologians.

### **Tasks for Theologians and Theology**

*Vita...saltem fit phantasia...* – in this manner the 16<sup>th</sup> century Dutch martyr Cornelius Musius commented to the neglect of the intellectual dimension in monastic life. If the use of books is prohibited, Musius wrote, *life will become a fantasy*.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, it is our task as theologians to seek ways in which we can revitalise, renew, reform, and distinguish what is obsolete from what is

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<sup>10</sup> See A. GIDDENS, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge 1990 and A. GIDDENS, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Cambridge 1991.

<sup>11</sup> Cornelius MUSIUS (Cornelis MUYS), *Solitudo, sive vita solitaria, laudata*, Antwerp (ex officina Christophori Plantini), 1566.



dynamic and well alive. We do this with heart and soul, but, above all, with our head – that is the typical vocation of the theologian and the reason why theology is a worthy member of the Academy. So, where lay our points of interest? What issues need to be addressed? If tradition is not a CD that got stuck and plays the same bit of music over and over again, how do we deal with our cultural and religious heritage?

*On Theologians and the Public Debate*

If we want to fully grasp the relationship between Church and society, and the contribution theologians and theology could make, we cannot conceive of Catholic faith and tradition as an antithesis to nature. As a matter of fact, that is a Calvinist heresy. God created the world (*creatio prima*) and he continuously maintains and supports his creation (*creatio continua*). Therefore, it would demonstrate a lack of confidence if nature was reduced to a mere antithesis of Church, tradition or faith. Grace works through nature. It elevates nature but it does not replace it. In this respect, the contribution of theologians is to translate Christian values, Christian tradition into the secular sphere. They should bring issues to the fore to which present day culture seems inattentive or neglectful. They must stand up for what is weak and vulnerable, and show the risks of modern-day idols like economic growth, a career or an ideal at all costs. A few years ago the Dutch auxiliary bishop of Roermond Everard de Jong pleaded for a less stressful life with more resting points. It would be beneficial to the sexual life of couples. “Sexuality”, he wrote, “is the Sunday of a relationship, a day off.”<sup>12</sup> Nature and grace comprise the realms of Church, tradition, faith, science, philosophy, culture, the arts, and technology; in short, everything. This is the very reason why the task of theologians and of theology is much broader than simply rearticulating tradition.

So, let us assume for the sake of the argument that the modernisation process is a kind of hellish machine which rolls in one direction only and which flattens everything in its tracks. We might want to stop this Goliath, ignore it or deny its significance, positive and negative. However, this seems not the most sensible thing to do. We should look, first of all, for opportunities, chances and positive results of the modernisation process. And among the achievements of our modern society, I range the possibility to do away with our ephods, to leave for another country, to participate in another culture, or to escape the bonds of family, village life and traditional society – in *Genesis 2:24* we find the Old Testament archetype. Furthermore, we may call our present day society *modern*, *radically modern*, or even *post-modern*, but people still need love and a sense of direction, people still face illness and death, seek an honest means of

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<sup>12</sup> E. De JONG, *Seksualiteit: lust of last?*, in *Katholiek Nieuwsblad*, 4.02.2000.

living, recognition, and so forth. Theology and theologians should contribute to the debate as how man could fulfil all his *desideria naturalia* – all his natural needs – best within the confines of society. Debate means dialogue, discussion, exchange of arguments. It is not just a matter of convincing our discussion partners of our right and their wrong, but a continuous process of mutual learning.

An interesting example in this respect is the Dutch *Heyendaal Institute* of the Radboud University in Nijmegen. Together, theologians and scientists research avenues for dialogue and ways to discuss theologically and scientifically the domains of philosophy, science, social law, economics and medicine. I will give you the titles of some current projects. “Memory, do-it-yourself: theology and the arts in a forgetful society.” “Neuroscience, theology and philosophy.” “How do religious concepts come into being?” and “Dementia and identity”. The title “Dementia and identity” may exemplify the reason as to why theologians are involved in the secular also. Man is a human person on the basis of him or her being *imago Dei* (image of God), while modern conceptions of man and woman being able to make deliberately choices or to freely create his own personality (both vital, innate potentialities) are perfectly compatible with the *imago Dei* notion. For this reason, discussion or dialogue are not only possible but also required. Meanwhile, the goal of such a discussion is not to give a once and for all answer, but to give directions, to raise doubts, to look whether other viewpoints are possible, and so forth.

#### *On The Social Question*

We might want to connect the aforementioned dialogue with the social teachings of the Church. Ever since Pope Leo XIII 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (Of new things) it is a more or less coherent doctrine of man and his society.<sup>13</sup> At its centre stands the notion of charity and, above all, of justice, which is Christianity’s unique contribution to the history of religions and of man. The theme was intensively discussed by the late Pope John Paul II in his encyclicals *Laborem Exercens* (1981), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987) and *Centesimus Annus* (1991). This last encyclical testifies to the fact that Leo XIII ideal of cooperation between capital and labour was tougher and more relevant than the Marxist dogmas of old. In fact, the contemporary Western European “Rhineland Model” of capitalism stands fairly close to *Rerum Novarum*.

Smoothing the consequences of the war of everyone against everyone, which is the predicament of man after the Fall of Man, Christianity’s “greatest invention” contains a universal and non-partisan dimension. Transcending the borders of ethnicity, religion, individual lifestyle, and so forth, it is connected

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<sup>13</sup> Starting with LEO XIII, encyclicals and other papal documents are made available online at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va) in various languages.

with the image of God who is God of all creation. The issues which need to be addressed are relatively straightforward. They range from a global perspective to the local and even the individual. There are many different themes, e.g.: protection of nature, the human environment, health care, assistance to the poor and other underprivileged persons, social justice, women's and children's rights, support for the family, and reconciliation, for instance, among ethnic groups. These are issues on which all Catholics can easily reach an agreement, but one could also think of benevolently engaging in alliances with NGO's, groups and initiatives outside the Church. Solidarity, taking on challenges and protest are part of our Christian belief ever since it was founded, and because they are closely connected with the fundamental notion of charity and justice, social action is firmly rooted at the core of the Church's life.<sup>14</sup>

#### *On Metaphors and Models*

It seems altogether undesirable that theologians cast modern believer, religion or even God in rigid moulds, regardless of the concrete life of the faithful, of the society they live in, and regardless of the fact that God always transcends the limitations of human language and imagination (*Deus semper maior*). After all, religious language is metaphorical, and metaphors need a context in which they can function to the fullest. Therefore, it is most likely that even strong metaphors, like those from the agricultural world will slowly lose their meaning. Something similar may be true for describing authority in the Church or of models of the Church itself. The family metaphor has an important emotional content and it is, therefore, highly evocative, but the family (nuclear or extended) does not adequately describe our modern, rather complex society. Consequently, its evocative strength will become less and less powerful. Furthermore, for someone who was raised in a dysfunctional family it can be painful or even meaningless. References to sheep and herdsmen have become sheepish themselves. God as a pot maker is wholly plausible in an archaic pot making society, but in our modern context God could well be a supernatural software engineer. As specialists of metaphors and models theologians have an important task to fulfil. Old metaphors and models need to be translated into new ones, which are intelligible and therefore plausible in our modern context. If not, theology becomes the science of explaining the incomprehensible. However, this updating process is not an easy one since traditional forms, like *Our Father*, are universally acknowledged and have an important binding function.

Whereas the Church's structures are concerned, it is not an absolute requirement that on the horizontal level each and every institution should be

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<sup>14</sup> Compare BENEDICT XVI, *Deus caritas est* (2006).

identical to the other. And, in our complex society, it could indeed be helpful to develop structures according to specific needs. In the Dutch bishopric of Breda, for instance, an experiment is now under way to develop different models for organising parish life. Within this concept, the countryside parish may differ from one in the city, while urban parishes are territorially organised but serve specific groups. In the village of Oosterhout which is a suburb of Breda city, three profiles are being put to the test. There is the *cathedral model*, which stands for the traditional parish that caters to the needs of the young and the old, of families and individual believers and so forth. Next there is the *living room model*, a parish which aims mainly at families with children. A third model is the *Thomas parish* which wants to serve believers, who maintain a more loose contact with the Church. This kind of experimentation is a matter of some importance, as the 19<sup>th</sup> century and onwards saw believers in the urban environment easily lose contact with the faith of the forefathers.

It is important to overcome fear of new technology as well. Take the podcasts of the 37 years old Dutch priest Roderick Vonhögen who abandoned his doctoral studies at the Gregoriana in order to devote himself to web journalism. He maintains an English language website *Catholic Insider*<sup>15</sup> with, among other things, the Secrets of the Pirates of the Caribbean-casts and Harry Potter-casts. Recently, he told a newspaper that the website does not have to have Roman Catholic written all over it, because most web surfers are far removed from the Church.<sup>16</sup> For example, there is the story of “Jack the Pumpkin” who “travelled to hell and back again”. Jack suffers from trauma over his father’s death and goes to see a psychiatrist. When that doesn’t help, a priest finds him, and they go and light a candle for his father. In stead of presenting a comprehensive theory of the *communio sanctorum* (communion of the saints), which is difficult to grasp anyway, Vonhögen brings a simple, non-theoretical message. And it is relevant on both an existential and a religious level: remember your dead in order to cope better with your life.

#### *On Lay, Religious and Clergy, Men and Women*

In the 1950s vocations for the religious life became a problematic, pan-European issue. With a few exceptions and for different reasons, nowadays in Central, Eastern and Western Europe the number of vocations keeps falling. This will have two different but equally serious consequences. On the one hand the volume of priests which is required to attend to the needs of the believers and to govern the Church on a managerial level will decrease. On the other hand, one can predict that the quality of seminary training will gradually decline. Because in most cases priests are educated by priests, a growing lack

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<sup>15</sup> <[www.sqpn.com](http://www.sqpn.com)>.

<sup>16</sup> M. De HOOG, *Tussen God en Harry Potter*, in *de Volkskrant*, 28.10.2006, 26.

of proficient educators will make itself felt. This means that theologians should discuss ways in which these problems could be dealt with. The admission to the priesthood of *virī probati*, married men with life experience, is not a question that will be decided on the local level, and, since “many are called but few are chosen” (Matthew 22,14), it will be equally difficult to select qualified *virī probati*. Still, it is as crucial as inevitable to reflect on the future of a European Church with less and less priests.

Furthermore, there exists an ongoing process of feminisation of the Church, which ought to be dealt with too. Statistical details for Romania are not at my disposal, but the example of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania shows that some two thirds of the believers are women, and that is more or less the case for all confessions, from modern Neo-Pagans to hyper-conservative Priestless Old Believers. First of all, this means that women should have a more representative role within the Church, from the local parish level and up. Here it would be interesting to tap in on the ongoing discussion of having women deacons, of which the legitimacy is being debated. Moreover, this could open the possibility to create Cardinal-Deaconess as well, who could participate in the administration of the Church worldwide. Misogynistic theologians may decry these propositions, but wanting to give more responsibility to women is, generally spoken, unproblematic from the perspective of theology.

However, the process of feminisation points in the direction of another issue, that is the difference between male and female believers. Might it be that the way in which the Church’s life is structured is not at all interesting to men? Maybe it is too feminine? Prayer groups, OK. Pilgrimages, not bad at all. But, might it be that many forms of more traditional piety and devotion are not so much a man’s thing? We could borrow an argument from modern science, which, in spite of second and third-wave feminism (1960s-1990s), claims that the differences between men and women are not just a question of ideological software, but of biological hardware as well. When the Church’s life is taken into consideration, it seems as if it is more about comfort than challenge, which could explain why men find Church less appealing.

Anyway, the role of the lay people as active participants in the Church making process remains a complex one, and should be seriously dealt with by theologians. My previous remarks testified to that effect. Besides, even if the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican council stressed the proper vocation of the lay, the implicit conception of the Tridentine Council (1545–1563) of lay people as a kind of mini-monks or mini-sisters remains powerful. Seen from the perspective of the many beatifications and sanctifications of the last decades this is apparently not a very viable ideal.

*On Spirituality*

Karl Rahner, undoubtedly the greatest 20<sup>th</sup> century Roman Catholic theologian, once said that Christianity will not survive unless Christians become mystics – in typical Rahnerian language: “[...] the believer of tomorrow will be a ‘mystic’, someone who has ‘experienced’ something, or he will not be at all, because the piety of tomorrow will no longer be supported by the self-evident public convictions and religious practices of all believers, which until now routinely coincided with personal experience and decision making; and, therefore, common religious education as a preparation for the religious-institutional life will become a rather insignificant drilling exercise.”<sup>17</sup> Why? In traditional and stable society, where children learn almost everything they need to know from their parents, authority and truth are undivided and simple. However, in complex and ever changing modern society the learning process is life-long and divided over many different institutions and persons. Therefore, truth and authority take on a different shape. They become subject to active scrutiny and critique by the recipients, and, for that reason, any claim to authority and to truth must authentically impose itself, argue against competitors and state its case clearly and, above all, convincingly. In this given context, truth is no longer one-way communication without interaction. On the contrary, truth becomes an issue of dialogue and of personal, subjective appropriation. Therefore, according to Rahner, faith cannot be merely ritualistic or an act of reason or of will. Being a believer does not equal customarily performing rituals, knowing all the questions of the catechism by heart, and making *sacrificia intellectus* (sacrifices of reason) all the time. Faith entails a personal, existential “amen”; a “yes” of the intellect and of the heart as well.<sup>18</sup>

Of course, by offering access to the manifold threads of our rich tradition lay, religious, priests and bishops can and must facilitate religious experience, but, to do this authentically, faith must have a link with the individual’s life history and experiences. Whilst in traditional society believers wear identical confection suits, in modern society their costumes are one offs, tailor made. If this insight is correct, we may understand how the New Age beliefs of the 1980s and 1990s got a strong foothold on the European continent, and how it challenges Christian faith.

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<sup>17</sup> K. RAHNER, *Frömmigkeit früher und heute*, in *Geist und Leben* 39 (1966) 326–342, 335: “der Fromme von morgen wird ein ‘Mystiker’ sein, einer, der etwas ‘erfahren’ hat, oder er wird nicht mehr sein, weil die Frömmigkeit von morgen nicht mehr durch die im Voraus zu einer personalen Erfahrung und Entscheidung einstimmige, selbstverständliche öffentliche Überzeugung und religiöse Sitte aller mitgetragen wird, die bisher übliche religiöse Erziehung also nur noch eine sehr sekundäre Dressur für das Religiös Institutionelle sein kann.”

<sup>18</sup> During the ensuing discussion professor Bernhard Uhde, Freiburg, condensed the Rahner quote into another Rahner quote, *ex auditu*: “Serving God.” Serving God, therefore, means: taking seriously the fact that we are or should become Christian mystic.

In the history of the Church, theology and spirituality have always been tightly bound together, and, as a rule, theological traditions were translated into spirituality, and vice versa. Consequently, there exists, for example, a Franciscan, a Dominican and a Carmelite theological tradition which is closely connected to a specific spiritual tradition. Similarly, nowadays believers must go look for and find a personal spirituality, while theologians develop ways to translate their insights into practical and usable materials. People are different and therefore spiritualities must be different. There is a spirituality for fighters, for sufferers, for activists, for leaders, for doubters, for seekers, and so forth. In this context, I find it important to stress that many of the great mystics and theologians were controversial figures in their days, e.g. Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Teresa of Avila. Often these theologians and masters of spirituality were stubborn, difficult and demanding persons who provoked great suspicion. What is more, due to short-sightedness of its leadership, the Church more or less routinely condemned innovators.

Wanting to create viable models which will allow modern man, and modern woman, to appropriate Christian faith, we may want to use the rebellious inspiration of a Saint Francis, a Saint Thomas or a Saint Teresa. After all, faith is not anymore a matter of drilling the believers into thoughtless consumption of religious *prêt-à-porter*. It is, on the contrary, about restyling in a creative manner, about upgrading older versions, about personalising common places, about discovering new paths off the beaten tracks, and about saying “no” too. Dialogue, participation in the public debate, feminisation and themes relating to the social question were identified above as important Church issues in the face of modernity. They challenge modern theology and theologians to develop more manly, activist and more world open spiritualities next to more feminine, quietist and contemplative versions. In this respect, it is of great interest to examine best practices and to evaluate how the Church may structurally facilitate different spiritualities. The charismatic movement rejoices in some popularity, in the Central and Eastern European area as well, but undoubtedly other, more interesting options are waiting to be discovered.

## FACTS AND PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF RELIGION

ÁRPÁD CZIRJÁK<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** The address focuses on the changing role of religion in contemporary society and its implications for theological education. The analysis departs from a symbolic representation of this change, the Ernst Seler-case. Christianity seems to gradually lose its importance in society. Attention is given to the phenomena of de-sacralisation, elimination of Christian symbols, denial of Christian origins. Most of these phenomena are understood to be rooted in the thinking of the Enlightenment. Theological education needs to be aware of these challenges and to be able to look for appropriate answers.

The sky is visible amongst mountains and valleys, but on the horizon the perspective is cut short. One can look above and see the light, which shines through the clouds, but the eye cannot reach far away. In Transylvania we also live surrounded by range of mountains and abyss among which we are able to glance at the sky, but in order to look around and have a better perspective we have to climb on the top.

This theological session also urges us to climb towards the heights of the spirit, to rise from our depths of the everyday life so that we can have a better view on the perspectives of theology and religion in our present world.

According to an anecdote once upon a time a rabbi was travelling to a distant village. Since he was in a hurry he stopped a carriage in his way and asked permission to get on it. At one of the crossroads a crucifix attracted the attention of the wonderers. The coachman passed without any sign of respect. The rabbi made a bow, and after a while, he asked the coachman to stop, because he wanted to get off. "But your destination is still far away." – said the coachman. "It doesn't matter." – answered the rabbi – "I don't mind to travel with a man of different religion, but I do care not to get in the same carriage with an atheist heathen."

Believers and non-believers – willy-nilly – have to travel together in this modern world. Those, who do not believe in God, not only do they not bow any more in front of a crucifix, but also they cannot or will not tolerate its view on the side of the roads. According to them the crucifix belongs to church, monastery or museum, but not to the public places. It is a symbol of Christianity and as such it cannot be exposed in the public sphere of a multicultural society. Lately there are no more crucifixes erected along the roads.

Some time ago we could learn that the German Ernst Seler and his wife decided to sue a Bavarian school, because their daughter was suffering of a

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<sup>1</sup> Episcopal Vicar of Alba Iulia, Cluj, Romania.



severe trauma caused by the view of the crucifix on the wall of her classroom.<sup>2</sup> The parents wanted to have the crucifix removed from the walls of the classrooms, because the image of a tortured, bloody, dead man disturbs the state of mind of the children. The case was debated for years in the court, and eventually the judge concluded, that all the crucifixes must be removed from the walls of public schools, because the exposure of religious symbols influences non-believers in a Christian direction and offends the belief of the children belonging to another religion. Therefore all the crucifixes had to be removed in the Bavarian public schools, despite the objection of the Conference of German Catholic Bishops.

It is a cliché, nevertheless true: Christianity gradually loses its importance in our world. The renowned novelist, Kurt Vonnegut, who, as his readers know, was a prisoner of war during World War II, was commissioned by the New York Philomusica to write a new libretto for Stravinsky's theatrical work *L'histoire du soldat* ("The Soldier's Tale") about the violinist grunt's deal with the devil. Stravinsky's work dates from 1918 and is based on a Russian folk tale re-written in French by C. F. Ramuz. It is a story about a soldier who trades his fiddle to the devil for a book that predicts the future of the economy. After reading the narration of the musical piece Vonnegut was appalled by the discrepancy between the nonchalant style of the text and the creepy tone of the music. He despised the libretto so much for its indifference towards the horrible events of World War I – which by the way was accurately expressed in the music –, that he was not willing to regard the original libretto as a guide for his transcription. Instead, he replaced it with a totally new text about Eddie Slovik, who in 1945 became the last American Soldier to be shot for desertion. He wanted to show real drama and human suffering which fits the awful atmosphere of war. Nevertheless, Vonnegut committed an act of desecration with replacing the original libretto, to the greatest astonishment of the New Yorkers. It was a sacred text and he dared to change it. The *Times* critic wrote, "It was difficult not to imagine the ghosts of Stravinsky and Ramuz [...] glowering at the proceedings."

But Vonnegut committed even a greater act of desecration: he wrote a secular requiem, where there is nothing to fear in the afterlife. In Vonnegut's requiem the hidden deeds and thoughts are not disclosed at the end and no one has to face damnation. At the Last Judgement the dust is going to remain dust, and it will rest quietly without being disturbed either by the fire of Hell, or by the eternal light of Heaven. Everybody sinks into a peaceful sleep. One of the music critics remarked in his article that there is no such a thing as atheist

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<sup>2</sup> On Ernst Seler's claim and argument see *Kruzifix-Urteil – Zeitdokumente*, on the homepage of the Institut für soziale Dreigliederung, <http://www.dreigliederung.de/religionsfreiheit/kruzifixbuchauschnitt01.html>

music, but there are plenty of atheist composers in our modern world. Church music does not belong to the church any more. Everything is getting secularised. That is a reality that the Christian believer of the present has to face and to cope with.

Pope John Paul II expressed several times the need of a new evangelisation in Europe. Even though the seeds of Christianity fell on the ground of the already complex Greek and Roman culture and gave us abundant crop during the ages, today the majority of the politicians of European Union refuse to acknowledge and include in the constitution that Europe has Christian roots. They probably do not remember anymore the lines of Psalm 127: “Unless the Lords builds the house, those who build it, they labour in vain.” They wish to build the new big European “house” similar to the Technopolis known from the famous *The secular city* by Harvey Cox.<sup>3</sup>

Cox assumes that “two motives in particular characterize the style of the secular city. We call them pragmatism and profanity. [...] By profanity we refer to secular man’s wholly terrestrial horizon, the disappearance of any supramundane reality defining life. Pro-fane means literally ‘outside the temple’ thus ‘having to do with this world’.” Furthermore Cox stipulates – “The Gospel does not call man to return to a previous stage of his development. It does not summon man back to dependency, awe, and religiousness. [...] It is a call to be a man of this technical age, with all that means, seeking to make it a human habitation for all who live within it”. Thus one can conclude that the modern – or post-modern – man does not need Moses, the prophets or Christ, or any kind of transcendence and redemption. There is already to be found a Heaven on this Earth, which is characterized by Free Will and the power of the money.

John Paul II in the twentieth year of his papacy published the encyclical entitled *Fides et ratio*, that was regarded a kind of spiritual testament of the already very ill Pope.<sup>4</sup> This encyclical was considered a philosophically deep and theologically well-grounded writing, in which the Pope analysed the relation between the soul and mind, belief and reason. He writes that philosophy is one of the most precious cornerstones of human culture, but theology is humanity’s indispensable requisite. But he also points out some problems and difficulties to match the two: theologians did not bother much to study philosophy and to argue philosophically about theological questions since

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<sup>3</sup> *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective*, New York, 1965, (25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition: 1990).

<sup>4</sup> Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith And Reason, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_15101998\\_fides-et-ratio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_15101998_fides-et-ratio_en.html)

the Second Vatican Council. The Pope rejects fideism, according to which reason is irrelevant to faith, and deprecates the so-called biblism, too, which assumes that the foundation of Christian faith can only be the Bible. John Paul II encourages the philosophical education of theologians, moreover because the beginnings of Christianity are not conceivable without the Greek and Roman philosophical tradition of Europe. Christianity shaped its own identity on the image of the Greek and Roman cultural heritage by appropriating certain systems of thinking and fashioning them according to the needs of Christianity. Here I do not intend to go deeper into the description and analysis of this highly valued encyclical, but instead I only wish to reflect on some theoretical and practical consequences of the relationship between belief and rational thinking.

The red line of the encyclical is the philosophical aspect of faith and reason.

Pope John Paul II wondered why the overwhelming majority of the present philosophical trends are deliberately assuming an atheist position. A few years ago Henri de Lubac entitled his book on atheism *Le drame de l'humanism athée*.<sup>5</sup> The central figures of his book are the heroes of August Comte, Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky. The French theologian points out the fact that humanism included much earlier an atheistic perspective than the nineteenth or the twentieth centuries. We cannot say that the inheritors of humanism became atheists under the influence of certain movements and philosophical trends in the nineteenth century. Atheism has always been a part of our culture. The only reason why it could not appear in the front line of the intellectual thinking before the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, because of the supremacy and political power of the church, that banished every non-Christian philosophy. Humanism cannot be characterized by the analytical approach to philosophy or the embodiment of political tolerance. Humanism is in fact a very pugnacious system of thinking that claims absolute value for Man and stipulates that human beings do not need a transcendent crutch, because they are able to stand on their own feet. Humanism is an ancient Greek philosophy, but at the same time it developed into a strong and refined ideology during the ages.

The encyclical *Fides et ratio* searches for contemporary signs and trends in current philosophies. Instead of examining these modern problems, let us take under scrutiny now the horizon and perspectives of the past. The scholasticism regarded philosophy the servant of theology: *philosophia ancilla theologiae*. The humanism of the Renaissance already considered humiliating the subordinated position of philosophy and affirmed its autonomy. Man became the central figure of its system of thinking and therefore God remained

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<sup>5</sup> Henri de Lubac, *Le drame de l'humanism athée*, Paris, Cerf, 1998.

in the background. This is the premise that is inherited by the later generations of philosophers and thus it became a corner stone of our modern thinking, too.

In the time framework of this short lecture it is impossible to scan all the main issues involving the relationship between humanism and theology. We might only glance from a bird's eye view at the three major figures of humanistic philosophy: René Descartes (1596–1650), Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1830).

Descartes still regarded himself a believer, but Hegel was already a more ardent critic of religion. Pascal, in his book of ideas and jottings, entitled *Pensées*, expresses his objections against the inanimate God of philosophy. He discloses Descartes' discreet atheism, which included God only as a kind of second-degree additional material. His successors already sensed this admixture of the presence of God, and left it altogether out of the reception of Descartes' philosophy. In most of his writings Descartes followed the ancient Greek materialists' thinking, according to which the material world is so perfect that it can sustain itself and can contribute to its own development and evolution. Pascal reproaches Descartes that he only left God in his system because he needed Him as the cause of the first push ("chiquenaude") to the chain of evolution. But Pascal's sister, Marguerite was even more passionate about the matter: "I cannot forgive Descartes, because he tried to exclude God from his philosophy. He only needed Him to set in motion the world, and afterwards He became useless".

Kant was already the representative of the Enlightenment. According to him we cannot know anything for certain about the transcendental world, therefore it cannot be included into the system of the speculative philosophy. God can even be completely excluded from the scope of humanistic philosophy, but this would be unfortunate from a pedagogical point of view. We need God, but only as the guard of moral values. Heinrich Heine, the nineteenth-century German poet, compared the philosopher from Königsberg to Robespierre. Heine said that the only difference between them is, that while Robespierre killed a king and a few thousand French aristocrats, Kant can be held responsible for eliminating God.

Hegel is more radical in his criticism of religion than his predecessors. His opinion is that the Jews subordinated themselves to God, as slaves would be subordinated to their master. In his view, the tragedy of the Jewish nation is not like a Greek tragedy, because it cannot evoke neither dismay, nor pity. Their tragedy rather cries out for indignation, because it is a self imposed subjugation and humiliation. The fate of the Jewish nation is like Macbeth's bleak doom who left this world, turned to foreign and strange powers, which caused eventually his fall.

Schiller already openly promulgates that Man should not search for the absolute truth, because the absolute is only the shadow of the Christian God. We cannot know anything for sure either about truth, or about the final outcome of this world. Time is going to solve everything.

The ideas of the Enlightenment found a welcoming seedbed amidst the walls of the School of Padua just in the neighbourhood of the Papal State. The students of this school were brought up in an atheist spirit; nonetheless this helped the emergence of modern science. There can be drawn a straight line from the School of Padua through the humanists reaching to the French Enlightenment.

In the Habsburg Monarchy the most prosperous period of the Enlightenment was during the reign of the empress Maria Theresia. One of the most ardent supporters of this ideology was Maria Theresia's husband, archduke Franz. Enlightenment and freemasonry also attracted some Hungarian intellectuals. György Bessenyei, the political thinker and poet, and Ferenc Kazinczy, the passionate promoter of Hungarian language revival joined freemasonry. In Transylvania the Jesuit monk David Baróti Szabó and the Saxon governor Samuel Bruckenthal acted the same way.

We live in a secular world, and have to cope with the abundance of spiritual and intellectual trends. We believers cannot resolve the problem by saying, "What do we bother with the world? It is not our business. Let God take care of the rest." We are not securely sailing towards the "promised land" on a kind of "Noah's ark" dreamboat. We cannot just dismiss the other sailors driven by secular winds, because their waves can easily interfere with ours if we are not alert.

At the beginning of Christianity the situation was just the same. Paul is permanently complaining about the bad times he has to face in his battle against the enemies of Christianity. But the sad circumstances do not make him bitter. On the contrary they urge him to have more faith and strength for accomplishing his work. He avows himself the "apostle of the heathens" and he is willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of evangelisation.

The believer today does not have to be frightened either by the difficulties. God hears the voice of his people even if it comes from the deepest abyss. Christ also encourages the believers: Trust, I defeated this world. The faith of the believer is like the candlelight in the night: the darkness cannot extinct the little flame, but quite on the contrary, the light breaks through the night. The light shows us the empty nothingness of the darkness by penetrating through it. The faith can also break through the realm of doubt and despair. It is greater than the spirit of denial. God is the only Lord, the only power, and if we try to fight against Him, He does not crash us, does not destroy us, but waits till we are able to recognize Him and grow up to His greatness.

In our world everything coheres, everything relates to each other. Therefore faith and reason cannot be separated either. They are understandable only by each other. Even the universe is so coherent that – as an astronomer formulated it once in a witty manner – if a baby drops his rattle, the whole Sirius quivers because of its impact. We are not able to measure this impact and the motion of the Sirius triggered by the toy of the baby, because we do not have such refined instruments yet, but we simply accept it, as a fact, a consequence of the physical laws that are based on the complex connection of the material world. These facts and laws are just the same in the realm of the spirit, too. Science influences theology, and theology has to respond to these impacts and challenges.

We often see earthquakes in the news. The view we have to witness is dreadful. Skyscrapers fell down like houses of cards; modern, apparently stable buildings are in ruins. At the end of the nineteenth, beginning of the twentieth century the seemingly steady structure of the sciences was also shaken and collapsed. The Euclidean geometry has been serving the evolution of science for two thousand years, when our Transylvanian mathematician, János Bolyai, managed to prove that the world could be better described by a non-Euclidean geometry such as the hyperbolic geometry. There are more possible geometries, which are not contradictory within themselves, but they do contradict each other. None of them is better than the other, they are all equal and pure mathematical laws cannot decide their truth-value. Thus the whole foundation of the traditional logic became also jeopardized. Russel for example – with the help of set theory – pointed out that the premises of the different mathematical systems could also be contradictory. Later, from the 1960s it has been definitely confirmed that in mathematics, geometry and logic there are more systems possible, and their function cannot be unequivocally decided on the ground of one single framework of values. The bases of the most exact sciences were thus convulsed. After the developments of quantum physics the foundations of physics were also questioned. If Leibniz and Kant were alive, they would have been shocked by the results of their posteriors. They would have been appalled by Einstein's relativity theory, which swept away the terminology of teleology in physics.

But from this entire story one should not conclude that sciences have completely lapsed. On the contrary: mathematics, geometry and physics flourish in spite of all the changes in their way of approaching reality. After this quick sketch of the history of sciences the only right conclusion would be to say that sciences are not based on absolute truth, but rather on a system of hypotheses. Nothing is absolute. The physical world is based on the relativity of the different systems.

The former prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, Cardinal Ratzinger, our present Pope Benedict XVI, has frequently drawn our attention to the fact that relativism affects the system of theology. Relativism suggests that every theological fact, every truth is only valid in its own, finite framework. Every truth is restricted and defined by its own system. Every system is equally valid. Relativism in theology is very seductive, because it seems a superficial matter of rhetoric to bring the different systems together and to “reconcile” the differences between religions. But this optimistic conciliating act is too easy to be true. According to the advocates of theological relativism every religion is right, but no religion can claim the truth for itself.

The Christian theologian acknowledges the values of the various religions, but does not doubt the unique truth of the revelation. The faith of Jesus is not relative to other beliefs. It cannot be the contingency of a certain period, geographical area or philosophical system. Instead it is steady, absolute and eternally valid. It is a building that has been built on rock and not on the shaky sand of relativism. And this rock is God. His building, his house is never going to collapse.

Christian faith is not our invention, but it is based on the revelation of God through his Son, Jesus Christ. It is the theology of the heart, which reserves us the possibility of the eternal life in our ever-changing world.

Hegel’s well-known terminology – thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis – can give a kind of system for the theologian, too. Thesis might mean the totality of the revealed truths, the foundation of our faith. Paul says in his letter I to Timothy: preach the Gospel! Spread the word and the truth of God and not the truth of Man, not your own wisdom. “Avoid profane babbling and the absurdities of the so-called knowledge”. We are also obliged to speak the truth of God, which is the truth of Jesus as well.

The Church encourages theologians – no matter what the circumstances are –, to spread Christ’s message in the world. The task of the theologian is to free God from the chains of human imagination. Instead of the philosophers’ god, to portray the God of the Bible, the God of the prophets and Jesus, the living God. Because the supernatural being of the humanists, the great spirit of the freemasonry or Heidegger’s god beyond God are not acceptable for Christian believers. We cannot be beguiled and blindfolded by the theory of relativism. But this does not mean, that we should be ignorant.

On the contrary: we have to be familiar with the anti-thesis, too. We have to know about the possible challenges. The pluralist world is God’s world. According to Hans Urs von Balthasar the truth is symphonic. Therefore synthesis can be interpreted as the response for the question of Man living amongst the cavalcade of ideas.

The words of the Gospel are like the treasures of the wise man: one can pull out old and new from his box of abundance. But we always have to pour the new wine of the Gospel in a new bottle. We constantly have to renew ourselves, and our vision about the truth of the Gospel. The world permanently changes around us, so we also have to change and revise our belief system.

The theologian feels happy to have the treasure box of the Gospel. This is indeed one of the most secure pillars of the world. But is Gospel enough in itself?

Since the foundation of the theological faculty in Kolozsvár ten years passed. These ten years seem a short period at the first sight; nevertheless they are enough to form a solid foundation for the future. One needs a diploma, but this is scarce. A PhD does not mean much more either. It is only deep faith, serious reflection and daily questioning of old value systems and truths that shapes and forms a real theologian. Today, this path is open to women, as well, even though the right to become a Catholic priest has not been given to them. However, as theologians they can also serve God and the Gospel.

Faith and reason have practical relations and references as well. On the streets we constantly bump into students carrying huge backpacks. Their mother takes care that her children should not leave home without the goodies she prepared for them. The food prepared by the mother – however much or little – is always precious because it was made and given with parental love. The parents of the students from the Faculty of Theology packed their children not only with earthly goods, but also with spiritual treasures. The faith cherished at the hearth of the Christian family and the theological knowledge acquired later in the church community is a “backpack” for a life. But the food has to be supplied again and again. The spiritual knowledge has to be deepened and improved from time to time.

To be a theologian or a teacher of religious studies is in the same time a very practical task: the teacher has to bring close the message of the Gospel to children. The theologian has to have a broad perspective and encompassing knowledge about the surrounding world. (S)he has to be able to discern the forest for the trees. Reason should be an organic part of the theological thinking. The theologian should not join the schizophrenic world-view of our present times, where the body and soul are indispensable separated. Instead (s)he has to strive to reunite the two, to be able to make a connection between Heaven and Earth, heights and depressions. The theologian does not live in a vacuum or ivory tower. (S)he should climb the mountains for a better perspective, and at the same time, should also descend sometimes to the abyss of the soul in order to deliver the message of the Gospel to the people. A theologian, if it is necessary, has to go for the sake of the people – like Orpheus searched his beloved Eurydice – in the realm of Hades. We have to turn our



face towards God and try to help others, too, to do the same in this world content with relativism and resignation.

Einstein was not only an excellent physicist, but an ardent music lover, too. Once one of his lady friends organized for Einstein's birthday a musical afternoon and invited to her salon a string quartet. Widmann, the writer, was also among the public, and took a seat next to Einstein. Widmann did not enjoy music at all. In the break Einstein stopped him, and started a conversation about music. Widmann admitted that he does not enjoy classical music, and last time he sang a song it was in his childhood. But Einstein did not give up, and asked Widmann to sing a song as a gift for his birthday. Widmann accepted the request and it turned out that he is quite a musical person, has a nice voice and good ears for music. After the performance Einstein invited Widmann at a concert given by the Philadelphia Philharmonics. When they returned to the salon the lady of the house expressed her disapproval for the long absence of the two gentlemen, and said that they have missed most of the concert and lost a lot. "It might be so" – answered Einstein –, "but in the meantime a miracle happened." "What exactly?" – asked the lady. Einstein replied – "I opened a door, and introduced mister Widmann to the wonderful world of music."

To open a door in front of someone and introduce him/her to the deepest mysteries of life – is one of the nicest tasks of a theologian. This door hangs between Heaven and Earth, time and eternity. Unless Einstein introduced Widmann to the marvellous world of music, Widmann would have been deaf to it. But doors do not open by themselves. However difficult it seems, we have to be strong enough to open the heaviest gates and the most resistant doors. God does not intrude in our life without an open door. To open the gates is the task of Man, the task of theologians; the rest is up to God.

We cannot follow the rabbi by saying that we do not want to travel with non-believers in a carriage. It would be too easy to give up. But first we have to look deep in ourselves and see what is our faith about, how strong is our belief? Hopefully the ironic sentence of a Renaissance critic is not valid for us too: "Look! These people say that they are Catholics, even though they gave up to be Christians long time ago."

On the carriage of modernity we cannot turn away from each other, but we cannot remain silent either. We have to discuss important matters while clarifying each other's point of view. Dialogue is the future spirituality.

However, we have a great advantage: we know where we are heading and we know that our way is not a dead end. Instead it is a frontier, a border, and a crossing-line. We have to face a severe custom check, but we hope that we are going to cross over and be admitted to the new home of eternity. But we have to wish the same for all those who think that there is nothing at the end of life. Our road should be the way of enlightenment and constant revelation. We can

repeat the words of Saint Augustine: “O regnum beatitudinis sempiternae, ibi laetitia sine tristitia, vita sine dolore, omne bonum sine omni malo. Ibi juvenus numquam senescit, ibi decor numquam pallescit, ibi vita terminum nescit.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The quotation is actually a compilation of Aug. *solil.* 35, Aug. *medit.* 22 and Greg. *in Ps.* 7, collected by Hermannus HUGO, *Pia desideria*, Antwerpen, 1624, 393-395, 397, and put together in the text of Samuel CAPRICORNUS' *Theatrum Musicum* 9 (*O Quam Gloriosum Est Regnum*). See [http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624\\_introduction.html](http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624_introduction.html) (for the online edition of H. HUGO's *Pia desideria*) and <http://www.cd-baroque.com/index.php/cdbaroque/content/download/449/2644/version/7/file/LivretK617188.pdf>, the latter available only in the html version. (Note of the editor).

**THEOLOGISCHE TAGUNG  
9–12 NOVEMBER 2006**

**„THEOLOGIE IN SIEBENBÜRGEN: GESTERN, HEUTE UND IN  
DER ZUKUNFT“**

Die Römisch-Katholische Theologische Fakultät der Babeș-Bolyai Universität feierte 2006 das zehnjährige Jubiläum ihres Bestehens. Diese Feier war Anlass für die Organisation einer Theologischen Tagung, die dem Thema „Theologie in Siebenbürgen: gestern, heute und in der Zukunft“ gewidmet war. Im Folgenden sind einige, von den an dieser Tagung gehaltenen Ansprachen publiziert.

Die politisch-gesellschaftlichen Umwandlungen anfangs der neunziger Jahre stellten mehrfache Herausforderungen der Römisch-Katholischen. Man sollte nicht nur die sakramentalen und pastoralen Strukturen umstellen, sondern auch gut durchgedachten Gleisen der Zukunft stellen. Gegenwart und Zukunft der Kirche zu sichern bedeutet zuerst eine retrospektive Auswertung des Vergangenen, dann ein objektives Aufmessen der sozio-kulturellen und wissenschaftlichen Gegebenheiten. Diese Aufgabe zu erfüllen bezweckte auch die Synode der Erzdiözese Alba Iulia. Das entschlossene Anstreben die Gleise der Zukunft zu stellen braucht fachlich gebildeten Menschen. Die Notwendigkeit der Ausbildung einer solchen kirchlich engagierten Gruppe erzielen die pastoralen Zentren der Erzdiözese und die theologischen Fakultäten in Alba Iulia (Priesterseminar) und Cluj-Napoca.

Die Römisch-Katholische Theologische Fakultät wurde 1996 unter der Obhut der Babeș-Bolyai Universität in Cluj-Napoca gegründet. Die Fakultät dient der Ausbildung von Religionslehrer/innen für die vier römisch-katholischen Diözesen in Siebenbürgen, und bietet gute Bildungsmöglichkeit im Bereich der theologischen Wissenschaften und zugleich eine entsprechende moralische Erziehung. Sie will ein Forum der Wissenschaftlichkeit und der religiösen Bildung sein, und erzielt die Rolle einer lebendigen Stimme der Kirche in der Gesellschaft zu übernehmen. Die Absolventen der Fakultät, Religionslehrer oder Lehrer anderer Fächer (man bekam bis jetzt eine zweifache Bildung: Religion und Sprachwissenschaft oder Geschichte oder Sozialer Dienst) sollten – das bezweckt die Fakultät – an dem Prozess der gesellschaftlichen und kirchlich-institutionellen Umwandlungen aktiv und engagiert teilnehmen.

Das zehnjährige Jubiläum der Theologischen Fakultät bietet sich als ein Anhaltspunkt an. Man wertet den bisher gegangenen Weg aus, versucht das Profil des Instituts neu zu stellen und nicht zuletzt den eigenen Weg in der

Gesellschaft zu konturieren, die eigenen Aufgaben im Bereich der Verkündigung, auf der karitativen, pastoralen Ebene klar zu formulieren.

Das Jubiläum bietet die Möglichkeit eine Bildungstete der Offenen Tür zu werden: offen auf die Welt, auf die multikulturellen Werte und auf die ökumenischen Anstrengungen.

Die Jubiläumsfeier will ein Zeichen setzen: sie will auf die gesellschaftliche Präsenz der Kirche(n) sensibilisieren. Sie will auch eine Art Ermutigung zu sein: die Kirche soll sich im gesellschaftlichen Umwandlungsprozess aktiv teil nehmen.

Glück- uns Segenswünsche wurden bei dieser Jubiläumsfeier von den Repräsentanten der Kirchen und von Vertretern mehrerer Universitäten, sowie Erzbischof Jean-Claude Périsset (Apostolischer Nuntius in Rumänien), György Jakubinyi (Erzbischof von Alba Iulia), Andrei Marga (Präsident des Akademischen Rates der Babeş-Bolyai Universität Cluj), Nicolae Bocşan (Rektor der Babeş-Bolyai Universität), Levente Salat (Prorektor der Babeş-Bolyai Universität), Mihály Kránitz (Prorektor der Katholischen Universität Pázmány Péter von Budapest), Zoltán Oláh (Rektor der Priesterseminar von Alba Iulia), János Molnár (Dekan der Reformierten Theologischen Fakultät der Babeş-Bolyai Universität), Ioan Chirilă (Dekan der Orthodoxen Theologischen Fakultät der Babeş-Bolyai Universität), Nicolae Gudea (Prodekan der Griechisch-Katholischen Theologischen Fakultät der Babeş-Bolyai Universität) und Czirják Árpád (Bischöflicher Vikar) entgegen gebracht.

## **INAUGURAL SPEECH OF THE DEAN, PROF. JÓZSEF MARTON**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1996, the Rector of the Babeş-Bolyai University, Andrei Marga and György Jakubinyi, Archbishop of the Transylvanian Roman Catholic Church have signed the mutual agreement according to which, the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology was founded, within the structures of the university. Since then 10 years have passed, during which the university has fully respected the contractual stipulations.

Although in Cluj the Roman Catholic theological education has a very long history, it was only after the events of 1989 that the four faculties of theology have been established, of these our faculty being the youngest. This is due to the fact that in Romania, during 40 years of communist regime, the Roman Catholic Church has been severely restricted. The newly proclaimed democracy brought about noticeable changes in the Church-State relationship. In order to obtain full acknowledgement of the theological education, the representatives of our Church have had the courage to take the initiative and to follow the same steps the responsible of the other confessions had already taken.

Now, after ten years of existence, we are proud to say that we do not regret taking this step which led to the foundation of our faculty. We may say that, along these years, we have been continuously receiving full acknowledgement and support from the Babeş-Bolyai University leadership, as well as respect for our confessional characteristics. For all these, as a representative of this institution, I wish to express my gratitude.

We have continuously striven to improve the educational system, in order to make it as proficient, as to fit all standards and expectations of higher education.

I would like to thank Archbishop György Jakubinyi, who ten years ago believed in us and in the future of our faculty. Ever since, we have enjoyed his continuous support in keeping up with the demands and expectations of the university. May Almighty God shower His blessings on Him and give him health and strength, in order to carry on his pastoral activity for many years ahead!

Further, there are so many friends and colleagues to whom we have to extend our gratitude, who have contributed to the development of this institution. Some of our colleagues have already passed away, but we need to recognise their enduring contribution. I also wish to include in my retrospective all our graduates, scattered all over the country.

On the decennial anniversary of the founding of our faculty I may add that, with the foundation of the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology the Babeş-Bolyai University has acquired a complete university structure. Moreover, the

## INAUGURAL SPEECHES

Faculty itself offers by now a full scale of undergraduate and graduate university training, at the level of BA, MA and doctorate. The doctoral school has lately developed a cooperation with the Faculty of Reformed Theology.

We may consider it a gift for our anniversary that on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August of this year a new agreement has been signed between the representatives of this university and Archbishop György Jakubinyi, which resulted in the adherence of the Institute of Roman Catholic Pastoral Theology of Alba-Iulia to the larger structure of Babeş-Bolyai University. Taking into consideration the two branches of theological studies (didactic and pastoral theology), we may say that our faculty that has so far focused on the didactic branch of study, can now be fully considered a faculty of theology.

10<sup>th</sup> of November 2006, Cluj-Napoca

Dean,

Prof. Dr. József Marton

**10<sup>ÈME</sup> ANNIVERSAIRE  
DE LA FACULTÉ DE THÉOLOGIE ROMANO-CATHOLIQUE**

**JEAN-CLAUDE PERISSET, NONCE APOSTOLIQUE**

Lors de la remise du doctorat *honoris causa* par cette Université « Babeş-Bolyai », le 4 novembre de l'an dernier, au Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, déjà alors le Pape Benoît XVI, j'avais parlé des rapports entre l'intelligence et la foi, en citant le professeur de théologie qu'il fut, et je disais: dans son expérience personnelle de théologien, Joseph Ratzinger a vécu ce que proposent les douze thèses, publiées le 6 juin 1976 par la Commission internationale de Théologie – dont il était alors membre – sur le rapport mutuel entre magistère ecclésiastique et théologie. La première thèse définit le théologien ainsi: « on appelle théologiens ces membres de l'Eglise qui, par leurs études et dans une vie vécue au sein de la communauté de foi de l'Eglise, sont appelés à approfondir la parole de Dieu dans l'enseignement, en vertu de la mission canonique reçue ».

Et j'ajoutai retenir dans cette définition deux éléments significatifs de l'engagement du théologien Joseph Ratzinger: les études et la vie, vécues dans la communauté de foi de l'Eglise.

Ce matin, en ouverture du Symposium célébrant le 10<sup>ème</sup> anniversaire de la Faculté de Théologie romano catholique au sein de l'Université « Babeş-Bolyai », je désire poursuivre cette réflexion, à la lumière aussi du récent exposé fait par le Pape Benoît XVI à l'Université de Regensburg où il avait enseigné durant huit ans (1969–1977) ayant pour thème « Foi, Raison et Université. Souvenirs et Réflexion ». Si je puis résumer cet exposé, avec les termes mêmes employés par Benoît XVI, il s'agit de montrer que « c'est la raison qui doit être le guide dans la transmission de la foi » et que « ce n'est pas la religion et la violence, mais la religion et la raison qui vont de pair. Le thème de ma conférence – répondant à la mission de l'Université – fut donc la relation entre la foi et la raison. »<sup>1</sup>

1.– Aussi, convient-il ce matin d'approfondir votre engagement à vous ici présents, professeurs, étudiants et collaborateurs de la Faculté de Théologie romano catholique (ce qui vaut aussi pour les trois autres Facultés de théologie),

- sur ce qu'est la théologie,
- sur le pourquoi de la théologie au sein de l'Université,
- et sur la façon de remplir votre engagement scientifique.

Définissons à grands traits la théologie comme « science de la religion – des choses divines » (Larousse); ou mieux, comme science qui considère – pour

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<sup>1</sup> Audience générale du 20 septembre 2006, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, éd. hebdomadaire en langue française, N. 39, 26 sept. 2006, 12

l'approfondir – la révélation que Dieu fait de lui-même et de son action. C'est donc une science, qui requiert l'usage de notre intelligence. Par conséquent, à cause précisément de cette dimension rationnelle, la théologie a sa place au sein de l'« universitas scientiarum », qui toutes mettent en oeuvre l'intelligence pour approfondir notre connaissance des différents domaines qui suscitent sa recherche: histoire, lettres, droit, médecine, biologie, mathématiques, sociologie, etc. Le résultat sera dans chaque domaine une plus grande humanisation de la société qui assume de façon toujours plus responsable sa condition propre, selon le fameux adage philosophique « connais-toi toi-même ».

En théologie, le motif de notre recherche est en définitive notre propre connaissance des choses qui sont de Dieu, qui viennent de Dieu, et qui conduisent à Dieu. Tout cela compris dans le donné de la foi, qui selon la Lettre aux Hébreux est « une manière de posséder déjà ce qu'on espère, un moyen de connaître des réalités qu'on ne voit pas » (He 11,1). Et précisément, la foi n'est possible qu'en réponse à la Révélation car « personne n'a jamais vu Dieu; le Fils unique, qui est dans le sein du Père, nous l'a fait connaître » (Jn 1,18).

2.– Mais comment allons-nous, en tant qu'hommes doués de raison, approcher le mystère de la foi de façon scientifique, alors que cette réalité même dépasse nos capacités humaines?

Je retiens trois manières d'exprimer notre relation à Dieu par la raison:

a) dans la première, Dieu est le Tout Autre, tellement Autre que nous ne pouvons rien dire de lui. Ce fut le point de départ de l'exposé de Benoît XVI à Regensburg dans la citation de l'empereur byzantin Manuel II Paléologue en dialogue avec un sage musulman d'origine perse (qui d'ailleurs ne représente pas l'attitude de l'Islam comme tel). Je qualifierais une telle théologie de théologie « a-théiste »: nous ne savons ni ne pouvons rien dire sur Dieu, car notre capacité d'investigation ne peut atteindre la divinité. C'est dans cette ligne – l'a-théisme en moins – que se meut la théologie dite « apophatique » (cf. Lettre apostolique de Paul VI, *Lumen Ecclesiae*, du 20 nov. 1974, pour le VII<sup>ème</sup> centenaire de la mort de S. Thomas d'Aquin, n. 12), qui procède davantage par négation que par affirmation, comme aussi la théologie mystique, qui met en évidence le mystère comme connaissance réservée à quelques privilégiés, appelés par grâce à connaître « *des paroles inexprimables qu'il n'est pas permis à l'homme de redire* » (2 Cor 12,4), comme pour saint Paul.

b) selon la deuxième manière, je m'appuie pour dire ma foi sur la connaissance des autres, du Magistère de l'Eglise en particulier, en acceptant – comme nous le disons dans l'acte de foi que j'appris au catéchisme – « *tout ce que votre sainte Eglise enseigne et ordonne de croire* ». C'est, selon l'expression consacrée, la « foi du charbonnier », du fidèle qui fait confiance à son curé, de l'enfant qui accepte comme vrai tout ce que disent les adultes, ses parents en particulier. J'appellerais alors cette foi une foi médiatisée, qui repose



sur la parole de Dieu par le moyen de ceux qui ont la charge de la proclamer et de l'expliquer. Ici, le rôle du théologien est très important, pour que sa médiation ne soit pas écran, mais transparence de la Révélation. D'où, dans la première thèse de la Commission internationale de Théologie, la référence explicite à ce que le théologien fasse ses recherches et vive « *au sein de la communauté de foi de l'Église* », car lui est « professionnellement » capable de contempler le donné de la foi avec sa raison, qui est précisément la troisième attitude.

c) d'où, la troisième manière des rapports de la raison à la foi, celle de la foi vive dans une intelligence illuminée par la Révélation, d'une intelligence capable de réfléchir sur ce que Dieu est en lui-même et dans son action, afin de « réfléchir » – mais maintenant dans le sens originel du terme de reflet - cette connaissance autour de lui par l'enseignement, au sein de la Faculté de théologie, dans la prédication, la catéchèse et dans toute activité de transmission des vérités de la foi.

3.- L'activité du théologien – votre responsabilité à vous tous membres de la Faculté de théologie – est redevable de ces trois attitudes: parce que votre recherche, votre enseignement, vos écrits, ne sont vraiment théologiques que s'ils sont en relation à leur source originelle, à savoir la foi en Dieu révélé:

a) la théologie mystique, certainement, car vous « traitez » une matière scientifique bien plus délicate que tous les matériaux biologiques, explosifs ou inflammables, à savoir Dieu lui-même, qui a révélé à Moïse son nom: « celui qui est qui Il est » (cf. Ex 3,14). Non sans raison la parole « Dieu » vient d'un terme sanscrit signifiant « lumière ». Mais ce n'est pas une lumière qui nous aveugle, bien au contraire. Les citations de l'Écriture sont innombrables, qui nous permettraient (voilà une proposition pour un doctorat en science biblique) de comprendre davantage que le Seigneur qui se révèle est « Lumière sur notre route » (cf. Ps 119,105). Il n'y a pas de théologie authentique sans ad-oration, « ad os », parce que « adorer » c'est être à l'écoute de Dieu, tourné vers Lui qui nous parle, pour ensuite goûter cette parole de vie dans la contemplation. J'aime citer à ce propos ce dialogue entre un grand théologien et prédicateur du XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle, le P. Monsabré, dominicain, (1827-1907) avec une pastourelle de 12-14 ans du Jura français (on raconte cette histoire aussi pour certains autres théologiens et même des saints). Alors qu'il prêchait une mission paroissiale dans un village, le Père Monsabré se promenait un après-midi dans la campagne environnante et rencontra une petite jeune fille qui gardait les moutons. Il s'arrêta pour lui parler et lui demanda si elle allait à l'école. « Oh!, non mon Père, car j'ai trop à faire à garder les moutons et ma famille est trop pauvre ». « Mais au moins, tu vas au catéchisme ». « oui! durant l'hiver; mais au printemps et à l'automne je dois garder les moutons ». « Alors sais-tu tes prières ». « Oh oui! mon Père ». « Allons! voyons! récite le

Notre-Père ». La petite commença: « Notre Père » et fondit en larmes. Alors le bon Père lui dit: « courage! reprenons ensemble: ‘Notre-Père qui es aux cieux..’ ». Mais la petite ne pouvait pas aller plus loin que « Notre Père ». « Alors, tu ne sais pas tes prières » lui dit un peu brusquement le P. Monsabré. « Mais oui! je les sais; mais quand j’ai dit ‘Notre Père’, cela me suffit, je ne peux pas aller plus loin ». En racontant ensuite dans ses prédications ce fait vécu, le P. Monsabré concluait: « cette petite en savait beaucoup plus que moi sur Dieu, sur le Dieu Amour ». Je laisse cela à votre méditation, pour vous aider à comprendre que la mystique est non seulement utile, mais indispensable au théologien. D’ailleurs, le grand saint Thomas d’Aquin disait qu’il apprenait bien davantage dans la prière que par l’étude, et il ne commençait jamais aucun exposé sans s’être d’abord mis en prière (cf. Lettre apostolique de Paul VI, *Lumen Ecclesiae*, du 20. nov. 1974, pour le VII<sup>ème</sup> centenaire de la mort de S. Thomas d’Aquin, n. 12).

b) Le théologien puise aussi dans la « foi du charbonnier » l’attitude requise de tout fidèle qui remplit sa mission *au sein de la communauté de foi de l’Eglise*, dans un rapport permanent, confiant et fécond avec le Magistère de l’Eglise, responsable d’assurer l’authenticité de la foi dans l’enseignement. La dixième thèse de la Déclaration de la Commission internationale de Théologie sur le rapport mutuel entre magistère ecclésiastique et théologie affirme que « le dialogue constitue un excellent apport réciproque: dans sa mission de prêcher et de défendre la vérité de la foi et des mœurs le magistère peut en acquérir une plus grande compréhension; la compréhension théologique de la foi et des mœurs, fortifiée par le magistère, en obtient fermeté ».

c) Remplissant dans la foi sa mission de « fides quaerens intellectum » – la foi en quête d’intelligence – le théologien correspond pleinement à l’invitation de saint Pierre aux chrétiens de la diaspora, d’être « toujours prêts à justifier votre espérance devant ceux qui vous en demandent compte » (I Pi 15), en particulier lorsqu’ils sont appelés à défendre leur foi devant les tribunaux; et nous aujourd’hui devant la société de plus en plus indifférente aux valeurs religieuses. Nous voyons ici que la foi et l’espérance sont intimement liées, parce que la foi nous est donnée non pas comme une information, une idéologie, mais comme un ferment vital pour notre conduite.

### **Conclusion**

En conclusion, laissant ces quelques réflexions à votre sagace méditation, je me permets encore de vous poser une question, à vous M. le Doyen, à vous Mesdames et Messieurs les Professeurs, à vous les Etudiants, et à vous tous les collaborateurs et collaboratrices de la Faculté de Théologie romano catholique (comme aussi à vos collègues respectifs des trois autres Facultés de Théologie) de l’Université « Babeş-Bolyai »:

Pourquoi suis-je engagé dans cette Faculté ?

Comment est-ce que je remplis ma mission au service de la foi de l'Eglise ?  
Suis-je suffisamment conscient de remplir une réelle « mission ecclésiale »<sup>2</sup>  
– comme prêtre ou comme laïc – dans mon enseignement et dans l'étude de la  
théologie ?

Avec mes vœux et ma prière pour que chacune et chacun donne une  
réponse généreuse et constructive pour l'édification de l'Eglise!

Cluj-Napoca, Université Babeş-Bolyai  
10. novembre 2006

Jean-Claude Périsset  
Nonce Apostolique

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. cc. nn. 279 et 229 et tout le Livre III *La fonction d'enseignement de l'Eglise*, cc. 747–833 du *Code de droit canonique*.

## LA SALUTATION DU VICE-RECTEUR DE L'UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE PÉTER PÁZMÁNY

MIHÁLY KRÁNTZ

Quand en 1635 le Cardinal Péter Pázmány, né à Oradea, avait fondait la Faculté de Théologie, c'est à dire l'Université à Trnava au Nord de la Hongrie, il ne pouvait pas penser qu' après 370 ans le représentant de son héritage va saluer la Faculté de Théologie de l'Université Babeş-Bolyai, qui fête aujourd'hui le 10<sup>ème</sup> anniversaire de sa naissances, à Cluj.

Comme on dit généralement: « l'âge n'est pas un mérite mais une état ». Tous les temps de l'histoire ont leur défis, leurs problèmes, leur questions. Regardons comme un signe du temps le Cardinal Péter Pázmány qui a créé un institut de grande durée. Mais quand le 12 Mai 1635 il a signé la lettre de la fondation, il n'avait même pas pensé que ce geste va garantir la continuation des hautes études en Hongrie, parce que c'est justement avec la fondation de la Théologie que l'Université restera en fonction sans interruption pendant plus de trois siècles et demi.

C'est en 1921 que l'Université Royale Hongroise des Sciences a pris comme nom le nom de son fondateur, Cardinal Péter Pázmány. Mais en 1948 le régime communiste a expulsé la Faculté de Théologie du sein de l'Université à laquelle elle a donné naissance. Celle-là a continué comme Académie de Théologie Catholique Romaine Pontificale, avec le droit de donner des degrés académiques y compris le doctorat. La nouvelle université de l'état (ELTE) a laissé tomber même le nom de Pázmány à part.

Après 44 ans d'oppression et après le changements politiques de 1989, la Conférence des Évêques de Hongrie en 1992 a fondé l'Université Catholique Péter Pázmány avec la Faculté des Sciences humaines et naturellement avec la Faculté de Théologie qui a survécu le communisme. En 1995 elle a été complétée par la Faculté de Droit et en 2000 avec la Faculté de la Technologie informatique.

Dans ces moments jubilaires je vous transmets la salutation de notre Grand Chancelier le Cardinal Péter Erdő, président de la Conférence des Évêques de Hongrie qui a été reçu ici comme *doctor honoris causa*, et la salutation du recteur de l'Université Catholique Péter Pázmány Dr. György Fodor et la salutation cordiale du doyen de la Faculté de Théologie Dr. Géza Kuminetz.

C'était avec un grand intérêt que la Faculté de Théologie de l'Université Catholique de Péter Pázmány a accompagné les débuts de la faculté de Théologie à Cluj et a aidé selon ses possibilité d'insérer dans la vie académique de l'Université Babeş-Bolyai. Pendant les 10 ans passés les deux faculté, celle de Budapest et celle de Cluj avaient organisé des conférences théologiques et bibliques remarquables, ou à Cluj, ou bien à Budapest. On doit encore souligner

les relations oecuméniques excellentes à cette université où différentes églises peuvent collaborer développant la culture et l'éducation théologique en Transylvanie. Et peut-être c'est pas par hasard qu'on organise la Troisième Rencontre Oecuménique Européenne à Sibiu en Roumanie, en 2007.

Quant à ma part aussi je vous porte ma salutation cordiale pour ces 10 ans et j'exprime mes congratulations au doyen de la Faculté de Théologie, Rév. Prof. Dr. József Marton et à ses collaborateurs pour les conférences internationales organisées à Cluj, pour les nombreuses publications théologiques et scientifiques et je souhaite que la Faculté de Théologie continue son chemin et devienne un château-fort de la théologie hongroise dans ces décennies et dans les siècles qui viennent.

Vive l'Université Babeş-Bolyai! Vive la Faculté de Théologie Catholique à Cluj! *Vivant professores, vivant studentes!*

Prof. Mihály Kránitz

Vice-recteur de l'Université Catholique de Péter Pázmány

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Hans-Josef KLAUCK: *Apokryphe Apostelakten. Eine Einführung*, Katholisches Bibelwerk, Stuttgart, 2005, 292 pp., ISBN 978-3-460-33023-8 (paperback).**

Currently professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, Hans-Josef Klauck has a remarkable academic career. Earlier professor at the Universities of Bonn, München and Würzburg, and visiting professor at the University of Pretoria, president of the SNTS (2003-2004), Klauck teaches New Testament since almost thirty years. His numerous publications – the commentaries on the Corinthian (Echter) and on the Johannine Epistles (EKK), his many books on early Christianity and its world (*Die religiöse Umwelt des Urchristentums*, *Religion und Gesellschaft im frühen Christentum*, *Magie und Heidentum in der Apostelgeschichte des Lukas*, *Die antike Briefliteratur und das Neue Testament*, *Religion und Gesellschaft im frühen Christentum*, to mention only a few), several of them translated to English, extol Klauck as a prestigious scholar. Moreover, he is editor and co-editor of several important biblical series, such as the Herders Biblische Studien, the Stuttgarter Biblische Studien, the Hermeneia and the EKK.

A special category of his works is dedicated to the study of apocrypha. His interest in the area goes back to earlier times (with *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit. 4. Makkabäerbuch*). Among the recent volumes we need to mention his introduction to the apocryphal Gospels (*Apokryphe Evangelien. Eine Einführung*, published in 2002, translated to English one year later, and reedited in German in 2005). As the title suggests, the *Apokryphe Apostelakten*, published by the Katholisches Bibelwerk, according to the conception and style of the Apocryphal Gospels, is meant to be an introduction to the apocryphal Acts. (The English translation has appeared this year at T&T Clark.)

The volume starts with a general introduction, including a discussion on the literary genre, focusing on the ancient novel. The body of the work includes a discussion of the main apocryphal Acts: the Acts of John, Paul, Peter, Andrew, Thomas, the Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles, the Pseudo-Clementines, and the more recent works: the Acts of Philip, and a shorter presentation of the Acts of Bartholomew, of Matthew, of the Acts of James the Great and those of James the Less, of the Acts of Matthias, the Acts of Simon and Judas, the Acts of Barnabas, those of Mark, of Luke, of Timothy, of Thaddeus, the Acts of Xantippe and Polyxena, as well as Pseudo-Abdias.

Each chapter is introduced by a most useful bibliography, including the main editions, translations, introductions and the major literature on the book. Moreover, each subchapter is preceded by a reference list of articles to individual, specific topics. Thus for instance, before discussing APTh 3, Klauck includes four important articles (by Grant, Malherbe, Bollók and Zanker) on the interpretation of the intriguing portrait of Paul. Bibliographic references are extensive and up-to-date. For each writing Klauck discusses in the introduction the provenance, dating, witnesses, versions and translations, background and structure. Subsequently the content of each work is presented. Although designed to be an introduction, and characterised by an accessible style, the volume is of high scholarly profile, precisely because it is based on a large spectrum of speciality-literature, and it incorporates the results of most recent international research. For instance the section on the Acts of Thecla includes not only a reference to the essay by C. Büllsbach in the volume edited by K. Greschat and H. Omerzu (2003), but also to the latest volume, edited by Martin Ebner (*Aus Liebe zu Paulus?*), published in 2005. This feature is all the more remarkable, as the field of the apocryphal Acts is extremely broad, therefore covering it is not an easy task. Each chapter offers a lot of information in a relatively condensed space.

Reading and searching through the volume is facilitated by an index of biblical and apocryphal texts, an index of topics and names, while further research is promoted by an index of modern authors.

Klauck's volume is an excellent introduction not only to the topic of apocryphal acts, but also to the manifold problems of origin, versions and relations between these writings among themselves and to the canonical books. Thus the *Apokryphe Apostelakten* is a fundamental work for all those who, as students or scholars less familiar with this wide field of the New Testament apocrypha, desire to get started or to learn more on this exciting literature, or wish to find a guide to contemporary research and literature.

*Reviewed by Korinna ZAMFIR*

**Thomas L. BRODIE, Dennis MACDONALD, Stanley E. PORTER (eds.): *The Intertextuality of the Epistles: Explorations of Theory and Practice* (New Testament Monographs 16), Sheffield Phoenix, Sheffield, 2006, xvi + 311pp., ISBN 1905048629 (hardcover).**

The volume edited by Th. L. Brodie, D. R. MacDonald and S. E. Porter comprises the papers presented at the international conference organised in 2005 at the Biblical Institute in Limerick, Ireland. The essays put forward an outstanding exercise of intertextual reading in exegesis. The volume starts with an introductory section, dealing mostly with the theoretical issues of intertextuality. Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher outlines the origins, method and criteria of intertextual reading. Steve Moyise applies the method to the Book of Revelation, more specifically to the depiction of Jesus as Lamb and lion. Although the article does not deal with the epistolary material, it was probably included in the volume because of its methodological considerations. The article by Peter Philips discusses the approaches of Gérard Genette and Umberto Eco, advocating for the need of a reader-oriented intertextuality. In an interesting essay, nonetheless again not connected with the epistles, Erkki Koskenniemi proposes an assessment of Josephus' references to Homer, Hesiod, Choerilus, and Theodectes. Jon Paulien offers another paper on Rev, focusing on the issue Old Testament citations, allusions and echoes; although this article also departs from the theme given in the title of the volume, it draws attention to the importance of clarity in what concerns terminology and methodology.

A second part follows, including the essays by Thomas Brodie, Lukas Bormann and Stanley Porter. Brodie argues for the triple intertextuality of the epistles: Old Testament, epistles among each other, and the thorny question of the use of the epistles by the Gospels and Acts. Bormann applies the principle of triple intertextuality to Philippians, discussing the authorial intention, the reader-oriented and the text-oriented interpretation. The reception of Phil is exemplified through the use of the motif of the suffering Paul and of his legacy, as reflected in Col and 2 Tim. Porter's essay is a revision of the *status questionis* regarding the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament, and of his own terminology, formulated in 1997.

More specific articles are included in the third part of the volume. Annette Merz offers a summary of the principles, methodology and conclusions of her dissertation (*Die fiktive Selbstausslegung des Paulus*, 2004), discussing the intertextual character of the Pastoral Epistles, on the example of 1 Tim 6,1-5, seen as re-reading of Phlm 16. While Bormann has shown how Phil, as authentic Pauline epistle, has influenced the Deutero-Pauline literature, Merz points especially to the way in which Pauline letters are read through the lens of



the Deutero(or Trito)-Pauline epistles. The subsequent essays focus on the relationship between 1 and 2 Thess. Hanna Roose convincingly argues for 2 Thess being a reading instruction for 1 Thess, that changes the meaning of concepts like the parousia, tribulation as atonement and guarantee for eschatological reward, and outlines the grandiose fresque of the Day of the Lord, created by the sequence of 1 and 2 Thess. J. Michael Gilchrist examines the debated matter of the authenticity of 2 Thess exclusively by means of intertextuality, pertinently arguing for the dependence of 2 Thess on 1 Thess. The same issue is analysed by Outi Leppä, this time in the broader context of the Pauline corpus, and by David J. Clark, who, contrarily to the previous authors, seems to favour the authenticity of 2 Thess.

The fourth section takes up the problem of the relationship between the Pauline epistles and the Acts. Dennis R. MacDonald makes a case for the dependence of Luke's portrayal of Paul on Plato and Xenophon's depiction of the unjustly persecuted Socrates. One wonders however whether the dependence is that much literary, or rather indirect, based on Socrates-motifs. Paul Elbert discusses the matter of possible literary links between Luke-Acts and the Pauline epistles, apparently sharing the traditional view of Luke as Paul's travel companion, and of his acquaintedness with Paul's letters. Heikki Leppä puts forward the tensions and contradictions between Gal and Acts, as sources for the Pauline chronology, and shows to what extent are scholars influenced by the "information" provided by Acts. Michael S. Sommer deals with the relation between John and the Johannine Epistles, challenging the classical view according to which the Gospel represents the early stage of the Johannine community's self-understanding, while 1 John is a later, heterodox writing. His approach reverses the conception of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and the question of higher and lower Christology.

The last chapter, written by Brodie, MacDonald and Porter, puts forward a number of essential methodological criteria for the intertextual reading.

The volume witnesses for the importance of the intertextual perspective in exegesis, as it shows to what extent our understanding of biblical texts is determined by other, later texts. In terms of authorial intention, intertextuality provides a special authority to later writings, and what is even more important, it offers a *relecture* of the initial text. Thus, the intertextual reading can make us aware of the preconceptions and foreknowledge we may unconsciously read into texts. The editors and authors are to be commended for their effort and their valuable contribution.

*Reviewed by Korinna ZAMFIR*