

THE ROMANIAN INSTITUTE OF
ORTHODOX THEOLOGY AND
SPIRITUALITY

Symposium

**Jesus Christ as the Theandric Paradigm of
Man's Restoration
at the Dawn of the Third Millennium**

*The Seventh Ecumenical Theological
Symposium*

Vol. VII, Nr. 1, 2000

**THE ROMANIAN INSTITUTE OF
ORTHODOX THEOLOGY AND
SPIRITUALITY**
The Chapel “St. Apostles Peter and Paul”
INCORPORATED IN AUGUST 1993

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of Man’s Restoration
at the Dawn of the Third Millennium**

*The Seventh Ecumenical Theological
Symposium*

December 5, 2000

Published by The Romanian Institute of
Orthodox Theology and Spirituality
New York, 2000

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Printed in Romania

ISBN 1-888067- 08-X

ISSN 1084-0591

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Introductory Address

Your Eminence Archbishop Victorin,
Rev. Fr. Dr. Vasilache,
Reverend Fathers,
Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Our Lord Jesus Christ is presented in the book of Revelation as being the Alpha and the Omega, the One who is the first and the One who is the last, the beginning and the end. That kind of *coincidentia oppositorum*, that paradoxical type of being is suddenly becoming very significant for our life today as we approach the great intersection of opposites, the year 2000, where the end and the beginning meet each other and look at each other face to face.

We are caught up in the middle.

Of course, the great question, after considering all that we humans have done in the last millennium, is, whether there is any future out there for us and if yes, what kind, and how can we best make sense of it for what we want our life to be.

Theologically speaking, believing in God is believing that there is a future for us, and from the Christian perspective the best place to prepare for it and meet it is the Church. As the theologian and writer Jerry K. Robbins says “The passing away of eschatology would be a terrible loss. The Church is an interim institution. It looks back to the first coming of Christ, and it looks forward to the second coming of Christ. It is a movement in three acts: past, present and future. To lose the final act would be to lose the point of it all. If the Church loses its trifocal vision, it loses its sight altogether” (Jerry K. Robbins, “Standing on the Promises: The Hope that Survives Doomsday”, in *Theology Today*, Oct. 99, p. 393).

The Church incorporates all three dimensions of time because she is created based on and after the theandric paradigm of her founder: our Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as God and man meet in Christ in a perfect way, so meet

the divine and the human in the Church and so meet the two divine eternities, one extending into the past, and the other extending into the future, with the human present *hic et nunc*; (that does not mean that there is no present time dimension for the divine or no past and future as two infinities for man).

In other words, Jesus Christ is a theandric being and besides this double aspect of His existence, there is another double aspect: His being the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. And being based on Christ's theandric paradigm, the Church is also divine and human and also beginning and end. Therefore, we Christians, who live in the Church, are Christocentric beings; that means, as image of God, we are as well, at a different level, divine and human, incorporating past and future in our present. That makes us experience the paradoxical *coincidentia oppositorum* phenomenon in our daily life, and what we need now at the crossing of millennia more than at other times is to know how to make it meaningful for our becoming. There cannot be another answer to our *how* but Christ.

In the same book of Revelation Christ is described as the One who comes, also; as Christians, as the people of God - *laos tou Theou* - on our way to the Kingdom modeled on Christ, we cannot but advance to meet our model.

Many sociologists, theologians, and philosophers agree, looking at our present day realities and thinking of the future, we need to reinvent the world, the society. We need to reshape it.

The only guarantee that we can do it is our life in Christ. From the context of these short and few reflections many questions arise:

1. Is man indeed divine or in kinship (*syngeneia*) with God, as St. Gregory of Nyssa puts it?
2. Can we change our world?
3. Is the theandric paradigm indeed the model that can successfully carry us into and through the next century and millennium?

The papers from our Symposium will try to address these questions and other concerns and problems that we might have in relation to who we are, where we are going and how we get there.

We are happy to have here with us distinguished guests and scholars from different fields of life who will enrich our experience with their pertinent research and observations.

I am pleased to introduce to you once again:

His Eminence, Archbishop Victorin, Fr. Dr. Vasile Vasilache, Mr. George Alexe, theologian and writer, Mrs. Didi Alexe, Dr. Bruce Buglione, Dr. Elena de Avila, Fr. Dr. Eugen Pentiu, Fr. Cornel Todeasã, Mr. Constantin Tennyson.

Symposium Prolegomena

Your Eminence Archbishop Victorin,
Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Mitrophoros Dr. Vasile Vasilachi,
Very Reverend Clergy,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, it is my privilege to acknowledge the highest hierarchical presence at our Symposium of His Eminence Archbishop Victorin of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and Canada, accompanied by the Rt. Reverend Archimandrite Dr. Vasile Vasilachi, the Archdiocesan Vicar and Parish Priest of “Saint Nicholas” Romanian Orthodox Church of Woodside, New York.

Both of them are most venerable Church personalities not only in our Romanian-American Orthodox communities throughout the United States, Canada and South America, but also in the Orthodox monastic spirituality and culture, being ecumenically recognized as such, especially in the Standing Conference of the Orthodox Canonical Bishops in the Americas. We are warmly welcoming you from the bottom of our hearts, and we thank you for bestowing your blessings upon the works and participants at our Symposium. *Eis polla etty, Despota!*

As mentioned, the Seventh Ecumenical Theological Symposium of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality is centered in this symbolic year of its activity upon the theme of Lord Jesus Christ as the Theandric Paradigm of Man’s Restoration at the Dawn of the Third Millennium.

Introducing to you the Orthodox theological concept of Theandric Paradigm, we have to recognize that the postmodernist era in which we are living belongs to paradigms, especially to changing or shifting paradigms. They are logically understood as a change from one way of thinking to another. It has been proclaimed already that a paradigm shift is nothing less than a new world view, attracting adherents and providing solutions to problems. So, paradigms are

becoming in our time a common place and a frame of reference, even if in some circles the paradigm shift is considered as being clearly of occult origin and the work of the Antichrist (Joseph R. Chambers, D.D., *A Charismatic Paradigm*, <http://www.pawcreek.org/paradigm.htm>).

I would like to underline from the very beginning, that the two key words of the main topic of our Symposium, “Theandric” and “Paradigm”, have nothing to do with these postmodernist paradigms. The distinction between them is fundamental, even if these key words might be eventually considered too intriguing, if not lacking any reverence in their direct association and relation with our Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, not to be identified with any other paradigm.

Such assertions are less probable, but the truth is that the postmodernist era has been invaded by all kinds of competing and changing paradigms. Some of them are very challenging for all of Christianity and their persuasive impact cannot be ignored.

That is why, last year (1998), at the end of the 6th Symposium, which was dedicated to the theological legacy of Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, the Director and founder of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality, Rev. Fr. Dr. Theodor Damian, and myself decided to assign to the present Symposium the topic “Jesus Christ as the Theandric Paradigm for Man’s Restoration at the Dawn of the Third Millennium.”

By proposing such a topic, we are hoping that our Symposium will theologially and ecumenically articulate a Christian alternative to all the other postmodernist paradigms, since there are a lot of changing paradigms which philosophers, scientists, new agers and theologians are intensively talking about. Nevertheless, among all of these changing paradigms, only one remains unchanged, and that is, forever, the Theandric Paradigm of Jesus Christ.

In fact, ontologically speaking, the Theandric Paradigm is one of the most distinctive metaphors for our Lord Jesus Christ, that makes sense in the Orthodox Soteriology and whose spiritual meaning proves to be undeniable throughout the millennia.

But there is also a deeper aspect to be taken into consideration. The Theandric Paradigm is not only more expressive and more significant than the concept of synergism for instance, but also more effective. In synergism, the human efforts are cooperating with the

divine grace for the salvation of the soul, while the Theandric Paradigm is aiming at the restoration of man as a person, whose theandric structure is similar to that of the person of Jesus Christ and who was created according to the image and likeness of God.

Certainly, there are many things to be said about these shifting paradigms and their impact on our Christian life. Our Symposium will present a series of papers dealing with various aspects of these paradigms in the light of the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As announced in the pamphlets provided, there will be eight papers to be presented, as follows:

The first, which will directly address the topic of our Symposium, will be submitted by myself.

Three distinguished professors of Audrey Cohen College of New York will offer their papers: Prof. Dr. Bruce Buglione, "Theandric Explorations in Higher Education," Prof. Dr. Elena de Avila, "Faith in Jesus Christ and Self-Esteem," and Rev. Fr. Dr. Theodor Damian, "Man's Recapitulation in Christ According to Saint Irenaeus and Its Significance for Our Life Today."

I would like at this time to cordially congratulate Rev. Fr. Theodor Damian, the President of our Institute, for his second Doctorate, this time in Theology, successfully earned from the University of Bucharest, Romania, this year on August 24th, by brilliantly defending his second doctoral thesis entitled "The Spiritual Implications of the Theology of Icons." It was an academic event much applauded in Romania and also in America. Again, congratulations, Fr. Damian!

In the last part of our Symposium, the following papers will be read: Rev. Fr. Dr. Eugen Pentiu, "Above All His Friends and Throughout the Ages, Paradoxical Language in the Old Testament Messianic Prophecies," Rev. Fr. Dr. Cornel Todeasã, "Seek First the Kingdom," and Prof. Constantine Tennyson, "Science and Religion in the Context of Christian Doctrine."

Before we proceed further, let me first express our gratitude to our guest speakers tonight. All of them are warmly welcomed for their very interesting papers and contributions to the main topic of the Symposium. Also, our gratitude goes to the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality, founded seven years ago by its dynamic Director and President, Rev. Fr. Dr. Theodor Damian, and his distinguished Preotesea, Mrs. Claudia Damian, and finally to all those

who by their devotion, hard work and skillfulness, have made possible this Symposium.

As we have already made known in the call for papers and advance information, the reading time for a paper is strictly limited to 15 minutes, or even less. However, all papers will be published in their entirety in *Symposium*, the review edited by the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality.

Following the presentation of all the papers, the Symposium will take a break during which a delicious dinner will be served, I hope around 7 o'clock P.M., by the Ladies Reunion of both the oldest fraternal society in America "Dorul", founded in 1903, and the Romanian Orthodox Church "Saints Apostles Peter and Paul," in Astoria, New York.

After the break, all the guest speakers and participants are kindly invited to a round table discussion about the problems raised by the papers. The closing remarks and the traditional prayer, presented by the Rev. Fr. Dr. Theodor Damian, with the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Victorin, will officially close the 7th Ecumenical Theological Symposium of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York.

Finally, it is our great pleasure to acknowledge the distinguished messages of benevolence and best wishes for the success of the Symposium, that we have received in recognition of our ecumenical and theological activities, academically developed by the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality.

Particularly, we are grateful to the Romanian Patriarchate for the message sent through His Grace Bishop Teophan Sinaitul, Patriarchal Vicar.

Also, we express our gratitude for the highest hierarchical messages and blessings of His Eminence Metropolitan Daniel of Moldova and Bucovina, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae of Banat, and His Eminence Archbishop Nathanael of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church of America (OCA).

In addition to these messages we also recognize the friendly wishes sent by the Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Hopko, Dean of St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary of Crestwood, New York.

And now let us start our work by inviting the Rt. Reverend

Archimandrite Mitrophanos, Fr. Dr. Vasile Vasilachi, to present his reflections on the main topic of our Symposium.

Thank You.

Jesus Christ as the Theandric Paradigm of Man's Restoration at the Dawn of the Third Millennium

The end of the 20th century and of the second millennium seems to be aggravated by strange competing paradigm shifts that aim to change everything, especially the old order of the world. For many, the syntagm of paradigm shift generally means a new way of looking at old ideas, or, more comprehensively, a distinct new way of thinking about old problems and thus creating new problems. But, we have to remember that more than two thousand years ago the Ecclesiastes said: "There is no new thing under the sun." And rightly so.

Certainly, this is not the first time when the "new" order of the world created by man, is luciferically trying to replace the divine order of the world created by God. But it is never too late for the adepts of some of these new shifting paradigms to reflect about what has already been called their own "metaphysical amnesia," so to say, their own blindness, when they persuasively believe that their "new order" is about to break out of the "old" order, be it that of modern rationalism or that of the Christian order of the world.

In fact, there is nothing new other than the renewal of the old fight between the western anthropocentrism and theocentrism, the two well known ways of the modern world order that have been, unilaterally and exclusively, determined by each other, without any possibility of creating a positive synthesis, a new paradigm shift of both of them, able to find a real solution to the new postmodern order of the world. Instead of a real paradigm shift, of a new conceptual world-view, accepted and recognized by everybody, we are contemplating a gradual decline of the old ways of the world order, all of them being intellectually and spiritually exhausted by their reciprocal frictions. After almost three centuries of struggle for domination, they have reached the post modern era, and by now are facing their fatal decline, which coincides with the beginning of the third millennium. Here we are.

The final combat that is taking place inside this world competition of paradigm shifts is still the one between western anthropocentrism and theocentrism. Unfortunately, western

anthropocentrism in its fight against theocentrism has dramatically succeed to pave the way for the oriental pantheistic movement of the new era and its finest cortege of paradigm shifts. To use a syntagm of the great Romanian philosopher Nae Ionescu, there is a kind of spiritual precipitation, still in progress, whose final paradigmatic result is yet unknown.

Anyhow, the question is, which one of these old or new paradigms, that are competing, dueling and precipitating against each other for supremacy, could be sempiternal? None but one, as we will further see. Could there be some hierarchical distinctions among the paradigms that are in the service of the new order of the world, and the paradigms that are sustaining and defending the divine order of the world created by God? And more importantly, could there be at least one possibility to reconcile the human paradigms with the divine paradigms? An eventual answer might be only this: "What is impossible for mortals is possible for God" (Luke 18: 26).

I would like to underline, and not only for the record, that before the year 1962, when Thomas S. Kuhn (1922-1996) published *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, his revolutionary book that opened the gate to all of these postmodernist paradigm shifts, in Romania, Nichifor Crainic (1889-1972), Professor at the Faculty of Theology of the Bucharest University and a visionary orthodox poet, also published a revolutionary theological book about the theandric structure of the Romanian culture, literature and art, taking a firm Christian standing against the old paradigms of the modernist era of European western culture, in the first half of our century.

For Nichifor Crainic, the strongest Christian paradigm against all these transient paradigms of the modernist era, which invaded Romania before the Second World War, was the eastern theandric mode of the Orthodox faith, as he demonstrated theologically in his landmark book *The Nostalgia of Paradise* (Second Edition, Bucharest, Ed. Cugetarea, 1942). Thus, he succeeded to establish an autochthonous balance between modernism and traditionalism, and more than that, to establish the strongest basis of the Romanian spiritual resistance in the second half of our century, when the theandric mode of Romanian Christianity has finally overcome the atheist paradigms of Sovietic Communism in Romania.

In fact, the eastern theandric mode of patristic essence promoted

by Nichifor Crainic is nothing else than the theandric mode of existence of all Romanians, based on our Lord Jesus Christ as the theandric paradigm of man's restoration throughout the centuries and millennia. In itself, the theandric mode of existence is a divine mystery, just as it is when applied to the Romanian culture.

According to Nichifor Crainic, the theandric way means to understand the universe from the perspective of the divine thought, to think of the world the way God thinks of it, to love it the way God loves it, and to work in it the way God does. This is the theandric way of being, promoted by the Christian faith and wisdom, the way of Jesus Christ. As Nichifor Crainic noted, the theandric character of Romanian Orthodoxy, principally based on the works of Pseudo-Dionisius the Areopagite, (who was identified by Fr. Prof. Dr. Gheorghe Drăgulin as being the Daco-Roman monk Dionisius Exiguus), has become a basic element of the Romanian autochthonous spirituality, culture, art, and civilization.

We have to take notice that even before Nichifor Crainic, Metropolitan Irineu Mihălcescu, the well known dogmatist and apologet of Romanian Orthodoxy, has insisted on the theandric character of the person of our Savior: God-Man in one hypostasis.

Following Metropolitan Irineu Mihălcescu and Nichifor Crainic, Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae has also reflected on the theandric mystery. He taught us that after Incarnation the Logos does not have any longer the divine life separate from the human one; nor does He have the human life separated from the divine one. All His acts are theandric, divine and human.

However, we consider the traditional theandricism of the Romanian Orthodox Christianity a strong paradigm, ontologically founded in the theandric person and activity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This Romanian theandric paradigm has theologially proved, throughout the millennia, its spiritual effectiveness not only against the transient paradigms of the modernist era, particularly raised from the western autonomy of reason or autonomy of science, but also against the atheist paradigms of Sovietic communism in Romania; it is evident today that all these modernist and Sovietic paradigms combined, were unable to suppress the sempiternal theandric paradigm of our Lord Jesus Christ reflected in the Romanian Orthodox culture.

Therefore, pursuing the tradition of the theandric mode of Romanian Orthodoxy, as it was literarily and theologially promoted by

Nichifor Crainic and his spiritual movement of “Gândirea” (The Thinking) against the modernist paradigms of his time, we are considering in the same way the theandric paradigm of our Lord Jesus Christ as the only one able to answer all the questions raised by all the shifting paradigms of our western postmodernist era.

Certainly, I am deeply aware of the fact that we are living in a world full of all sorts of paradigms, each one representing at any moment a different world view in conflict with all the others. From the preparadigmatic stage of mankind, to the postmodernist era of our time, one might historically witness the struggle of how each “new” world order created by these local or global paradigms, was luciferically trying to replace the divine order of the world created by God. But they never succeeded.

Unfortunately, the fever of changing everything only for change’s sake, no matter how and for what purpose, is a paradigmatic phenomenon of our time, that affects, among other religions, the entire Christianity; this inadvertently creates spiritual and moral crises, and when it comes to the destiny of Christianity itself, it either interprets the end of the second millennium as the end of Christianity, or in the best case, predicts that a new form of Christianity will arise.

It seems to me that the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose theandric identity is ontologically based on the hypostatic union of the two natures after the Incarnation, was not well understood in the second millennium just as it was not understood in the first, either.

Consequently, in the first millennium the humanity of Jesus Christ was generally contested, but not His divinity (with some exceptions), while in the second millennium, His divinity was generally rejected, but not His humanity (again, with a few exceptions). What will happen in the third millennium? Only God knows, if we are going to give blank credit to the shifting paradigms of the New Age movement, or to those western theologians who are fascinated by Thomas Kuhn’s revolutionary paradigm, and who try to transfer and adapt the structure of his scientific paradigm shift to the postmodern theological realities.

It is true that *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* of Thomas Kuhn has revolutionized the history and philosophy of science and his concept of paradigm shifts has proved to be very productive in other fields such as biology, medicine, politics, economics, and sociology, not to speak of education, philosophy, art, and religion. It is also true that changes are not always welcomed even if they are inevitable, but they

have to be *volens-nolens* recognized and accepted.

As Rabbi Zalman Schachter rightly said in his book *Paradigm Shift* (edited by Ellen Singer, Jason Aronson Inc., Northvale, New Jersey, Jerusalem, 1993) “the whole planet was affected by the shifts... All life is touched” (p. 279). Some of his paradigmatic reflections, concerning the newly emerging ways of looking at reality, deserve to be mentioned. He emphasizes the fact that “many who seek God today look for some needed spiritual vitamins in the liturgical and theological medicine chests of others. Among Catholics, people like Merton saw the preciousness of the Buddhist and Taoist teachings and found them valuable in the service of Catholic spirituality. This has come to the point that there are now such recognized hybrids as Christian Yoga and Catholic Zen. Many of us have also learned from Native Americans, Yogis, Sufis, and Vedantists, in addition to Christians” (p. 280). Evidently there are some new religious aspects seen from a Judaic perspective that suggest a kind of paradigmatic melting pot of planetarian proportions. The effects of this paradigm shift in the Judaic religious thinking might be considered creative and inspiring, but I believe, they need not a theological confrontation, but precisely some very distinctive ecumenical criteria to strictly indicate the validity of a religious paradigm shift in such new “revolutionary” situations.

Without minimizing the new paradigm thinking of Thomas S. Kuhn and its positive influence on the creation of a new world view and order, we have to pay serious attention to the fact that the structure of the new paradigm thinking in science cannot be the same in theology or even in philosophy, not because the paradigm shift appears to be a more or less controversial concept, but because these are different fields with different contents and specific characteristics. Especially the essential structures of a new paradigm shift of theology suppose to outline the constant theandric paradigm of humanity throughout the millennia in the light of Jesus Christ as the theandric paradigm of man’s restoration. This theandric paradigm has to remain unchanged and immune to the proliferation of so many religious changes and individual new interpretations, that are labeled as postmodern paradigm shifts, that are jeopardizing, replacing or even destroying the essential structures of the real theological paradigm. What has to be changed in this case, is our attitude toward this eternal theandric paradigm, by renouncing our anthropocentric assertions and temptations inherited from the modern era, that try to replace our Eastern Orthodox theandric paradigm with

the most publicized paradigm shifts of science and philosophy (most of them being promoted by the pantheistic new age movement of our times).

Having in mind Thomas S. Kuhn's understanding of the structure of the scientific revolution as it was applied in the history of science, I find it interesting, in this context, to move to another significant voice on the subject, that of the Roman Catholic liberal theologian Hans Küng. In his book *Theology for the Third Millennium, An Ecumenical View* (translated by Peter Heinegg, Doubleday, 1988, 316 pp.) Hans Küng has developed a way of teaching parallel to that of Thomas S. Kuhn by trying to create a new basic model of theology. He does not intend to replace an old paradigm with a new one, but to create a basic consensus in theology that "makes room for different other methods, theories, schools, and theologies" (p. 169). In spite of his considerable efforts to create a western theological paradigm able to reconcile the paradigm shifts of all the other Christian confessions and denominations, as well as religions, by trying to argue what true religion really means, the final conclusion of his postmodern paradigm cannot be accepted because of its lack of theandric truth; consequently, in the end, Buddhism and Hinduism, Islam and Judaism, and Christianity will no longer be there; also, in the end, he writes, "there will no longer be standing between the religions a figure that separates them, no more prophet or enlightened one, not Muhammad and not the Buddha. Indeed even Christ Jesus, whom Christians believe in, will no longer stand here as a figure of separation" (p. 255).

Certainly, Hans Küng deserves more attention, not only for his creditable contributions and interpretations, especially in the fourth chapter, "Theology on the way to a new paradigm", but also for the less creditable (but sometimes inspiring) and controversial aspects of his well intended theological paradigm, particularly found in part C, "A New Departure Toward a Theology of the World Religions." Hans Küng's challenge has to be objectively appreciated by theologians, who need to find the eternal theandric paradigm in which all the paradigm shifts have to perfect and fulfill their sense of Christian existence. The paradigm of the "true religion" based on its inner existential truth, demonstrated by Hans Küng, does not solve the present postmodern crisis, because the truth of all religions is ontologically grounded on the fundamental relation of man and God.

The great Roman Catholic theologian and thinker, Jean

Daniélou, in his essay “Phenomenology of Religions and Philosophy of Religion” (in *The History of Religions, Essays in Methodology*, ed. by Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa, with a preface by Jerald C. Bauer, The University of Chicago Press, 1959), clearly proclaims that “Theandricism is religion itself, that is to say the eternal relationship between man and God, the presence of the One to the human spirit. But the Christ is the religious man in whom this relationship has found its perfect expression, in whom the intimacy between God and man which exists eternally is at last realized” (p. 77).

We have to concede that in most cases, our Lord Jesus Christ as the Theandric Paradigm of man’s restoration at the dawn of the third millennium, is directly or indirectly rejected, if not misinterpreted, misunderstood or totally ignored by postmodern paradigm shifts.

Above postmodern Christianity the sword of Damocles is still suspended by a single hair. Aware of the adjective “controversial”, attached to his name, the Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong is proposing a new way of understanding Christian life and the traditional dogmas of Christianity; this new way requires not only the reformation of the Church’s faith and practice in our times, but also a reformulation of Christianity adequate to our new world. Otherwise, the whole Christianity, in order to survive in the new millennium, must change or die. He believes that another alternative does not exist. (See his book: *Why Christianity Must Change or Die. A Bishop Speaks to Believers in Exile*, Harper, San Francisco, 1998, 358 pp.). The new western paradigm shift elaborated by the Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong replaces God with what he believes to be “the Ground of Being.” According to his conclusion, “The Ground of Being will finally be worshiped apart from any system of religious thought. It is a startling but real insight into the future of worship” (p. 224). Our Lord Jesus Christ as the theandric paradigm of man’s restoration at the dawn of the third millennium remains in the belief of Bishop Spong only a divine presence, a powerful experience of the reality of that Ground of Being undergirding us all at the very depths of life (p. 221).

Certainly, to the dubitable question “why Christianity must change or die”, other paradigmatic considerations and answers could be given than that of Bishop John Shelby Spong, whose beliefs and predictions might be theologically challenged and jeopardized, since he substitutes the personal relationship between God and man with a new impersonal relation between man and the Ground of Being. Without

being an atheist, the author of *Why Christianity Must Change or Die* is searching beyond theism, better said outside of theism the new God images, is replacing the theistic God of the past with a God who is called the Ground of Being, a God who is not a being superior to all other beings, because this God is the Ground of Being itself. From now on Christianity is apparently interpreted apart from its theistic context in the light of this Ground of Being, the new God conceived from a “non theistic” attitude.

As a matter of fact, there seems to be a problem of determination. The question is whether or not the Ground of Being is determined by man, or man himself is determined by the Ground of Being. In this case, the source of determination appears to be not in the Ground of Being, but in the mind of man, so the theandric structure of man is reduced only to its human side, while its relation with the Ground of Being becomes at least illusory. In this situation, why must Christianity change or die? It would be a non sense.

To conclude this presentation, I have to mention that all religious paradigm shifts of this western postmodern era are dealing, more or less, with the personal or impersonal relation between God and man throughout the millennia. Indeed, there is a real paradigmatic movement that tries to reinforce, from various points of view, the old or the newly established rapports between transcendence and immanence, between divinity and humanity. In this framework, special attention is granted to the new interpretations of the ontological relationship between God and man, in order to eventually update them in accordance with both, the new order of the world, already in progress, and the divine order of the world.

However, a theological systematization of the data furnished by all these postmodern paradigm shifts demands not only a reevaluation of the primordial relationship between God and man throughout the millennia, in the light of history, philosophy, and theology of religions (including Christianity); it also requires a creative hermeneutic able to discover the theandric structure of man and its spiritual message and Christian meaning for the entire mankind, by harmoniously reconciling the divine order of the world created by God with the new order of the world created by the man of the postmodern era. In this sense, the book *Theological Hermeneutic and its Dynamics in the Structuring of Tradition* (Sibiu, 1999, 122 pp.) by the well known Romanian ecumenist theologian, Rev. Prof. Dr. Ion Bria of Geneva, Switzerland, can give one of the best Eastern Orthodox orientations in this western labyrinth that has become a paradise of all sorts of postmodern paradigm shifts.

Certainly, all these assertions, exaggerations and implications are to be analyzed, confronted and theologically debated in order to discover the eternal theandric paradigm of the whole mankind that shines in the divine light of Jesus Christ as the theandric paradigm of man's restoration at the dawn of the third millennium.

Theandric Explorations in Higher Ed

When I was asked to participate in a roundtable titled *Christ as a Theandric Paradigm for Man's Restoration at the Dawn of the New Millennium*, I felt both honored and humbled. After all, it has been thirty years since I last studied theology. While questions I had then about the nature of Divine characteristics still appear vital after all these years, my preoccupation with solving the more mundane day to day career and family concerns have caused them to recede in terms of priority. Recently, I have begun to revisit, albeit from an educational administrator's perspective, the question of what the Academy has contributed to the undermining of theological inquiry as a legitimate endeavor in higher education, thereby preventing it from being treated seriously in many of our institutions of learning.

In addition to being a senior administrator, I am also a professor of Applied Social Systems theory. As such, I am interested on the ways societies incorporate specific themes and/or constructs into their cultural agendas. And, since systemic processes are needed to their delivery, the cultivation of educative styles specific to that culture's purpose remains a primary focus of my attention.

Families, employers, churches and primary and secondary school systems have clearly defined and observable objectives that are usually achieved by adherence to very formal, almost intractable curricula. Higher Education, on the other hand, has consistently portrayed itself as the guardian of the *unprejudiced* environment in which its constituents are encouraged to pursue *new* knowledge in a guided, generally unconstrained manner.

Ignoring the rather challenging and, seemingly, oxymoronic pedagogical question of how educators guide innovative intellectual investigation without constraining the scope of the inquiry, I have chosen to make my contribution to this Symposium a brief consideration the ways the Academy has responded to non-secular inquiry. I will identify some questions that have arisen out of my personal experiences in the classroom and the issues I face as a college administrator. I will discuss whether or not an impartial and detached

atmosphere currently exists in secular colleges and consider whether, or not open discussions of fundamental religious value issues are encouraged, or even permitted. I will comment on how I believe the emotionality of political correctness saps the intellectual energy required to pursue a free and open exchange of ideas. Finally, I will consider whether ideas like collectivism and individualism, fundamentalism and post-modernism, and secularism and non-secularism receive equal opportunity protection in the arena of the college classroom.

Answers to such questions have important implications for investigators of American culture. And while they may cry out for a formal study conducted on a national scale, my approach here pretends to be nothing more than a personal and anecdotal treatment.

My observations will focus, then, on how one particular secular institution of higher education, Audrey Cohen College, struggles with the question of how to present Divine nature and its human manifestation in one's professional life. While I certainly do not mean to imply that anyone should generalize from this discussion that this is what goes on in academia today, it may stimulate the kind of speculation that this author believes is inappropriate to constrain.

Purpose-Centered System of Education is a model of learning developed at Audrey Cohen College. It informs all the educational programs that the college offers. A transdisciplinary model, it seeks to integrate information from disparate sources into unique configurations that are delivered to the students through what are referred to as *Dimensions of Learning*. Consisting of five areas of knowledge divided along performance oriented criteria, information is clustered by faculty in ways that, both logically and practically, relate to one another. The undergraduate Human Service curriculum, for example, illuminates eight thematic competencies. These are Self-Assessment and Preparation for Practice, Developing Professional Relations, Working-in-Groups, Teaching, Counseling, Community Liaison, Supervision and Managing Change. They represent skill sets that each student must demonstrably master to be awarded the Bachelors Degree in Professional Studies.

The Purpose Dimension provides the methodological tools needed to complete what is called *taking* constructive action. This is an enterprise designed and implemented by each student, during the semester, to illustrate his/her level of effectiveness in successfully

combining information delivered in the Dimension classes with experiential feedback received in an internship that runs concurrently with his/her class-work.

No electives are offered in the College's undergraduate curriculum. The Purpose Centered System of Education is thought to contain all the general information a student needs to know in order to be "certified" as a *professional* in the field of Human Services. The five dimensions of learning consist of Purpose, Values, Self and Others, Systems and Skills. Both the undergraduate and graduate curricula of the College are delivered to students through this system.

While most other colleges provide their students with the opportunity to take electives, they often have a required *core curriculum* representing the foundational information all liberal arts students need to master before moving into a more narrowly focused discipline. Even then, electives in one's field of specialty are usually encouraged only after one takes a set of pre-requisite courses considered to be absolutely necessary to the anticipated graduate level of study in that discipline.

Whether one has freedom of choice in some of the courses that one may select, or the freedom from choice offered at Audrey Cohen College, a student is expected to display a mastery of critical thinking that is revealed through measurable expression, both in word and deed.

Implicit to this discussion is the proposition that a Theandric paradigm may be helpful in informing one's judgement in professional arenas of action. There may be something valuable to be gained from an examination of the divine characteristics of human behavior that can be incorporated into the arsenal of skills professionals need to utilize in the workplace. Classroom dialog on this subject may yield information that will determine its legitimacy as a subject for intellectual inquiry.

The question arises, here, as to whether or not the Academy is promoting, or preventing, inquiries that can help resolve the question of what degree of utility, if any, such knowledge confers on the person possessing it.

In a system of education that lauds its applicability for the working professional, it makes sense to look at the curriculum being presented in those areas which most directly address this issue. In the Purpose-Centered Education model, the *Dimension* of Values houses those domains of knowledge that reflect the ethical issues in professional behavior. Since ethics implies "shoulds", inquiry into the subject of Divine behavior as an appropriate guide, or standard for the

working professional implicates the question of how we decide what actually characterizes Divine behavior. This kind of epistemological question is one that immediately energizes campus advocates of political correctness. This becomes particularly evident when *respect* is demanded for religious views that challenge the Judeo-Christian paradigm that has traditionally guided such discourse. Of course, the same kind of frenzy often develops over other kinds of views that confront orthodoxy.

An example, perhaps, may be useful at this juncture. Several years ago, the faculty of Audrey Cohen College convened with the President/Founder of the College to discuss some of the ideological issues in *professionalism* that were being raised at that time. I had been recently elected a member to the Human Rights Committee of a local hospital. The hospital conducted a program for those suffering with severe Autism and used what is commonly known as Aversion Therapy. This treatment regimen includes the planned administration of pain in order to deter anti-social behaviors in the patients. Such behaviors included banging their heads against the wall, bare-handedly punching wood desks and concrete walls and a total absorption in singular activities that often caused harm to themselves, as well as to others. Extremely psychotic, often the Autistic patient is unaware of anyone else in his/her environment. The administration of pain, by applying pressure to the fingertip, or by pinching the soft skin of the inside of one's arm, is an effort to bring the patient into some kind of conscious awareness of their surroundings. The Human Rights Committee had to provide its approval prior to the use of these techniques on each patient.

During this period, I became aware of a story being disseminated in the media about an upstate New York institution being closed down because of what was termed "excessive" use of Aversion Therapy. Reportedly, some patients had been locked in dark closets for hours on end, or put into coffin-shaped boxes with the lids closed until they provided what was considered to be a therapeutically "appropriate" response. The State Department of Mental Hygiene decided to revoke the license of this organization, calling the practices at this institution "barbaric."

Everyone seemed to decry the poor plight of these patients...everyone, that is, except their parents. They pleaded with the State to keep the doors to the Institution open because they felt that the patients were beginning, for the first time in as many as 20 years, to

acknowledge the presence of their own parents and siblings and to communicate with them.

I asked my colleagues whether or not they felt Aversion Therapy was suitable for presentation in our Skills curriculum as a viable treatment option for the problems of some of the individuals with whom our students work. The President became very angry at my question and baldly stated that we would never include such information in our curriculum. I inquired of the President whether or not she thought that Antabuse, a drug commonly used in the treatment of alcoholics that causes the almost instant discomfort of nausea when the alcoholic imbibes, would fall into the same category of *banned* information. She replied that psychotropic medications were very helpful in the treatment of many psychosocial diseases and, therefore, should not be excluded from our curriculum's "body of knowledge."

Of course, having spent 10 years as a researcher in a State Psychiatric Facility caused me to reject giving such blanket approval to the use of psychotropic drugs. In fact, the manner in which drugs were commonly dispensed led me to the conclusion that decisions to administer medication were often made in the same way that the decision to perform a lobotomy on Jack Nicholson's character in Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Many of the patients I interviewed were fully aware of the "pain" that accompany the increased dosages of their medication that they would be subjected to if they acted, or behaved "inappropriately."

Psychiatrists claim that the use of psycho-pharmacological therapies is proactive and not for the punitive and retributive reason that hands are chopped off in fundamentalist Islamic countries. Today, of course, while many in this country would be repelled by the idea of establishing vivisection as a legitimate punishment, a possible outcome of our changing demographics is that such outrage may not be as intense as it once may have been. The reaction that it "wouldn't be Christian" to use such a deterrent may be on the wane precisely because there is a paradigm shift accompanying the influx of non-Christians.

Paradigm shifts are real to those who do not see the world only as flickering shadows on the Platonic wall. It may be that we are moving almost inexorably towards a collision between a secular world, where the idea of knowledge being theologically illuminated is considered modern day witchcraft, and a more fundamentalist approach to evaluating right from wrong.

While certainly, no one would want to see a return to the days of Galileo's recanting his data, what is to be gained from thinking that everything is the beholder's interpretation and that objectivity can never exist? Where does this post-modern reaction to 19th Century Imperialism and our own mid-century certitudes that almost blew the lid off of everything ultimately lead?

People will always have jobs, or tasks to perform and will want to be recognized for their competencies in solving problems related to these activities. People want recognition for the good that they do unto others. Arbitrarily closing our minds to a consideration of Divineness as a criterion that could prove useful as performance standards obviously presents a serious ethical dilemma. Indifference will contribute to a continued schizophrenic posturing that seeks on one hand only to calm the feelings of those "disrespected" because of their "peculiar" religiosity while, at the same time, rejecting evaluations of religiously based criteria precisely because they appear too "peculiar" to include in performance paradigms.

Academia avoids confronting this challenge by intellectually delegitimizing almost any discussion of the potential benefits of theological standards for assessing behavior in any environment other than the non-secular. It is simply portrayed as a subject that is most appropriately examined in the privacy of one's home.

This secular dismissal has consequences other than merely circumscribing the venue for its pursuit. It has the devastating effect of completely severing, in the public mind, any connection between concepts of the Divine and a public ethic. Exceptions to this separation occur, of course, when the government uses consensus about what constitutes the boundaries of religious observance to justify its intervention into what it characterizes as the "demonic practices" of certain individuals and communities. One only has to recall the fates of Mark Koresh, Jim Jones, or the 19th century Oneida commune and, even more currently, the sensational stories about Sullivanian child care practices in upper Manhattan (*Cult Observer*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1996). The government's stand that they each exceeded the boundary of acceptable practice was seared into the public consciousness by the marketing minded media.

This brings us back to my introductory remarks about how information is approved for inclusion in a college curriculum. Since this process goes hand in hand with the concept of academic freedom, we

must look at the extent to which stakeholder oversight is part of curriculum design. Is it the instructor who solely decides which facets of information should be woven into his/her presentation? Does the Department Chairperson, or the college's Chief Academic Officer review course content before it becomes part of the instructor's disseminated syllabus? What roles do Alumni and Trustees play in assuring that what is taught conforms to the College's mission?

Atheism is not a criterion for admission into a secular college such as Audrey Cohen College. In fact, no identification of one's religiosity is requested in any part of the admissions process. However, since the College's population is primarily made up of African-American female heads of households, it is understood that a majority would almost certainly represent themselves as Christians. In point of fact, many students at Audrey Cohen College, Christian, or Islamic, respond to questions asked in class about ethical issues from an almost fundamentalist Christian perspective. The question is whether or not the Purpose Centered curriculum design anticipates, perhaps, even provokes such questions and provides a process and direction for treating this perspective.

While the curricula for Audrey Cohen's undergraduate Values classes may cover brief descriptive overviews of the spirituality represented in such disparate works as *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* and Plato's dialogues, however, what is usually emphasized about these readings is their contribution to the evolution of human services and not the utility of their codified standards in determining what is the "good".

Avoiding consideration of the underlying criteria that make up a religion's standards, the curriculum avoids any meaningful discussion of their potential benefit to the understanding of what professionalism means in terms of observable and measurable characteristics.

And this is key to my concern about the exclusion of religious tenets from the processes implicated in intellectual scrutiny. We seem afraid to evaluate normative standards encouraged by religious beliefs, particularly when they are in any way linked to conduct outside of the family system. This has the effect of relegating what goes on in the family to a lesser status than what goes on in the workplace. It is a particularly shortsighted perspective given what I said earlier about how a culture passes its agenda from one generation to the next by *approved* systemic processes.

The education system is another vehicle a culture uses to

accomplish paradigmatic assimilation. What more effective way of evincing in children behavioral forms that represent public performance standards than curricula that evaluate individuals on the basis of their ability to manifest these traits? Certainly, families do the same thing to their members. But school systems are able to accomplish this on a much grander scale.

To the extent that there is uniformity in what is considered *suitable for study*, a measure of the culture's emphasis on conformity may be taken. Certainly, in an age where media has unleashed a torrent of communication initiatives that connect individuals from different backgrounds with one another, the tendency toward social homogenization can be understood. Hence, my photograph of a sacred cow sprawled out on a Bombay street gazing up at a banner above proclaiming the availability of advanced computer training in a storefront on the same street. All over the world, technology is infiltrating curricula. The movies industry, satellites, cable, videotapes, dvd's and cd's encourage worldwide uniformity in what is watched and listened to. Franchises now bring their brand of dietary monotony to every neighborhood in the world. And even in cosmopolitan environs, where diversity appears, on the surface, at least, Patrick Moynihan notwithstanding, greater than in most suburban and rural enclaves, little understanding of the culture behind the meal being served is required to enjoy the culinary experiment. In fact, the celebration of diversity that seems to take place almost weekly in certain cities, has become reduced to salivary stimulation. People partake of the exotic food and drink and then return to the consistency of their own neighborhood. Nothing much is encouraged beyond the mere momentary experience of the tastes, sounds and images. Very little emphasis is placed on learning about the cultural practices of those who had prepared the meal, the symbolic meaning of the various rituals they practice daily, or the values that underlie such rituals. Our knowledge of these *foreigners* is, for the most part, pure veneer.

About the only time we become somewhat more interested in these strangers from a strange land is when our comfort zones are disturbed. The landscape we have become accustomed to seems to be assaulted. The neighborhood's constituency begins to change. The workplace doesn't look the same. People with accents begin to show up on television in major roles. Our children bring home children with peculiar names.

Of course, America has always faced up to such *challenges* and actually incorporated the idea of our country becoming even stronger as a consequence of immigration. However, previous immigrants brought with them familiar religious icons. This simply doesn't seem to hold true for those arriving from foreign lands today. They come with threatening looking insignia on the flags billowing out from their fortress-like temples of worship. The gods to whom they pray are not the gods of Jacob, or Jeremiah, or even Judas. They seem even more threatening, menacing and, at the very least, uncompromising than Yahweh.

What does this challenge represent to our tradition of religious freedom? How can we remain indifferent to religious symbolism that the media has integrated into scenes of military and terrorist violence? How can we remain content with permitting religious expression to be the province of the family when it is the family that is breeding enemies of the State? What do these questions have to do with the theme of this roundtable?

As you recall, I said, early on, that a culture maintains and enhances its consistency by perpetuating important themes through systemic ritual. It relies on the larger, more public systems, like education, to officiate over the behavioral conditioning of our young and relies on public law to insure the uniform practice of behaviors that have been entrained in our population by these public systems. And, one of those *ideals* that we encourage is the concept of religious freedom. We verbally espouse the idea that Americans can worship whatever faith they believe in. What we seem to mean, however, is that one can practice almost anything in private that does not interfere with, interrupt, or more importantly, disturb the greater good of the community.

While images of animal sacrifice abound in the bible, it is not a practice that would be looked upon favorably today. Animal rights activists have done a good marketing job with their cause convincing Americans that they should be disturbed not only by animal sacrifice that is part of religious ritual, they have gone the extra step of apparently convincing the legal system to apply equal protection to the animals whose pelts we cherish. People have literally been assaulted not only for wearing garments made of real mink, but also for slaughtering the animals we eat in ways not thought to be humane. Meanwhile, the same legal system affords protection for the doctor who drills into the

cranium of a forcibly crowned fetus in order to suck the fetus's brains out and then abort the carcass.

Certainly, the legal implications of these issues are scholastically pursued and debated in law schools. But, what criteria have been internalized by these law students during their pre-law educational experience? What elementary, secondary and higher education curricula shaped their minds and influenced their sense of what is a legitimate subject for critical, let alone legal, analysis?

And how have curricula that deal with issues of professionalism dealt with these ethical questions?

I would think *indifference* is the key word. But, it is indifference buttressed by a prior confidence in Judeo-Christianity as a synonym for American. It is a confidence that may be diminishing daily with the arrival of each Middle Eastern, Asian, or African airline. Not only are our Judeo-Christian certitudes of right and wrong being challenged by Kali, Buddha, and the Messenger, we are also being forced to interact with those who believe in animism. Reconciling our Christian perspective with those that we don't completely understand may tax our educational, even our social systems beyond their capacity to handle such issues.

Perhaps, one way out of this is to relate these seemingly religious values to behavior in the very social arenas from which they have been barred. Perhaps it is time for us to formally examine religiosity in terms of its relevance to a determination of what constitutes professionalism in the workplace. I make this suggestion precisely because of the lack of real social diversity in our neighborhoods that serve as the loci of our community based educational system.

Diverse approaches to real-life situations will not happen informally. The experiments in critical thinking that ensue from such experiences will not be available to our children because of the tendency for ethnic and religious groups to cluster together. Their *gemeinschaft* systems retard the introduction of our children to the concept of comparative analysis. It simply can not be a real issue to those comfortably ensconced in systems in which homogeneity is the rule.

For many, because the law has provided for a more equal access to the workplace, the first encounter with people very different from themselves often accompanies their first real job. The interactional

intimacy that is encouraged by organizational workflow forces this kind of normative confrontation. Socializing with people one would not ordinarily meet in “the hood” creates opportunities for *testing* one’s paradigm in the marketplace of ideas.

But, shouldn’t our educational systems create similar opportunities? And, shouldn’t the complete array of paradigms that inform one’s judgements be open to intellectual inspection? While institutions in higher education market themselves as the guardians of free inquiry, why is it that so many offer so little by way of religious studies? And, why does there seem to be, even in those programs that do broach this subject matter, so little attention paid to the practical application of religious ideas about the conduct of people to performance standards found in both the macro and micro systems of our society?

If there is any utility to a Theandric Paradigm as it relates to the needs of the professional, it will be in the operationalization of divine characteristics to make them suitable for observation in a variety of settings.

Faith and Self Esteem

It is so easy to be swayed by philosophical and psychological trends and accept definitions of human existence as if they have recently surfaced in the history of humanity. Moreover scholars spend their lives searching for roots in ancient philosophy or cultures to prove millenary continuity of human inquietudes. As a lay person, I do this every day, and I feed on theories either to ground my teachings or to prove a rationale for my actions.

One of the modern topics of these days is self-esteem. Psychology defines self-esteem as one's feelings of high or low self-worth. Generally it is accepted as a special ingredient or the essence of behavior toward oneself that definitely affects the individual's relationships with others. Self-esteem is the combination of what we believe we are and what others around us say we are. Still, how do we maintain the balance? Or how much of what we think about ourselves is our own creation and not what others make us believe we are? When self-esteem is not balanced, personal and social problems ensue, transforming human existence into hell. Developing self-esteem and maintaining it at a healthy level is a question not exclusively for psychology but also a question of ontology, epistemology and axiology. I would like to reflect on how and why the faith as taught by our Lord Jesus Christ is distinctive in maintaining self-esteem at a healthy level. What does faith have to do in this equilibrium? It all relates to our creation. "It all relates back to our creation" because it is my belief that we are not a finished product, but creation lives with us and within us.

Created by God in His image we became kinship with God, special beings both for ourselves and for God. We may admire the beauty of the lilies in the field, the light and the mystery of the stars, but we are bearing a special connection with God.

And why take ye thought for raisement? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore,

if God so clothes the grass of the field, which to day is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? (Matthew 6: 28-30).

Jesus's words show the value human beings have for God. If God takes so much care of the lilies and gives them a superb color even more radiant than Solomon's own glory, even more so will He care for the human beings whom He made in His own image and to whom He gave souls. If God values us and bestows grace upon us, there is no reason to toil and spin. Still, Jesus knows our nature, because He underlines "O ye of little faith." We need to be faithful in God's love in order to remember creation so that we can strengthen our own image about ourselves since this image is auspicious in the challenges that await us in life. Jesus accentuates the significant role of faith in God.

I would like to spend some more time with the words "toil and spin." Our Lord Jesus did not use the words "work or endeavor." The words *work* and *endeavor* bear positive connotation of daily activities, and they imply toil or spin as physical movements. However, if toil and spin lead daily activities, the hysterical aspect of human life is highlighted. Hysteria entails disregard both for oneself and for others, and that is the aspect of daily activities that Jesus wants us not to foster in our existence. If we have faith, "*toil and spin*" are not in control of our minds and actions. Without being deterministic, we know we have God as a guide of our lives and "*toil and spin*" are easier to be handled. Faith in God has to be abounding, as St. Isaac the Syrian taught.

While proclaiming the beatitudes Jesus again reinforces the worth of the human being saying, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Matthew 5: 13).

It is my understanding that the *savor* is the human essence, that combination of inner value and the way we use it in everyday life. That inner value is nothing if it is not used in the right way because we exist by giving and taking. Thus, faith is nothing without good deeds. Faith is abstract but through human deeds it becomes palpable, evident and assuring of its presence. Our Lord Jesus Christ explained that God in His love toward us did not allow our deeds at random, but established the ethics of our deeds or actions in the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were given to us not in a punitive way because our

Lord Jesus Christ emphasized the Commandments as moral rules in our relationship with ourselves and with others. When Jesus says, “Think not that I have come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I have not come to destroy, but to fulfill” (Matthew 5: 17), He prepares us for the complexity of the New Law regarding the Commandment “But I say unto you: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5: 44). I assume this is no easy task, but Jesus again reminds us our origins “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5: 47).

The idea that we should be perfect may overwhelm us. We know from experience how difficult it is only “*to be*” let alone *to be perfect*. However, this is exactly the opinion of the unfaithful or of those of little faith. In this case our daily activities should be intertwined with prayer, as our Lord Jesus assured us: “your Father who is in heaven gives good things to them that ask him” (Matthew 7: 11). There is no reason to *toil* and *spin*, in other words, to let ourselves become victims to feelings of incompetence, inadequacy or incapacity. Believing that God is by our side not only gives strength to our thoughts and actions, but it adds a moral dimension to them as well. If we have to be like our Father, as Jesus said, then we have to be good. *To be* implies a constant interaction between the actor and the image acted. Thus, we should be in interaction with God. Jesus advises us that only through prayer do we remain in contact with God. Prayer keeps us in touch with the inner self, with our needs and our strengths. Prayer will bring us closer to God and to the security and boldness in seeing help within our reach.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent?” (Matthew, 7: 7-9).

St. Isaac the Syrian explains that “The righteous man is bold as a lion” (Prov. 28: 1) daring all things through faith, not as one who tempts the Lord, but as one who has confidence in Him, and as one who is armed and arrayed in the power of the Holy Spirit (St. Isaac the Syrian, *The Ascetical Homilies*, The Alpine Press of Stoughton, Mass., 1984, p. 65). And because God is his constant concern, God will also

say concerning him, “I am with him in affliction, and I will rescue him, and glorify him, with length of days I will satisfy him, and I will show him My salvation” (Ps. 91: 15-16). If faith in God is the root of our actions, low self-esteem is not an existential problem any longer. We understand and accept God’s role in our lives, and we seek His guidance in our deeds through prayer.

So what will be our sense of control in our lives? Psychologists speak about external locus of control and internal locus of control. People with an external locus of control perceive their lives as determined by external forces whereas those with internal locus of control see themselves in charge of their lives. If we put our faith in God, this may seem as an external locus of control. Since creation is with and within us, God is not an external force that controls our lives. The next role available for God in our lives is to become an internal locus of control. However, God’s relationship with us is much more complex than a mere physical location that we express through the words internal or external. If we measure ourselves according to Jesus’s testimony about our existence, then our locus of control should be internally divine. This internally divine locus of control does not imply that God shares the reality of existence with the self. It is that the reality of the self is possible through God.

Grounding our self-esteem in our faith in God is not a deterministic attitude or a *laissez faire* disposition, nor is it a conceited demeanor. On the contrary, it entails self-knowledge, discipline, will, planning, taking actions and adjusting ourselves in relationships in such a way that we will not “*toil* and *spin*” and harm others just the same way we don’t want to be harmed. Although self-esteem is a human construct, for us the faithful ones, it is supposed to be a product of our faith in God. Within the umbrella of faith, self-esteem is related to the love that we learned that God has for us. It is the respect and consideration we need to have for our neighbor, and this is its moral dimension. The moral dimension of self-esteem is also emphasized when Jesus said: “For everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18: 14). Self-esteem is the reflection of the magnitude of our existence through God because “the things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (Luke 18: 27).

The Concept of Recapitulation in St. Irenaeus' Theology

Preliminary considerations

In the Christian tradition St. Irenaeus of Lyon is believed to be one of the most glorious heroes of the Church, an outstanding Christian leader, faithful guardian of the Orthodox, Apostolic Tradition,¹ and a blessed peacemaker² in difficult times.

St. Irenaeus was born probably at Smyrna, Asia Minor, around the year 125-135 A.D. He was an admirer and follower of St. Polycarp of Smyrna, martyr and disciple of St. John the Evangelist. By the year 177, 178 A.D., Irenaeus became bishop of Lyon where he put all his talents in the service of the Church, distinguishing himself as a keeper of the treasure of apostolic faith in troubled times, when the Church was facing both persecutions and gnostic heresies.

According to tradition, he died in 202 A.D. together with thousands of other Christians during the persecution of Severus.

From the writings of Irenaeus, which represent a major source for knowing the Christian history and culture in the first two centuries,³ two major works have survived: one is *Against Heresies* and the other, *The Preaching of the Apostles*.

Against Heresies is one of the most precious works of early Christian antiquity.⁴ Here, in five books, Irenaeus makes a presentation and a refutation of gnostic heresies by means of reason and logical arguments, and then by means of biblical texts and interpretation. In addition, he makes an exposition and a defense of the Orthodox faith covering the whole economy of salvation.

The Preaching of the Apostles is a shorter book, but it also represents an exposition of the whole history of salvation written briefly and systematically.

Because the Scriptures were contested and misinterpreted by gnostics, in his works, Irenaeus uses extensively the Bible, quoting abundantly.

Being strongly rooted in the Orthodox tradition of the Church,

Irenaeus was especially influenced in his writings by Theophilus of Alexandria and Justin the Martyr. But he was the theologian who summed up the thought of the second century and dominated Christian Orthodoxy before Origen.⁵

A characteristic of Irenaeus' theology is the typology. In his works he looks for and uses types, analogies, parallelisms, especially between the Old and New Testament. This is particularly evident in his theology of Recapitulation, or 'Ανακεφαλαλῶσις.

In this presentation about Irenaeus' teaching on Recapitulation, I will first introduce briefly this concept as particular to Irenaeus, and then I will make a general presentation of 'Ανακεφαλαλῶσις as a doctrine, followed by a more detailed development with regard to specific aspects, types and examples according to St. Irenaeus' understanding. I will then speak about Participation as an aspect of Recapitulation and a way for Deification. The whole presentation will be developed in the general framework of St. Irenaeus' anthropology and Christology. I will end the paper with a number of critical reflections.

Recapitulatio

The main purpose of Irenaeus' writings is to demonstrate the unity and unicity of God, the unicity of Jesus Christ, the unity of God and Jesus Christ, the unity of the divine plan and the economy of salvation. 'Ανακεφαλαλῶσις is a structural element of this unity which implies the unity of our history, since Recapitulation takes place in it.

'Ανακεφαλαλῶσις is first of all a parallel between Adam and Jesus Christ, Eve and Mary, between the economy of creation and the economy of Incarnation. This sets already the theological framework and the poles of this doctrine, that is, Anthropology and Christology, in the sense that the content itself of Recapitulation is a new Anthropology developed on the ground of Christology; this will be visible throughout the presentation. In other words, Recapitulation is related to fall and salvation; fall is Anthropology, salvation is Christology. Anthropology is understood here not only in its retrospective aspect - related to the creation and the fall of the first man - but also in its actualization in Christ who took on a *human* body, who became 'Ανθρώπος. Anthropology is also understood in its prospective sense, that is, man's

becoming a new being in the Holy Spirit on the foundation of Christ's theandric mission.

Even if the paternity of Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις as a concept is attributed to Irenaeus, it is found in Paul's writing, especially in Ephesians 1: 10, but also in Romans 5: 12, 5: 19, 11: 36, Colossians 2: 9-10, 3: 11, texts which Irenaeus quotes extensively.

The idea of Recapitulation is also found in St. Justin the Martyr's work *The Dialogue with Trypho*⁶ by whom it is said that Irenaeus was inspired.⁷

That the concept of Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις goes back until Justin's work,⁸ seems very probable because of a significant quotation from Justin made by Irenaeus in his fourth book of *Against Heresies*. Nevertheless, G. Wingren notes that the end of the quotation is questionable and therefore the concept may belong specifically to Irenaeus. J.T. Nielson also thinks that there is "no question of borrowing on the part of Irenaeus."⁹ However it is not impossible at all, that Irenaeus took the concept from Justin. A. Houssiau shows that the word Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις comes from the technical vocabulary of rhetoric,¹⁰ and not only was Justin a rhetorician but, as J. Quasten says, he had clearly used this typological parallel between Adam and Christ, as Paul did, and, even more than Paul, that of Eve and Mary¹¹ (a parallel that is very frequent in Irenaeus' work as well). L. Regnault mentions that Irenaeus knew well and used the theological heritage of his predecessors, that Irenaeus' theology is on the line of these predecessors, and that it is very difficult to separate what belongs to him and what comes from other sources.¹² H. Chadwick and Kelly think in the same way; Irenaeus gives important quotations from Justin, whose theological lines he follows.¹³ This concept of Recapitulation, from Paul "seems to have reached Justin" and "was taken and deepened by Irenaeus."¹⁴ This is how Hans Urs von Balthasar puts it in more radical words: "Sans Justin dont il utilise sans cesse les matériaux Irénéen n'aurait jamais atteint sa hauteur propre."¹⁵

Anyway, even if the idea of Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις could be found in Justin as well, it is Irenaeus who makes a real theological concept out of it in the sense that for Irenaeus, Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις "embodies the whole of the biblical proclamation about the work of Christ in a single word."¹⁶ It is the axis and the originality of Irenaeus' soteriology,¹⁷ even more, the heart of all his theology.¹⁸

As I have mentioned above, Recapitulation refers *stricto sensu*

to the analogy Adam-Jesus,¹⁹ which Irenaeus fully exploits;²⁰ it is the correction of Adam's fault and the restoration of his initial freedom in Jesus Christ.²¹ As A. Houssiau remarks, the word Recapitulation in St. Irenaeus' theology has a plurality of meanings: to sum up, to condense, to bring to unity, to lead to fulfillment, to perfect, to finish, to repeat, to restore, to renew,²² to come back, to make a new beginning, to incorporate under a single head, to reorganize.²³ It is Christ's work of salvation, man's return to the original state, the restoration of man's initial beauty,²⁴ as P. Beuzart says also: "Jésus Christ refait les étapes du premier homme, répète les mêmes expériences avec un résultat opposé."²⁵ L. Regnault sees in Recapitulation two general meanings: to sum up and to renew.²⁶ These two meanings would include different aspects and dimensions.

In the work of Recapitulation the Son of God incarnated restores the image and the likeness of God in man;²⁷ in other words, in Incarnation God restores God's own image, which was corrupted by the sin of disobedience, because God actually takes in Incarnation the image of man, which was created in God's image and likeness.²⁸

In a larger sense, Recapitulation refers to different analogies and allegorical interpretations of older events in the light of the later ones or, vice-versa, of the new events in the light of the older ones; it refers to historical events as prefiguration and preparation of those to come.²⁹

As accomplishment of God's plan of salvation for the fallen humanity,³⁰ Recapitulation has mainly an anthropological character because it is strictly related to God's Incarnation and to our humanity. "Man is in every respect the formation of God and therefore He (Jesus) recapitulates man into Himself, the invisible becoming visible, the incomprehensible becoming comprehensible ... and the Word becoming man. Thus He summeth up all things into Himself."³¹

Therefore, even if *Recapitulatio* has a divine, Christological dimension, because it relates to the Son of God, the Word, Irenaeus chiefly describes the incarnated Word as a recapitulation of our humanity, as Lord and Savior for humankind,³² and thus keeps stressing its anthropological character.

Why was an Incarnation necessary for our salvation and where does Recapitulation stand in relation to Incarnation, one may ask. Hitchcock says that "Incarnation is *Recapitulatio*"³³ and in this assertion he is based on Irenaeus' own understanding. Indeed, for St. Irenaeus, Recapitulation starts with Incarnation because this is the best way in

which we could bear the presence of God. God could have come in God's splendid majesty, but we could not bear that: "Lorsqu'Il récapitula en Lui toutes choses," Irenaeus says, "Il vint à nous, non tel qu'Il le pouvais, mais tel que nous étions capable de le voir."³⁴ In His Incarnation, He recapitulated "l'antique ouvrage modélé"³⁵ by God, He took the flesh of the first sinner and recapitulated in Himself this flesh which at one time He molded, and Jesus did that in order to kill the sin.³⁶ Speaking of Incarnation in St. Irenaeus' theology, A. Orbe remarks that for Irenaeus, Incarnation is the crown of historical οἰκονομία "corona de la economia historica."³⁷

Even what Jesus recapitulated in all His other salvific work, as on the cross, in the Resurrection, etc., supposes the Incarnation. When Irenaeus speaks about the Lord's words -"All the righteous' blood which is shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias ... will be required" - Hitchcock says that Irenaeus refers to the recapitulation, which Jesus made bodily and bloodily on the Cross, but the sacrifice was possible only after the Incarnation.³⁸ Incarnation is salvation through obedience³⁹ and for all humankind: "Lorsqu'Il s'est incarné...Il a récapitulé en Lui-même la longue série des hommes"⁴⁰ and brought salvation by restoring in the man the image and likeness of God, which Adam lost through disobedience. But the likeness is possible only after the Incarnation.⁴¹

Jesus is the recapitulation of all humankind because in Adam all humankind was contained: "Itaque in Adam genus humanum erat comprehensum, inerat in eo. Inde ab Adam expansus est. Genus humanum est expositio Adami. Id quod Adam fecit nos fecimus."⁴²

Because Adam is man and humanity and humanhood, individual and species, Jesus is called Son of Man, as individual and species, humanity, and humanhood.⁴³ In this sense, in His salvific work, Jesus recapitulates *the universal humanity* from the beginning to the end, in good and bad, especially in death.⁴⁴ In this recapitulation, the power of evil is conquered and crushed by Jesus' assumption of the old enmity of the serpent⁴⁵ and the good is consolidated through the victory of the Lord over death. This victory is universal also, its fruits are for the whole of humanity.⁴⁶ Here again the Anthropological and Christological character of Recapitulation is evident.

Recapitulatio, by the obedience of humankind to God in Jesus Christ, is a new commencement, is the way of reconciliation with God.⁴⁷ It is the union between human beings and the Holy Spirit through which

the Spirit indwells the human being, and this is essential for salvation because “c’est par cet Esprit que nous voyons, entendons et parlons.”⁴⁸ It is in this spirit that God “a fait adhérer et étroitement uni l’homme”⁴⁹ to Godself in His Son.

Christ’s Recapitulation is not to be seen as a separated work of God in our history but as part of the whole of God’s economy of salvation:⁵⁰ Jesus comes “tout le long de l’économie universelle et récapitulante tout en Lui-même.”⁵¹ Even the stages of the divine economy of salvation are called “économies de Sa récapitulation” (“ejus recapitulationis dispositiones,” τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀνακεφαλαίωσης οἰκονομίας.)⁵²

In St. Irenaeus’ writings the universality of this *Recapitulatio*⁵³ does not refer only to humankind in all ages of history, but it embraces the totality of creation, it embraces Parousia, the Resurrection of the dead, the Last Judgment⁵⁴; it is not only the human being’s restoration but the final cosmic restoration,⁵⁵ the restoration of *all things*⁵⁶ (τὰ πάντα), as St. Irenaeus insistently stresses. A. d’Alè speaks about this cosmic dimension of Recapitulation which he finds to be intimately linked to another dimension, the logical one: “D’ailleurs, les deux acceptions cosmique et logique, parfois difficile à distinguer, se mélangent chez lui (chez Irénée) et se fondent si intimement que l’on perdrait son temps à vouloir les dissocier.”⁵⁷ This Recapitulation - which is not a simple parallel between Adam and Christ, not even “l’universelle retrouvaille de toutes choses en Jesus Christ,” but more than that, the final accomplishment of the whole of creation includes also the human being’s deification. It operates our deification in Christ.⁵⁸ This whole process takes place in the Church. It is a process, which will continue until the consummation of times, and what is to be done at the end of time - the Eschaton - is part of Christ’s Recapitulation.⁵⁹ Therefore, the life of every individual in the Church between the two comings of Christ - the new life and fellowship in the Spirit of God⁶⁰ - is part of Christ’s *Recapitulatio*.

The different economies of Recapitulation, whether related to the first Adam and his spiritual representation in Jesus,⁶¹ or to Eve and Mary or to other works of God in Jesus Christ, can be generally classified in three categories, depending on the kind of analogies implied. There is a rapport of continuation or similarity, one of opposition, and one of continuation but with opposite effects.

The examples of Recapitulation that imply continuity between

the elements of the analogy have a symmetrical character. This is the case, for instance, of Adam, who had no bodily father, and of Jesus, who also had no bodily father.⁶² Also, Adam was born of the virgin clay because there was no rain to fecundate the earth at that time, and of the Will, Wisdom, Word, or Spirit of God, and Jesus also was born from a virgin and the Will of God.⁶³ In addition, as all things and humanity were created through the Word of God, so all things and humanity were recreated in Jesus Christ, as was evident especially in the miracles and healings He performed, for example, the healing of the man born blind.⁶⁴

The following examples belong to the second category, that of opposition between the elements of the analogies in the framework of Recapitulation. These analogies have an antithetical character⁶⁵ and they relate to different moments in the history of salvation; here are some examples: the old Adam and the new Adam, Jesus Christ; disobedience in Adam and obedience in Christ;⁶⁶ sin and death in the first Adam, and liberation, salvation, and life in the Second Adam; evil is disobedience to God in Adam, good is obedience to God in Jesus Christ;⁶⁷ the first creation corrupted by sin was restored in Jesus and became a new creation; Adam and Eve are the ante-types of Jesus and Mary; the captivity of the first man was transformed in the victory of Christ;⁶⁸ the pride of the serpent in Paradise was overcome in Jesus' humility, and if Adam obeyed the serpent, the devil, and died, Jesus did not obey the devil, who was tempting Him in the desert;⁶⁹ the wood of death in the Paradise is opposed to the wood of life, the cross of Jesus, and as sin came through a tree, it was overcome also through a tree.⁷⁰ Speaking about "l'économie du Bois," St. Irenaeus mentions the remission of our debt that we have in the cross of Jesus because "la désobéissance par le bois a été réparée par l'obéissance sur le bois."⁷¹

In the same category, St. Irenaeus considers the antithetical parallel Eve - Mary;⁷² he emphasizes the virginal birth of Jesus in order to demonstrate His divinity, thus making a point against the gnostic heresies. L. Regnault also remarks that Irenaeus insists on the divinity of the Virgin's Son.⁷³ Usually the antithesis Eve - Mary⁷⁴ is presented in relation to virginity and to obedience - disobedience,⁷⁵ but also in relation to the fact that Eve brought into the world the curse while Mary brought the blessing. Eve is cause of death for all people while Mary is the cause of life for all humankind.⁷⁶ After the disobedience of one and the obedience of the other, in Mary, a virgin is interceding for a virgin:

“une vierge se faisant l’avocate d’une vierge.”⁷⁷

The third category of analogies reflects the continuation of the event or of the moment presented but with opposite effects: through a *man* sin and death entered into the world, through a *man* sin and death were destroyed;⁷⁸ in the beginning, the man who was not hungry ate and transgressed God’s commandment - Jesus Christ, who was hungry when he was fasting in the desert, did not eat in the moment of temptation and did not follow the devil;⁷⁹ on the sixth day of creation Adam sinned, disobeying God, and died, and also, on the same sixth day, the day before Sabbath, Jesus died, obeying God and bringing life to the world because “en récapitulant en Lui l’homme tout entier du commencement à la fin, Jésus a récapitulé aussi sa mort.”⁸⁰

In addition to these few examples, Jesus included in this work of Recapitulation other personalities and events of the Old Testament that symbolized or prefigured His life and activity, like the patriarchs, the prophets and their prophecies,⁸¹ the teaching of Moses,⁸² and others.

In His recapitulative work, Jesus includes even our war against the enemy, the devil, such as when he was tempted by the devil in the desert.⁸³ The recapitulation of this war will be intensified at the time when the Antichrist will appear in the world. The Antichrist also will recapitulate in himself all apostasy of the devil and all the evil, “l’iniquité, la tromperie et l’erreur idolâtrique depuis la fondation du monde,”⁸⁴ but he will be destroyed by the Son of God, Jesus Christ.⁸⁵

In all these examples, one can see that Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις as part of God's economy of salvation has a historical, retroactive dimension, in the sense that Recapitulation assumes the past events, in reverse, in a new economy of salvation,⁸⁶ until God takes back His own creature;⁸⁷ that also has an eschatological, prospective dimension. This is evident also in the double aspect of *Recapitulatio*, that of growth, evolution, the process of Jesus' salvific work and of our lives in Him, and that of conflict, struggle, and victory that characterized His life.⁸⁸ The growth in Jesus' life and work is understood as an openness that we have to receive what Jesus brought to us, as a participation in His life; it is only through this receptive participation that we really grow spiritually for a new life.⁸⁹

The conflict or the struggle of Jesus against sin and death and for a new beginning of creation,⁹⁰ His struggle against the devil, repeats the history of Adam, albeit with an opposite outcome.⁹¹

St. Irenaeus says that Jesus “a combattu pour le genre humain, a vaincu l'ennemi de l'homme,”⁹² “a lutté et a vaincu... Il combattait pour ses pères; par son obéissance Il rachetait leur désobéissance.”⁹³ All the suffering of Christ, His death and Resurrection, are conflictual aspects of *His* work of Recapitulation. If, in other contexts, St. Irenaeus stressed the Anthropological aspect of Recapitulation, here, in this context, he stresses the Christological aspect. This aspect is not marginal in St. Irenaeus' theology because, as J.T. Nielsen notes, for Irenaeus, Christ is the center of history,⁹⁴ and of the history of salvation.⁹⁵

The struggle in human life is related to our confrontation with the evil which can be overcome through our participation in Christ's life and work.

Participation

Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις requires our participation; participation in the cross of Jesus,⁹⁶ that implies that we have to be in a state of reception, to assume consciously and willingly the grace offered to us by God in His Son. In this sense, *Recapitulatio* is a grace. It is, however, not given to us automatically. It does not annihilate human freedom, but it confirms it. Without human freedom Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις would be inefficient for us, because it is part of the economy of

salvation, and this requires human freedom. “The very dualism of faith and unbelief is part of man’s recapitulation,” says G. Wingren.⁹⁷ This is God Who first participates in God’s creation⁹⁸ and so opens the possibility for us to participate in His life by imitation and obedience. As St. Irenaeus puts it: “C’est en devenant les imitateurs de Ses actions et les exécuteurs de Ses paroles que nous avons communion avec Lui et que par là même, nous qui sommes nouvellement créés, nous recevons ... la croissance ... la ressemblance avec Lui-même ... L’incorruptibilité.”⁹⁹

The one who sees the light participates in the light’s splendor, and the one who sees God participates in God’s splendor, St. Irenaeus says; to see God (Θεωράω) is to participate in God’s life. This is the reason why the Invisible one became visible: in order to offer a chance to people to *see* and, in that, to *participate*.¹⁰⁰ The vision of God is thus part of the original plan for us, and it can be realized now through Jesus Christ.¹⁰¹ In this sense, the Incarnation as *Recapitulatio* has in view our participation. It is an open way for us to be restored to the divine filiation¹⁰² and to reestablish our communion with God through His Son, our Lord,¹⁰³ who, as our mediator, becomes the principle of our supernatural adoption by God.¹⁰⁴ Through us, Adam himself - not as an individual, but as mankind, as collectivity - participates and is integrated in the salvific work of Christ.¹⁰⁵ Because Recapitulation is God’s mercy on us and a grace, participation is our responsibility and duty.¹⁰⁶ That implies a participation in the Spirit which makes man a spiritual being¹⁰⁷ and which advances mankind towards a final conformation of the image and likeness of God, when Recapitulatio will come to an end.¹⁰⁸ It has to be specified here that when we say “human being” that includes the body, as the Church professes her belief in the resurrection of the body and its transfiguration and eternization through the deifying grace of God.¹⁰⁹

Recapitulation, therefore, implies a double participation: God participates in human life and recapitulates it in Jesus Christ, and we participate in God’s life, and through Jesus Christ. This double participation is the premise of deification, a doctrine emphasized in a special way by Athanasius (“God became man so that man can become god”) and present in St. Irenaeus’ theology as well (Jesus “became what we are in order to enable us to become what He is”).¹¹⁰

Deification

Ἐνακεφαλαλωσις has in view deification, Theosis (Θεώσις) because it is a part of the divine economy for humanity, and this starts with creation. After sin, it is continued in the new creation in Jesus Christ and has as an aim the humans' deification in grace, by the restoration of our incorruptibility in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.¹¹¹

St. Irenaeus uses in his theology different terms to describe the concept of deification,¹¹² like incorruptibility of body and spirit and immortality,¹¹³ resurrection of flesh.¹¹⁴ Irenaeus has a strong theology on this point, that is directed against the gnostics, for whom only the divine spark in the human being is capable of salvation. Irenaeus demonstrates that human flesh is capable of deification in grace.¹¹⁵ Jesus did not assume only the human spirit. He was fully human in that He assumed the whole man. Deification is also communion with God,¹¹⁶ life in the Kingdom of God,¹¹⁷ salvation,¹¹⁸ man's spiritualization of life.¹¹⁹

Deification is the restoration of the image and likeness of God in human beings through Jesus Christ who unites the creature with the Holy Spirit,¹²⁰ with God. Through Recapitulation, Jesus realizes "la parenté" with both sides - God and man -, it is in this kinship that we can reach incorruptibility.¹²¹ We have it also in the sense that Jesus restores, through His obedience, our obedience to God,¹²² in which we grow in freedom toward perfection.¹²³ The idea of growth illustrates Irenaeus' understanding that Recapitulation in Christ means the evolution of humanity from its "edenic state of infancy to the true maturity of God-likeness."¹²⁴ St. Irenaeus' insistence on the concept of growth is consistent with his specific teaching that man was created in a stage of childhood and was supposed to become mature in free obedience to God.

Jesus Christ is our Eucharist on the Cross and in the sacraments in the Church. To participate in His life, to join our bodies to His body in the Holy Spirit, is to enter into eucharistic communion with the Son of God. In Jesus Christ, St. Irenaeus says, through our offering to God and through our readiness to receive the Holy Spirit, we become ourselves eucharist, eucharistic beings; we leave behind the corruptibility of sin and lead our life in the hope of the resurrection, and this is the way to Theosis.¹²⁵ The Eucharist is the visible sign of

Christ's Recapitulation. As L. Regnault says, it attests that Recapitulation is not only for mankind, but for the whole creation.¹²⁶

This understanding of the Eucharist introduces us to a discussion of the mystical body of Christ. E. Mersch believes that Recapitulation indicates the way in which the mystical body of Christ is achieved and how the salvation is worked through that.¹²⁷ Recapitulation has an ecclesiological character, Mersch says, and it contains the Ecclesiology, the "theory of the Church"¹²⁸ through its relation to the Eucharist and because the mystical body of Christ is achieved in the Church, where the divine life is.¹²⁹

Critical Reflections

If the Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις of Jesus is an offer for all humankind, including those who lived before the Incarnation,¹³⁰ if "tout Son oeuvre qu'Il avait jadis modélée Il l'a récapitulée en Lui-même,"¹³¹ if He recapitulated *all things* (τὰ πάντα), the whole cosmos, the whole creation, then one can ask if recapitulation is equivalent to salvation. According to St. Irenaeus' theology, however, recapitulation is only a part of the whole economy of salvation. This difference is to be understood in the sense that recapitulation has in view salvation, if salvation means the final goal of creation. However, if salvation means also the process toward this final goal, then, the steps of this process relate equally to Recapitulation. At this level, both are to be viewed as one. Yet, to be included in the divine act of Recapitulation one has to assume it, to participate in it consciously and freely, just as in the case of salvation.

And again, if Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις refers to *all things*, is that already *apokatastasis*? What is the relation between Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις and ἀποκατάστασις? Indeed, the double character of Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις - retrospective and prospective -, the fact that it determines the whole οἰκονομία of salvation,¹³² as J.T. Nielsen says, can suggest a straight connection. This is, however, to be understood in the sense that Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις only announces the idea of ἀποκατάστασις through its emphasis on τὰ πάντα that are included in its framework. There cannot be an identity between them or a rapport of synonymity. This is noticed also by d'Alès, who says that Ἐνακεφαλαίωσις does not imply ἀποκατάστασις.¹³³ Whereas ἀποκατάστασις implies a necessary

predetermined return of all things to God (for Origen, the Beginning and the End are one), 'Ανακεφαλαλῶσις in its prospective dimension relates to the free will of man to assume the divine works of salvation in Jesus Christ.

In this particular context one can ask again the question: If Recapitulation starts with Incarnation, what about those who died before Jesus' Incarnation? According to a later concept, specific to the Cappadocian Fathers, that what is not assumed is not saved. Yet Irenaeus says that *all things* are assumed in Recapitulation. The answer to this problem comes from Irenaeus' doctrine of participation. Those who lived before the Incarnation benefit directly from the gift of salvation and participate in it indirectly through us who live after the Incarnation because they are consubstantial with us and thus recapitulated in us. As for those who live after the Incarnation, we benefit directly from the gift of salvation and participate directly, personally in the life and work of Christ. And in their participation, human beings include the whole of creation, all things, and make them part of the mutual, free, positive response of humans to the *yes* of the love of God.

The word Recapitulatio, 'Ανακεφαλαλῶσις, comes from *caput* (Latin), κεφαλή (Greek), head. G. Wingren interprets Irenaeus as saying that by disobedience man walked away from his Master, Head, and in Jesus Christ, the Master, the Head, man is re-capitulated, brought again under the head.¹³⁴

A different interpretation seems also possible here, when we think that man was made to be the crown or head of all creation. By sin, the human race lost the leadership over creation and it is only in Jesus Christ, the Lord through whom all things were made, that man can regain this original position.

* * *

Conclusions

The theology of Recapitulation, specific to the thought of Irenaeus, characterized by symbolical and typological formulae, is not a simple parallel between Adam and Christ. It is that, but more than that.

Ἐνακεφαλαλωσις brings more than a restoration of humankind to the original state,¹³⁵ it aims for the total fulfillment of the whole of creation at the end of time, in Jesus Christ, the Word of God through whom all creation came into existence; it has in view the abolition of death and the eternal communion between God and man. “Adam had to be recapitulated,” St. Irenaeus says, “so that mortality might be swallowed up in immortality.”¹³⁶ But man, under the burden of sin and death, could not rise toward God unless God came down. Ἐνακεφαλαλωσις is found also in the fact that Jesus came into the same likeness to God which man originally had and which was lost. In this sense, Jesus recapitulates both, God’s image and man’s corrupted image, and makes one, the real one, out of the two. Thus, “en se faisant homme et en assumant en Lui-même l’antique ouvrage modélé,”¹³⁷ St. Irenaeus says, Jesus Christ, in His work of Recapitulation made “l’homme monter jusqu’à Dieu.”¹³⁸

The concept of Recapitulation, as it is used and developed in all his writings, constitutes one of the major structures of Irenaeus’ theology, the element which gives it its consistent unity and force. He used it remarkably to creatively and steadily defend the treasure of the apostolic faith against the gnostic dualism he had to face and which taught the partial salvation of creation. Contrary to the heresies of his time and in accordance with the teaching of the Church, the doctrine of Recapitulation “a l’avantage d’embrasser dans une unique et grande vision l’oeuvre toute entière de Dieu.”¹³⁹

The word re-capitulation also involves the word *capitulation* - surrender, obedience, i.e. by recapitulating all things Christ brings them all back under His dominion.¹⁴⁰ Capitulation implies a position of obedience and surrender, the head bowed down, inclined, in front of God’s majesty; in fact, this is the correct position of humankind *coram Deo*, which keeps man by consequence in the correct position *coram mundo*. The state of Adam in Paradise was one of obedience, of capitulation, surrender of his will to the will of God. By disobedience, “incapitulation,” “entêtement,” revolt against God, Adam lost his right

and due position *coram Deo* and *coram mundo*. Then, Jesus came, obedient to God on behalf of humanity, capitulating, surrendering His will to the will of God (a fact which is extensively presented in the Gospel of John). Thus, He re-capitulated Adam. He did the job of Adam, and this is why He is called the new Adam and how He restores the human being in the correct position before God and in the center of creation. Origen seized that well when he spoke of a double aspect of Recapitulation: related to each other and in respect to obedience. He says that in His divine work, Jesus restored man's capacity to obey as well as man's capacity to rule; but without obedience, there is no ruling.¹⁴¹ Indeed, obedience is the decisive act of Christ's Recapitulation.¹⁴²

Obedience is thus a keyword for salvation in general and for the salvation of man and the world in particular. As we cross into a new millennium, the concept of obedience takes on new connotations and becomes a new basis for critical reflection. After a few centuries of "Enlightenment", emancipation, liberation, and secularization, the world is witnessing a coming back to religion, spirituality, classic values and traditions (A. Malraux, A. Heschel, Ph. Sheldrake, L. Newbegin, and others, just to name a few who have written about that trend). The increased conversion of people - at least in the American society - from liberal Protestant and neo-Protestant denominations to fundamentalist denominations or religions also indicates that, almost paradoxically for the mentality and way of being of the modern man, greater value is being placed on structure, integration, and then, obedience, even rigidity takes on a positive connotation. In this context, suddenly the doctrine of Recapitulation, which implies obedience, takes on a new relevance and significance.

As Sterling Rayburn comments, "perhaps the steady disintegration of Western society had spurred a new interest in the doctrine of recapitulation."¹⁴³

What St. Irenaeus is telling us today is that obedience to God is the only way out of perdition. The spiritual mission of the man of the new millennium is to rediscover, to reinvent obedience, in his or her own interest. Obedience is not about talking but about doing. The Recapitulation worked by God in Jesus Christ required action. That action should characterize our lives, too. Since Recapitulation also means re-enactment, the only way we can do this, is by being in the Church. To be in the Church, in the body of Christ, means to actively

and consciously let ourselves be transformed and assumed in the recapitulative work of Christ. But it also means that we are called to re-enact Christ's salvific work through worship and sacraments¹⁴⁴, a neverending source of regenerative values for humans at any time and place in their history.

Obviously, Irenaeus' whole doctrine of Recapitulation is oriented towards Parousia; it involves a continuum which is accomplished step-by-step,¹⁴⁵ it has in view the fulfillment of the whole of creation at the end of time when evil will be completely defeated. At that moment, human beings - restored through Jesus Christ in the image and likeness of God and transfigured in the Holy Spirit, - will be in final communion with the Trinitarian God in the Kingdom. This transfiguration of man in the Holy Spirit, the realization of the spiritual man¹⁴⁶ is not a marginal idea in the theology of St. Irenaeus. C. Richardson relates the real meaning of Recapitulation exactly to this aspect, saying that Recapitulation refers to the Spirit that was given by Jesus to humanity and under whose leadership man advances towards a new life.¹⁴⁷

NOTES:

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4. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers I...*, p. 311.
5. J.N.O. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, Harper and Row, New York, 1978, p. 104.
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19. G. Wingren, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
20. J.N. Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 172.
21. Irénée de Lyon, *Contre les Hérésies*, III, ed. critique par F. Sagnard, Ed. du Cerf, Sources Chrétiennes, Paris, 1952, ch. 23, 2, p. 387. (Next references to this book will be under the abbreviation CH III.)
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23. E. Mersch, *op. cit.*, p. 318; see also Sterling Rayburn, "Cosmic Transfiguration," in *The Church Quarterly Review*, vol. 168, London, 1967, p. 162.
24. P.S. Irineu Bistrișeanul, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
25. P. Beuzart, *Essai sur la Théologie de Irénée*, Ed. Ernest Leroux, Paris, 1908, p. 105.
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48. *Ibidem*, ch. 20, 2, p. 261.
49. *Idem*, CH III, ch. 18, 7, p. 325.
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52. *Idem*, CH IV, 2, ch. 20, 8, p. 653.
53. *Idem*, PA, ch. 9, 30, 99.
54. *Idem*, CH III, 2, ch. 16, 6, p. 293.
55. *Idem*, CH V, 2, ch. 33, 4, p. 419.
56. *Idem*, CH I, 2, ch. 10, 1, p. 157; see also: CH III, ch. 11, 8, p. 203; 16, 6, p. 293; 21, 9, p. 371; 21, 10, p. 317.
57. A. d'Alès, *op. cit.*, p. 189.
58. Emile Mersch, *op. cit.*, p. 315.
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60. St. Irenaios, PA, 6, 30-37, 99.
61. P. Beuzart, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
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78. *Idem*, CH III, ch. 18, 7, p. 329; also: CH V, 2, ch. 21, 1, p. 265.
79. *Idem*, CH V, 2, ch. 21, 2, p. 265.
80. *Idem*, CH V, 2, ch. 23, 2, p. 293.
81. *Idem*, CH IV, 2, ch. 15, 1, pp. 551-553.
82. *Idem*, CH IV, 2, ch. 2, 3, p. 401.
83. *Idem*, CH III, chs. 21-24, pp. 349-403; also: CH V, 2, ch. 21, 1-2, pp. 261-273.
84. *Idem*, CH V, 2, chs. 25, 1, p. 309; 28, 2, p. 333; 29, 2, p. 367; 30, 1, pp. 371-377.
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105. P. Beuzart, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
106. St. Irenaios, PA 96.
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111. A. Bénéoit, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
112. For deification in its different names or aspects, see especially: Irénée de Lyon, CH III, ch. 25; CH IV, 2, chs. 37-41; CH V, 2, chs. 1-3, 5-15, 27-28, 31-33, 35-36.
113. *Idem*, CH III, ch. 19, 1, p. 333. See also: PA 39.
114. *Idem*, PA 38; also: CH IV, 2 and throughout.
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136. St. Irenaios, PA 6, 32.
137. *Idem*, CH IV, 2, ch 33, 4, p. 813.
138. *Idem*, CH V, 2, ch. 1, 1, p. 21.
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140. P.S. Irineu Bistrișeanul, *op. cit.*, p. 55. See also Mary Ann Donovan, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

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142. L. Regnault, *op. cit.*, col. 1951.
143. Sterling Rayburn, *op. cit.*, p. 163.
144. Johannes Knudsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-133.
145. G. Wingren, *op. cit.*, p. 193.
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Above All His Friends and Throughout the Ages Paradoxical Language in the Old Testament Messianic Prophecies

Kafka once wrote that the “Messiah will come one day later than he was announced.” And the author of *The Castle* is right on the mark. No matter how great our desire is to know the time and circumstances in which the long-awaited and repeatedly promised Messiah will come, we may never be able to give a sure, satisfying answer. For as soon as we are close to the hour of truth another question will surface and the Messiah, God’s mysterious emissary, will always be one step ahead of us.

For Christians, the Old Testament is relevant, among other reasons, because it contains a considerable number of Messianic prophecies, inspired sayings pertaining to the person and activity of the Anointed One. (“Messiah,” *mashiah*, in Hebrew means “anointed.” The Septuagint, the oldest translation into Greek of the Old Testament - ca. 250 B.C. - renders this noun as *Christos*, Christ which has the same meaning as its Hebrew counterpart. In the Old Testament times, anointed were the kings, priests, and prophets, i.e., the charismatic leaders of Israel whose authority came from God.) Thus, the Messianic prophecies represent the pre-history of our Lord Jesus Christ. “These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ [Messiah], the Son of God,” says the apostle John (John 20: 31).

The Old Testament history is marked by a persistent linearity, beginning with God’s creative word (Genesis 1), passing through various calls (e.g., Abraham’s in Genesis 12) and covenants (e.g., the Sinai Covenant in Exodus 19), and culminating with the Day of the Messiah when the entire creation would be brought back into submission to its Creator. This linear history depicted by the Bible is in strong contrast with the seasons-based cyclicality of the ancient mythical societies (e.g., Babylon, Ugarit, Canaan, etc.) where instead of a beginning and an end one speaks of repeated moments in time.

Throughout the ages, the pre-incarnated Messiah has been journeying along the path of history changing names, titles and

garments, softly whispering or indefinitely appearing, hiding himself in mysterious signs and types foreshadowing the great Incarnation which was fulfilled in Christ Jesus. He has always been there, at the beating heart of history; as the Servant of Yahweh (*Yahweh* is the personal name of God in the Old Testament, meaning “The One Who Is”), the only God who is here and there, now and then, for you and me, and for both of us when we are in deep need and great sorrow. He is so close to Yahweh, his Father and Anointer, that often times their names are interchanged. For instance, Exodus 3:2 indicates that an angel of Yahweh (a type of Messiah) appeared to Moses in the blazing bush at Horeb, while v. 4 says that Yahweh himself spoke to him.

With respect to the relationship between the pre-existing Messiah and his types, the Psalmist (45: 7-8) writes: “Your divine throne is everlasting; your royal scepter is a scepter of equity. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; rightly has God, your God, chosen to anoint you with oil of gladness over all your friends.” The “friends” of the Anointed One mentioned in this text refer to the Old Testament types and prefigurations of Christ. The Psalmist points to the Messiah who due to his divine nature is above all his types. Since the Messiah shares the same divine nature with God who anointed him to accomplish his saving work in the world, any description of him will use a paradoxical language. This lack of precision reaching sometimes a high level of ambiguity is the very expression of the “interpenetration” (Greek: *perichoresis*) of the divine and human natures in the person of the Messiah. While the human nature can be encapsulated in phrases, the divine nature tends to escape any precise categorization or definition.

In the following lines we are going to dwell on some of the most representative Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament showing how the inspired writers used a paradoxical language to try to convey what is beyond any description.

The Seed of the Woman

Genesis 3: 15 contains the first good news (“Protoevangelium”—the “First Gospel”) given by God to Adam and Eve immediately after they had transgressed his commandment. God addresses Eve saying that he will establish an enmity between “the woman” and “the serpent” (or the devil). The definite article on the Hebrew word *ha-ishah* “the woman” (a certain woman) made the early Christian writers see in this providential woman a prefiguration of Mary, the Lord’s Holy Mother.

The Messianic character of this text was recognized by the Jewish interpreters too. The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (an Aramaic translation -interpretation) of Genesis 3: 15 ends with the remark “in the days of the King Messiah.”

But what is most puzzling in this verse is the mention of the “seed” along with “the woman.” It would have been more natural to speak of the seed of a man rather than of a woman. This paradoxical wording underlines the fact that the Messiah (“the seed”) will be born in a supernatural way without a human father. The text does not say how “the seed” becomes “the woman’s.” It simply inserts the first paradox into the intricate portrayal of the Messiah.

Virgin yet Birth-Giver of God

Many centuries have elapsed from the dawn of humankind when the “Protoevangelium” was delivered, and the time when the prophet Isaiah started his activity (8th century B.C.). The great prophet of Jerusalem left us one of the most known and quoted Messianic prophecies. Isaiah 7: 14 insists on the same idea as Genesis 3: 15, the supernatural conception of Messiah. The text adds a few new details. First, “the woman” is closely defined as “the virgin” (cf. the inspired rendition of the Septuagint which translates the indefinite Hebrew *ha-almah* “the young woman” with *e parthenos* “the virgin”). The interjection *hinneh* “Behold!” points to a paradoxical reality: that of a virgin yet birth-giver of God. Isaiah says, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the virgin will conceive [this detail parallels the seed of the woman in Genesis 3: 15] and will give birth to a son and she will name him Immanuel (which means “God-is-with-us”). As one can deduce, Immanuel’s mother is virgin in the moment of conception, and

during her pregnancy. Almost two centuries later, Ezekiel (44: 2-3) would have the vision of the eastern gate of the sanctuary in Jerusalem, which will be kept shut. The Christian writers saw here a prefiguration of Mary's ever-virginity (including the post-delivery virginity). "This gate will be kept shut. No one may open it or go through it, since Yahweh, God of Israel, has been through it. And so it must be kept shut. The prince himself, however, may sit there to take his meal in the presence of Yahweh." (The "Prince" here as the "Prince-of-Peace" in Isaiah 9: 6 is a Messianic title.)

The second paradox in Isaiah 7: 14 is that the Messiah, though God in nature will dwell among humans, hence his symbolic name Immanuel.

Now and then, near and far

A Babylonian diviner, by name Balaam son of Beor (living at the end of the 13th century B.C.), mentioned in Numbers 24: 15-19 and also in a 8th century lime plaster discovered at Deir Alla (Jordan), made his contribution to the recording of the Messiah's pre-history. In his saying, inspired by Yahweh, Balaam refers to "a star emerging from Jacob, a scepter rising from Israel" [i.e., a royal Messiah], concluding "I see him—but not now. I perceive him—but not near" (v. 17). The emphasis of this prophecy falls on the pre-existence of the Messiah. God allows Balaam to see the Messiah before his conception and birth. While the Messiah is present there and at that time, among the children of Israel, in a mystical way, his incarnation was still far away.

The hidden Redeemer

With lips dried of fever and eyes wet of endless weeping, a long tried Job makes his confession public: "But I know that my Redeemer lives. In the end he will testify on earth. After my awakening, he will set me close to him, and from my flesh I shall look on God. I myself, not another, would behold him; my eyes will be gazing. My heart sinks within me" (Job 19: 25-27).

As in Balaam's prophecy, the Messiah (here named "the Redeemer"—Hebrew *goel* refers to the closest relative whose duty in

difficult times was to keep the family property intact) is a living person, though on a different level of existence. Yet his redeeming activity will be disclosed “in the end.” The Messiah depicted by Job combines within his person human and divine features. On one hand, he is God who will raise Job’s body from the dust of the earth. On the other hand, he comes on earth as the Redeemer (closest relative) to testify for and to set Job close to him.

One like a Son of Man

The same oscillation between human and divine, natural and supernatural, may be found in the prophet Daniel whose activity is traditionally dated to the 6th century B.C.

In 7: 13-14 the exilic prophet describes one of his visions: “I was gazing into the visions of the night, when I saw, coming on the clouds of heaven, one like a son of man. He came to the Ancient of Days and was presented to him. Dominion, glory, and kingship were given to him, and all peoples, nations and languages must serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will never pass away, and his kingship will never come to an end.”

In chapter 7 Daniel mentions four human empires (Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greco-Macedonian, and Roman) vis-à-vis the kingdom of God (symbolized in 2: 34 by a “rock which was cut out, but not by human hands”). The center of attention is the Ancient of Days seated on the judgment throne: “His robe was white as snow, the hair of his head as pure as wool; his throne was a blaze of flames...ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was in session and the books lay open” (Daniel 7: 9). Suddenly, one like a “son of man,” coming with or from the clouds approaches the Ancient of Days. While human in appearance, the Messiah exhibits divine characteristics: he is coming from above (“the clouds,” v. 13), “all the rulers will worship him” (v. 27), the Ancient of Days (God the Father) hands him “dominion, glory, and kingship” (v. 14) and “his kingship will be without end” (v. 14). After his glorious resurrection, the Lord, who assumed for himself the title “son of man” (Matthew 8: 20), let the apostles know: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28: 19) alluding to Daniel 7: 14.

The Pierced One

In the postexilic period (around the turn of the 5th century B.C.) the prophet Zechariah (12: 9-10) wrote: “When that day comes, I shall set about destroying all the nations who advance against Jerusalem. But over the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem I shall pour out a spirit of grace and prayer, and they will look to me. They will mourn for the one whom they have pierced as though for only one child, and weep for him as people weep for a first-born child.” (The text is quoted in John 19:37, with respect to the Roman soldier who pierced Jesus’ side to make sure that he died on the cross.) The death of the Pierced One occurs in an eschatological context: the siege of Jerusalem by the nations and Israel’s conversion to God. The Messianic age relies on the passion and mysterious death of a human-divine person. One may say human-divine person because in this prophecy God identifies himself with the man-Messiah, the “pierced one.”

A different paradox makes its entrance now: Messiah’s suffering as an unavoidable step toward God’s eschatological victory. Can suffering and victory, coexist together? We have already seen how human and divine, eternal and temporal, are blended in the image of the Messiah. But what about the suffering Messiah who “had no form or charm to attract us, no beauty to win our hearts” (Isaiah 53: 2)? Is he capable to accomplish God’s saving work? The answer is *yes* both in Zechariah and Deutero-Isaiah. “The man of sorrows” (Isaiah 53: 3), the one who “was carrying our sorrows,” and was “crushed because of our guilt” (vv. 4-5), “gave his life as a sin offering” (v. 10a), thus “he will see his offspring and prolong his life” (v. 10b). “Offspring” refers to the multitude of believers while “prolonging life” may be an allusion to the eternal life in the kingdom of God.

Death and Resurrection

In Psalm 22, one of the most famous passionate psalms (cf. Ps 35; 41; 55; 69; 109), the contrast suffering-victory is slightly modified to death-resurrection. The psalm consists of two divisions: vv. 1-21 describe the suffering of Messiah; vv. 22-31 depict the triumph over suffering and death. The sufferer's cry of solitude: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (v. 1; Jesus uses the same words on cross; Matthew 27:46) is soon dissipated by the holiness of God one may always rely on (vv. 3-5). A closer look to suffering follows (vv. 6-8). Interestingly enough, those who laughed at Jesus on the cross unknowingly quoted this psalm (v. 8): "He trusted himself to Yahweh, let Yahweh set him free! Let him deliver him, since he delights in him" (Matthew 27: 39-43).

The suffering Messiah mentions twice his mother (rather than his father!) as the one who connects him to the Davidic line (vv. 9-11). This could be an indirect allusion to the supernatural conception of Messiah in the virgin's womb (cf. Isaiah 7: 14).

Near to dying (v. 15), with his hands and feet pierced (v. 16), Messiah watches how they gamble for his garments (v. 18). The last detail is found also in Matthew (27: 35) and John (19: 23-24).

In the second part (vv. 22-31), the sufferer gathers the fruits of his sacrificial death: resurrection and eternal kingship. Once again, the victory stems from or more precisely cohabitates in a mysterious way with the unbearable suffering.

Messiah - Christ

The same paradoxical language is used in the pages of the New Testament with respect to the person of Jesus Christ, the Word of God made man for our salvation.

Above all his friends, i.e., the Messianic types revealed in the Old Testament, Christ, the Anointed One, bears in his own flesh the mark of the nails as well as the glorious light of the third day resurrection. He is the "image" of the Almighty Father (Colossians 1: 15) and the "paschal lamb" who has been sacrificed (1 Corinthians 5: 7). He is the true Son of God and the true son of man, the "new" reality beneath the sun (Ecclesiastes 1: 9).

Science and Religion in the Context of Christian Doctrine

Abstract

During the previous centuries, when science and the industrial revolution created the most materialistic society, it was a tendency among intellectuals to marginalize religion and other spiritual aspects of life. Surprisingly, today, top scientists are looking at religion and philosophy to get answers.

Preliminary considerations

Since the symposium organized by The Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality was scheduled so close to the end of the second millennium, we have an involuntary need to take a retrospective look at the evolution of the mentality of society since the beginning of the Christian era. But most of the remarkable changes are recent, due to industrial and electronical progress, combined with a higher degree of education and information available to all. Technology, in turn, affects our way of thinking, offering new possibilities to investigate and interpret our universe and our life.

Generally speaking, we have a very old habit of trying to find answers to the phenomena surrounding us and to find better solutions to our needs. We try to understand, explain and prove everything as new tools or means of investigation become available. Since our senses are limited, we rely on science to provide new means and explain new phenomena, beyond what we see or feel. But science itself has limitations and so, we arrive at a point where things are unexplainable, which in many cases we call supernatural. One of the greatest difficulties is the study of ourselves, humans, as very complex entities consisting of body, mind and spirit. The first, the material aspect, is better known, though not completely. The mind is still uncharted territory and the spirit a great mystery. In many cases its existence is denied, because it cannot be seen or evaluated with our senses. And yet, these three components are confirmed by our daily activities and

behaviors. As in many cases when science has no answers, this problem continues to be the domain of religion or philosophy.

Despite this separation in the object of their study, both religion and science are looking for truth, for a better explanation of life in the universe and the laws governing nature since we are part of this universe. The ignorance or wrong interpretation of these laws can have dangerous consequences and reminds us to look continuously for the truth which became a fundamental concept for both science and religion.

Another aspect of our life as social creatures, morality, is also based on truth. Rejection of lies is found in religious teachings, as in the Ten Commandments, in the oldest laws of Hammurabi and in all major civilizations. And so, we have a common ground, a basic point of view common to religion and science and neither one has departed from this fundamental principle. They have always tried to correct eventual mistakes as soon as they were acknowledged.

There are instances, when our knowledge is limited and some unusual phenomena can not be explained or our senses can perceive them only to a certain degree and when the available research equipment is also ineffective. It would be both unscientific and immoral to deny, cover up, or ignore such phenomena. It would be even worse to give false interpretations, especially based on prejudice, ignorance, or personal interest. A true scientist or theologian will accept the limitation of knowledge and openly declare such conditions and let future events provide answers or understanding.

The Science and Religion Debate

As we can observe today in many scientific and religious organizations, a great interest is evident concerning the relation between these two fields of activity. The debate is not a new one and has many implications.

Because in the past there were many misconceptions and prejudices, we can have a better understanding by focusing our attention on recent debates and selecting some of the most representative examples from a huge quantity of data related to this subject. We have some favorable conditions at the present time:

- many renowned theologians and scientists are involved;
- more information is available;

- we can express freely our opinions.

Another favorable aspect is the higher level of education of a large part of the population of the globe, thus being able to understand and participate at this debate. But the most favorable aspect of the situation is the realistic and open-minded involvement of church leaders in the field of science. Here are a few examples:

- Pope John Paul II said: "Science can purify religion from errors. Religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes... We need each other to be what we must be."

- Rev. Dr. Philip Hefner (who is also Chief Editor of *ZYGON*) expressed the same conviction: "Traditional religious stories of creation and evolution are complementary".

On the other hand, top scientists acknowledged the role of religion. For example, Albert Einstein said: "Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind." And before Einstein, another great physicist, also a Nobel Laureate, Max Planck had this well known inscription on his laboratory door: "Let no one enter here who does not have faith."

Finally, let's hear another opinion expressed by a great contemporary scientist (physicist), Dr. Paul H. Carr, Chief of Air Force Laboratory, who is also a theologian from Harvard and professor of Science and Religion at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT): "Science is an effort to understand creation."

The Orthodox Church is also involved in this dialogue; it is appropriate to mention here the active involvement of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in ecological issues.

It is interesting to notice in this context the great number of specialists educated in both fields: religion and science (all branches). They belong to very prestigious universities and organizations all over the world, have organized many symposia, and published many papers and books related to the connection between science and religion. It would be a long list to mention just the most important of them, so I am naming a few magazines where their papers are constantly being published: *Theology Today*, *Cross Currents*, *The Harbinger*, and *ZYGON*.

In Europe there is an organization (ESSAT) that promotes the exchange of information between all continents on this subject, just as DOSER (Dialogue on Science, Ethics and Religion) and AAAS (American Association for Advancement of Science) and others can be

found in the US. These above mentioned names can give an idea of the actuality and importance of the subject.

Recent Opinions

One of the most remarkable events concerning the dialogue between science and religion consists in Dr. Sidney Fox's visits to Pope John Paul II during 1984-96. The most surprising aspect described by the visitor, were his meetings with the Vatican scientists, some of the best informed around the world, who were very receptive of his research on thermal proteins, and other theories of evolution, which the Pope accepted as a complementary explanation of creation. This realistic approach of the Church to science was described by Dr. Fox in the following terms: "Pope John Paul II doesn't want to repeat the mistake of his predecessors who excommunicated Galileo". The consensus of the discussions was that the Bible has offered explanations of great value for its time, but is not up-to-date. So, there are no contradictions. Today we have a more advanced technology for research and experimentation.

In 1997, during a visit in New York, at the Episcopal Seminary, Prof. Dr. John Polkinghorne (a British physicist and theologian from Cambridge) declared in an interview that: "I want a consonant relationship between science and theology". Also, one of his favorite remarks was "Epistemology models ontology" (*Cross Currents*, vol. 48/ 1. 98).

An impressive and comprehensive study of the main currents and opinions existing today in relation to this dialogue has been published in *ZYGON* under the title "Theology and Science: Where Are We?" (*ZYGON*, Vol. 31/ 2, 1996.). Because this concise but inclusive paper is among the best in the field, let's examine it closer.

Dr. Ted Peters, the author of the paper, classified all information in eight categories, from the most antagonistic to the most conciliatory. In the first category, he describes the materialist-scientific point of view called "Scientism", which assumes a monopolistic attitude of science about all existing knowledge, the rest being non-sense. Another closely related category, "Scientific Imperialism" includes religion, as a concept of human mind.

An extreme religious position is reflected in "Ecclesiastical

Authoritarianism”, where sciences are under the control of theologians, which is an old idea maintained by the Church until the Second Vatican Council; however, that way of looking at the connection between science and religion has changed, so that we are now on a friendly ground. The new attitude of scientists seems to be a surprise for many persons who consider the advancement of science as a substitute for religion and other spiritual preoccupations. But they are not the best informed or educated, so we don’t rely on their opinions. The leading intellectuals and scientists investigating the laws governing our universe, at the border-line of human knowledge, are realizing the limitations of our senses and the possibilities of research equipment when they explore the infinity of the universe in both forms: macrocosm and microcosm. And so, these border-line scientists are looking for answers from religious doctrines, especially from the Bible; likewise, the theologians learn new meanings of creation when they study it in the light of evolution. In so doing, they can better serve the permanent desire of mankind to find answers to the mystery of nature and to act in accordance with the laws of nature, for a better life and for better relations in the world, eliminating superstitions, prejudices and ignorance, replacing them with the teaching of Jesus Christ which has guided us for two millennia.

The principle of truth, so much emphasized by Jesus Christ and central to His message, is the common ground for both science and religion and the fundamental criterion for their dialogue.

But, in order to have a comprehensive understanding of this relation, it will be necessary to mention, in short, another influential factor, namely politics, which always has used both science and religion in order to attain its goals. Since political practices are not based on truth or better human relations, and all means are used to attain the goals, the consequences are detrimental to religion as well as to science. We are not insisting now on this problem, because it is beyond the purpose of the present paper.

I cannot conclude this presentation, however, without considering the long history of the connection between religion and science. I would like to mention a few aspects of this connection:

- the priests were the first and only scientists of antiquity, being the most educated people;
- the first schools and universities were organized by churches

or temples;

- the arts and literature were promoted by religion all around the world;

- the first printed book was the Bible.

In fact, printing and consequently the access to information, is the root of present day progress.

In other words, religion has invented science, not the other way around. And this is the conclusion of most contemporary scientists who are trying to prove the strong bond between the two fields, their compatibility and complementarity. In so doing, both religion and science are going toward the accomplishment of the unity of humankind from this particular point of view, seeing the universal laws of the universe as emanating from one God.

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