

# S·T·K

## SVENSK TEOLOGISK KVARTALSKRIFT 2013

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## Per Erik Persson – A Symposium

GÖSTA HALLONSTEN

This issue of *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift* is comprised of the papers given at the Per Erik Persson symposium held at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University on February 11th 2013. The symposium was supported by the Oscar and Signe Krook Foundation and by the Royal Society of Letters at Lund University.

### *Introduction to the Symposium*

Per Erik Persson, was born on February 16th 1923. After studies in Theology and Philosophy at Lund University he earned his Doctorate of Theology there in 1957 and became *Docent* of the Faculty in the same year. From 1963 until his retirement in 1989 he held the chair of Systematic Theology or Dogmatics at the said faculty. 1980-83 Dr. Persson served as the deputy vice chancellor of Lund University.

The papers given at the symposium in honour of Per Erik Persson focused on the main topics of his theological study and scholarship. As the subject for his dissertation Per Erik Persson chose the theology of Thomas Aquinas, a rather unconventional choice in the context of “Lundensian Theology” of the 1950s. At that time, most doctoral students in systematic theology started their careers with a Luther study. And as a matter of fact, no one of the professors at that time had specialized in Thomas Aquinas or in medieval theology generally. The inspiration came from the Danish theologian Kristen Einar Skydsgaard, who had lectured in Lund for a semester during Persson’s time as a student. Skydsgaard acted as an informal supervisor during the time of his dissertation work, and Persson spent an academic year in nearby Copenhagen, where Skydsgaard was a professor. The dissertation of 1957 was entitled *Sacra doctrina : en studie till förhållandet mellan ratio och revelatio i Thomas' av Aquino teologi* (Lund : CWK/Gleerup 1957, *Studia theologica Lundensia*, 15). The English translation was published in 1970 (*Sacra doctrina : reason and revelation in Aquinas*. Oxford : Blackwell). The first two papers of the symposium, by Drs. David Burrell and Anna Bonta Moreland respectively, focus on the place and reception of the “Sacra Doctrina” in contemporary Thomas Scholarship. An anecdote, told by Professor Persson himself, might add further to the importance of his Thomas research. At a Faith&Order Meeting in the 1970s Per Erik Persson met the late Avery Dulles, prominent Catholic theologian and later Cardinal. When hearing the name of the Swedish theologian, Dulles commented to him: “Your Thomas study is always on my desk”.

The third paper of the symposium is dedicated to the ecumenical dialogue between Lutherans and Catholics. This has always been a main concern and interest of Professor Persson. Perhaps we could discern the influence of Skydsgaard even behind this. Skydsgaard himself was a Lutheran observer at the Second Vatican Council. However, Per Erik Persson got acquainted with Roman Catholic theology in the early 1950s, not only through his Thomas research but also by spending a semester at the *Institut Catholique* in Paris. That was one of those cold winters when the charitable work of Abbé Pierre saved many lives in the freezing metropolis. Further, Persson had the opportunity to get to know the important Catholic ecumenist Yves Congar, who at that time had been censured by the Vatican authorities but later became a leading theologian of Vatican II. Paradoxically, while Persson was in Paris to study Aquinas, Congar at the time concentrated on Luther research.

After the council the first official international dialogue between Lutherans and Catholics started in 1966 and resulted in the so-called Malta report in 1972. The dialogue committee among whose members was Per Erik Persson, achieved a substantial amount of consensus. Another member of the committee was Walter Kasper, who later became the cardinal prefect of the Papal council for promoting Christian Unity. In terms of ecumenical engagement much could be added. Yet, most importantly, Per Erik Persson for many years was a member of the Faith&Order commission, as well as of the official Lutheran-Baptist dialogue. Professor Persson has shown a consistent engagement and interest in ecumenical dialogues until this day. In his paper, Dr. Burckhard Neumann from the Roman-Catholic Johann Adam Möhler research institute in Germany, focuses on the status and prospects of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue today.

After his doctoral dissertation on Thomas Aquinas Dr. Persson turned to study the concept of "Repraesentatio Christi", the priest as representing Christ in his ministry, especially in recent Roman Catholic theology. This resulted in a monograph published in 1961: *Kyrkans ämbete som Kristusrepresentation: en kritisk analys av nyare ämbesteologi* (Lund: Gleerup. *Studia theologica Lundensia* 20), translated into German in 1966. The aim of the study was to explore the Catholic theology of the priesthood and especially the concept of *Repraesentatio Christi* and further, to compare this with the use and reception of similar lines of thought in Anglicanism and in the Church of Sweden. One of the basic issues was the role and relevance of this type of theology within a Lutheran theology of ministry. The critical analysis of this book must be understood against the background of the controversy over the ordination of women within the Church of Sweden around 1960. Hence the book became the subject of heated discussion even in Swedish newspapers at the time. In the fourth paper of this symposium the theology of Church and Ministry is addressed from a contemporary ecumenical and Lutheran perspective by Peder Nørgaard

Højen, emeritus associate professor of systematic theology at the University of Copenhagen

Given his study on Thomas Aquinas as well as his engagement in ecumenism, it does not come as a surprise that Per Erik Persson early on became interested in Eastern Orthodox theology. Orthodox theologians were part of the ecumenical movement from the early 1920s onwards, and their books were published in Western European languages. The Faith&Order conference in Lund 1952 brought orthodox theologians to the town, most notably perhaps the famous Georges Florovsky. Yet, even on this point, Persson's choice of subject for a third monograph was unconventional in the golden days of Lundensian Theology. In the last paper of this symposium, I will take as my point of departure the unpublished manuscript on Orthodox theology that Per Erik Persson wrote just before becoming appointed as a professor. The paper focuses on the development of East-West dialogue and on recent trends in Orthodox theology.

The papers of the symposium clearly illustrate the main fields of study and interest of Professor Persson. Yet, everything cannot be covered. The topics of the around 20 dissertations that he has supervised encompass a wide range of subjects. Also, Persson has written several textbooks, among which the introduction to contemporary theology in 1970 *Att tolka Gud idag: debattlinjer i aktuell teologi* ("Interpreting God today – trends in contemporary theology") is most widely read. Further, a wealth of articles, minor books and studies are listed in the bibliography of the 1989 Festschrift: *In unitatem fidei: festschrift till Per Erik Persson red: Per Frostin ...* Lund: Teologiska institutionen, Lunds Universitet 1989 (Religio 29). A complementing list of his publications after 1988 is included in this issue.

In addition to the papers relating to the scholarship of Per Erik Persson, we are happy to publish also a talk given at the end of the symposium by the long-time friend and colleague of Per Erik Persson, the former University Chancellor, Professor emeritus Carl-Gustaf Andrén. Among other things, Andrén focuses upon the important work done by Per Erik Persson in several governing and administrative bodies of this university and his engagement in policy discussions on research and higher education.

By publishing the papers and talks from the Per Erik Persson Symposium, the editorial board of *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift* honours its longtime editor (1969-1990). This issue is homage to an internationally renowned scholar and an esteemed teacher. In the spirit of Per Erik Persson it is intended also as a contribution to ongoing theological study and dialogue.

# Creatio ex nihilo - on the mutual incorporation of theology and philosophy in Thomas Aquinas

An appreciation of *Sacra Doctrina: Reason and revelation in Aquinas*

DAVID BURRELL C.S.C.

*Dr. David B. Burrell, C.S.C. is Theodore M. Hesburgh Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Theology at Notre Dame University, Indiana, USA. Dr. Burrell is a renowned Thomas Aquinas scholar and has published several monographs and many articles on the Angelic Doctor. Through his studies on Aquinas, David Burrell came to specialize also in medieval Arabic and Jewish philosophy, resulting in several books and articles. He is active in Jewish-Muslim-Christian dialogue. Professor Burrell was awarded a doctorate of theology, honoris causa by Lund University in 2008. Dr. Burrell's paper was read at the symposium by Dr. Anna Bonta Moreland.*

I can only wish I had become acquainted with the work of Per Erik Persson when it was first published in Swedish in 1957, the very year in which Bernard Lonergan, S.J., whose groundbreaking study, *Insight*, was first published. I was studying in Rome from 1956-60, under the inspiration of Lonergan whose "Concept of *Verbum* in the Writings of St Thomas Aquinas," had appeared in *Theological Studies* from 1946-49. (I would put those articles into book-form in 1967 as *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*.) I note the proximity in dates not to suggest any 'influence' from one of these thinkers to the other, but to call attention to affinities that can appear quite remarkable, absent any palpable connection. The primary affinity lies in appreciating Aquinas' mode of inquiry quite independently of the 'Thomist' pattern for structuring Aquinas' work then reigning in Catholic intellectual circles, stemming from the publication of the papal encyclical *Aeterni Patris* in 1879. It is fair to say that what became known as 'Thomism' owes its provenance to this initiative of Pope Leo XIII, designed to use Aquinas to advance the restoration of Christian philosophy, by explicitly counteracting trends then current in philosophy.

Those of us who found ourselves studying in Rome in mid-century, already indoctrinated into Thomism, would experience a far different Thomas Aquinas with Bernard Lonergan.

Fascinatingly enough, Persson's work breathes more of that inquiring spirit than of 'Thomism', by introducing us to an Aquinas whose exploratory *élan* outstripped his systematic prowess, and one whose theological focus ever directed and animated his philosophical inquiry. In that respect, both Persson and Lonergan anticipated John Paul II's encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (1998), which offers the dialectical interplay of 'philosophy' and 'theology' as key to a distinctively Catholic mode of inquiry. Persson sets himself against the *philosophia perennis* theme championed by *Aeterni Patris* to remind us that "Thomas ... was primarily a *theologian* and must therefore be viewed as such. ... It is significant," he notes, "that he himself never provided the kind of comprehensive discussion of his 'philosophy' which we can find in the writings of the neo-Thomists." Indeed, to focus on that, and even more, to accentuate his "interest ... in Greek philosophy and above all in Aristotelianism" cannot but be "misleading" (4).

The cultural context of the nineteenth century aligned the Catholic church with a discredited *ancien regime* to give a defensive impetus to Catholic intellectual endeavor, so a church document proposing a Thomistic philosophy to correct a prevailing way of doing philosophy would have to be taken as partisan. And yet more significant, as a distinguished mid-century Dominican, Ignatius Bochenski, once remarked, was the inevitable sociological fallout. Once a church mandates a philosophy, the result will invariably be mediocre, since that very sponsorship will call for an army of teachers, most of whom are likely to be second-rate.

It may be that Persson's Swedish cultural location simply released him from these cultural distortions. And his Lutheran confessional position may also have alerted him to another "frequently neglected factor" of high scholastic period: "a renewal of the study of the *Bible*" (4). Indeed, as a *magister in sacra pagina*, Aquinas' primary teaching responsibility would be exposition of biblical texts. Moreover, he reminds us how

study of the biblical text gave rise to what is perhaps the most characteristic form of instruction in the Middle Ages, and the form preferred by Thomas himself, namely, the disputation. (8)

We find this form of teaching exploited for detailed philosophical inquiry in his *Questiones disputatae*, yet its origin in biblical commentary forcibly reminds us how "the primary task of a scholastic theologian is to elucidate and set forth the divine revelation communicated in scripture" (10). In this context, then, "study of philosophy [will be] subordinated to the stated aim of theology", without which any discussion of Thomas' thought cannot but be "misleading in its interpretation" (11). So Persson articulates his study into three parts: (1) *Revelatio* and *Sacra Doctrina*, (2) *Ratio* And *Revelatio* in *Sacra Doctrina*, and (3) *Ratio* and *Sacra Doctrina*. Part one focuses on revelation and its communication, part two will employ metaphysics to display how a universe created freely by one God will have to be ordered, while part three elaborates how theology can be a mode of knowing [*scientia*].

While the breadth and clarity of Persson's review of Aquinas is awesome, this appreciation

will focus on part two, to parse Aquinas on free creation, which also forms the heart of his transformation of Aristotle's metaphysics, precisely to accommodate a free creator. It is telling how Aquinas will interweave philosophical and theological themes together to create the synergy needed to elucidate how key is God's activity of freely creating. Aquinas' capacity to integrate philosophical with theological demands is displayed in the initial article in the *Summa Theologiae* on creation: 'Must everything that is have been caused by God?'<sup>1</sup> Relying on his identification of God as that One whose very essence is to exist, Aquinas shows why one must 'necessarily say that whatever in any way *is* is from God'. For if

God is sheer existence subsisting of its very nature (*ipsum esse per se subsistens*), [and so] must be unique, . . . then it follows that all things other than God are not their own existence but share in existence (*ST* I.3.4; P102).

So the Neoplatonic distinction between *essential* and *participated* being is invoked to give everything but the creator the stamp of *created*. Very little, if anything, is said here about causation, but the elements are in place to press for a unique form of it, even though another way of posing the initial question employs Aristotle explicitly: 'whether God is the efficient cause of all beings?' An objection asks about those 'natural necessities' that Aristotle presumed simply to be, or always to have been: 'since there are many such in reality [—spiritual substances and heavenly bodies which carry no principle of dissolution within themselves—], all beings are not from God.' Aquinas deftly diverts this objection by recalling the primacy of existing:

an active cause is required not simply because the effect could not be [i.e., is contingent], but be-

<sup>1</sup> *ST* I 44 1. What follows reprises portions of "Act of Creation with its Theological Consequences," in Thomas Weinandy, Daniel Keating, John Yocum, eds., *Aquinas on Doctrine: A Critical Introduction* (London and New York: T & T Clark, 2004) 27-44. References in text to Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*: *ST* I. 44. 1 ad. 2.= part. 1, question.44, article 1, response to objection 2. References to Persson, p. 23 = P23.

cause the effect would not be if the cause were not [existing] (*ST* I. 44.1 ad. 2; P113).

So even ‘necessary things’ will require a cause for their very being: this is a radical revision of Aristotle, depending on the Avicennian distinction of *essence* from *existing*. What it suggests is that Aquinas was seeking for a way of understanding created being using Aristotelian metaphysics, yet the ‘givens’ of that philosophy will have to be transformed to meet the exigency of a free creator. Put another way, which anticipates our elucidation, the *being* that Aristotle took to characterize substance must become (for Aquinas) an *esse ad creatorem* (an existing in relation to the creator). This is another way of saying that ‘all things other than God are not their own existence’ (P113), either in the radical sense on which this article insists, distinguishing creatures from the creator, or even in a more attenuated sense in which the being that they *have* cannot be ‘their own’ in the sense of belonging to them ‘by right’ or by virtue of their being the kind of things they are (which was Aristotle’s view). Everything other than God receives its being from the creator as a gift. Yet such derived or participated things are no less real than Aristotle’s substances, since now there is no other way to be except to participate in the *ipsum esse* of the creator. So the nature of the creating act depends crucially on our conception of the One from whom all that is comes.

Now if that One is most properly identified as ‘He who is’ since ‘the existence of God is his essence and since this is true of nothing else’, then we are in the presence of One whose characteristic act will be ‘to produce existence [*esse*] absolutely. . . which belongs to the meaning of creation’ defined as ‘the emanation of the whole of being from a universal cause’ or ‘universal being’.<sup>2</sup> That being’s ‘proper effect’, then, is the very existence of things (*ST* I.45.5; P126, 129). One implication of this unique form of causation is that creation is not a change, except merely according to our way of understanding, [since] creation, whereby the entire substance of things is produced, does not allow of some common subject now different from what it was before,

except according to our way of understanding, which conceives an object as first not existing at all and afterwards as existing (*ST* I.45. 2 ad 2)

So creating is not a process answering the question: *how* does God create? God creates intentionally, that is, by intellect and will, though these are identical in God, so Aquinas has no difficulty adopting the metaphor of ‘emanation’ to convey something of the act of creation: God’s consenting to the universe coming forth from God—that One whose essence is simply to-be (*ST* I. 19. 4 ad. 4; P128). The revelation of God’s inner life as Father, Son, and Spirit will in fact allow Aquinas to say more, while respecting the absence of process. For it is this revelation that directs us to the right idea of creation. The fact of saying that God made all things by His Word excludes the error of those who say that God produced things by necessity. When we say that in Him there is a procession of love, we show that God produced creatures not because He needed them, nor because of any other extrinsic reason, but on account of the love of His own goodness (*ST* I 32 1 ad 3; P143).

So the act of creating is not a ‘mere overflow’ (or emanation) from this One whose very nature is to-be. It is rather an intentional emanating and so a gracious gift. Yet the mode of action remains utterly consonant with the divine nature, hence the natural metaphor of *emanation*.

The other metaphor that Aquinas invokes is that of the artisan: ‘God’s knowledge is the cause of things; for God’s knowledge stands to all created things as the artist’s to his products,’ with the implication that ‘natural things are suspended between God’s [practical] knowledge and our [speculative] knowledge’ (*ST* I.14.8 and ad 3). The deft way Aquinas employs Aristotle’s distinction between *practical* and *speculative* knowing here allows him to utilize the metaphor of artisan critically, and so avoid pitting divine and human knowing against one another. Since God’s knowing brings things into being and sustains them, we need not worry ourselves whether God’s knowing ‘what will have happened’ determines future contingent events, since the knowing that God has of what will have taken place is not propositional in character. God knows what God does; the model is practical knowing. Taking a cue from Aquinas’ strategy

<sup>2</sup> *ST* I.13.11; I.3.4; I.45.5; I 45.1; I.45. 4 ad. 1.



regarding God's knowledge of singulars, we must say that divine knowledge extends as far as divine activity, for God does not work mindlessly. Yet we can have no more determinate model for divine knowing than that.<sup>3</sup>

Yet the artisan metaphor for creation might lead one to suspect that the product could subsist without any further action on the part of its maker. So emanation will need to be invoked to remind us of the revolution that the presence of a creator and the act of creation has worked in Aristotle: the very being (*esse*) of creatures is now an *esse-ad*, 'a relation to the creator as the origin of its existence' (*ST* I.45.3; P135-6). Aristotle's definition of substance as 'what subsists in itself' can still function to distinguish substance from accident, but the being inherent to created substances proceeds from another, from the source who alone subsists eternally as the One whose essence is to be. And if substances must now be denominated 'created substances', the causality associated with creating can hardly be comprehended among Aristotle's four causes. For the two contenders, efficient and formal, each fail since an efficient cause without something to work on would be unintelligible to Aristotle, while trying to fit the creator into Aristotle's formal cause would directly foster pantheism, as Aquinas notes in *ST* I.3.8. So a 'cause of being' must be *sui generis*, as we shall see, confirming 'the distinction' of creator from creation, while the founding 'non-reciprocal relation of dependence' will be unique as well, and best characterized by the borrowed expression 'non-duality'.<sup>4</sup> So the practical knowing involved in creating will be more like *doing* than *making*, suggesting James Ross's prescient image of the 'being of the cosmos like a song on the breath of a singer,' while emphasizing that 'God's causing being can be analogous to many

diverse things without even possibly being the same as any one of them'.<sup>5</sup>

All of this is admirably expressed in Persson's 1957 study, yet the rest of us needed to await the last three decades of sustained attention to Aquinas' *theological* manner of proceeding—ironically enough, in his *Summa theologiae*—for such had been the fixation on Aquinas' *philosophical* acumen throughout most of twentieth-century commentary on his work.<sup>6</sup> The cumulative effect of this quite recent focus on the theological *telos* of Aquinas' work has been to correct the inevitable distortion to his work when it was touted as primarily 'philosophical' or 'Aristotelian'. In fact, a strong modern bifurcation between 'philosophy' and 'theology' was quite foreign to medieval thinkers; and in speaking of divine things Aquinas was often guided by neo-Platonic texts as well as Jewish and Islamic thinkers influenced by them.<sup>7</sup> Persson summarizes this dialectical relation in terms of *ratio* and *revelatio*:

Philosophy can do no more than teach us that God is one and the cause of all existence, but unaided reason has no conception at all of God as three in one. But once this truth has been revealed and faith illuminated by reason, a whole new field of activity is opened up for reason; ... interpreting the inner meaning of the truth that has been disclosed (151).

<sup>3</sup> *ST* I.14.11. See also my extended treatment of these issues in *Freedom and Creation in Three Traditions*, pp. 105-19.

<sup>4</sup> See Sara Grant's comparative study of Aquinas and Shankara for this creative proposal to find a positive way to express the relation attendant upon 'the distinction': *Towards an Alternative Theology: Confessions of a Non-dualist Christian*, ed. Bradley Malkovsky (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> James Ross, 'Creation II,' in Alfred Freddoso (ed.), *The Existence and Nature of God* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), pp. 115-41, at 128.

<sup>6</sup> I am thinking especially of the work of Gilles Emery OP, as exemplified in his *Trinitarian Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*, tr. Francesca Aran Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), and his later *The Trinity: an introduction*, tr. Matthew Levering (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), and see also contributions to Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering, eds., *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas*, (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

<sup>7</sup> See my *Knowing the Unknowable God: Ibn-Sina, Maimonides, Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986).

Yet by virtue of his distinction between *essence* and *existing* (as refined from Avicenna), Aquinas can offer a fruitful model for ‘transcendence’, articulating “an unbridgeable gulf between God and creation, between *ipsum esse per se subsistens* and *esse receptum*” (152). This is best displayed in what he

says concerning the nature of the statements that we make about God when we take creation as our starting point. ... What we mean by the term *intellectus* does not apply univocally to man and God [ST 1.13.3], and because of the limitations of our reason it is impossible for us to know what it means when what it describes is identical with *ipsum esse* (152-153).

Yet our statements “really correspond with the truth, they do not apply to God *pure equivoce* but *analogice*, so they are true though inadequate statements” (153). Persson finds “a continual interaction between *ratio* and *revelatio* throughout Aquinas’ theological work:

Revelation is of crucial significance even for the basic outlines of his metaphysics, which means that he defines the relationship between God and the world in a markedly different way from Greek philosophy. On the other hand, he defines the meaning of the knowledge given by revelation ultimately in terms of a rational knowledge that is independent of revelation. In this whole process

two different worlds of thought confront us, since Thomas borrows terms from Greek thought in order to translate the biblical idea of the living God who is at work in his creation without ceasing to be its sovereign Lord. ... He sustains his creation in power by giving life and existence to all animate and inanimate beings in a continuing creative act (154).

So in one fell swoop, as it were, Persson dismisses a polemical reading of Aquinas, which had him substituting ‘Greek thought’ for our biblical heritage, and does so by showing how Aquinas’ effective transformation of Hellenic metaphysics is rooted in the bible. And he does this by following closely and astutely the way Aquinas uses philosophical skills to mine those riches of revelation not evident on the face of biblical texts, which often enough lead in opposing directions. And that is precisely the way Bernard Lonergan introduced students to the way the first five councils of the church creatively originated Christian theology. So to bring these two astute interpreters of Aquinas into nascent conversation is to expose the way Christian intellectual developments utilized human reason as the community attempted to probe the hidden meanings of revelation, showing at the same time how such a fresh understanding of revelation could transform the very categories of reason itself.

# Comments on Per Erik Persson's *Sacra Doctrina: Reason and Revelation in Aquinas*

ANNA MORELAND

*Dr. Anna Moreland is Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Augustinian Traditions at Villanova University, Pennsylvania, USA. Moreland earned her PhD at Boston College in 2006. Her revised dissertation was published in 2010 under the title *Known by Nature: Thomas Aquinas on Knowledge of God* (Herder&Herder). She also co-edited *New Voices in Catholic Theology* (Herder&Herder, 2012). In addition to her expertise in St. Thomas, Dr. Moreland is now concentrating on issues of religious dialogue and theology of religions. Among her articles on those issues could be mentioned the forthcoming "Analogical Reasoning and Christian Prophecy: the Case of Muhammad" (Modern Theology July 2013).*

I first read Professor Persson's book in the nineties when I was a doctoral student at Boston College. I remember it being such a refreshing read among a sea of commentaries on Thomas that seemed wooden and Neo-Scholastic. My dissertation analyzed Thomas' account of natural knowledge of God. I did not use much secondary research in the project, but I did draw upon Persson's work to signal of the kind of approach to Aquinas that I found very convincing.<sup>1</sup> Re-reading Prof. Persson's book in preparation for this conference has deepened my appreciation for it – having continued to study Thomas in the intervening years. I am reminded of its freshness and of its continued importance in contemporary Thomas scholarship. Certainly scholarship on Thomas has taken cues from Persson's work in the fifties, for much more attention is now being paid to Thomas' scriptural commentaries, to his

daily life as a theologian, as a Dominican, and as a leader of educational reform for his order. My comments this morning will reflect upon Persson's book as a whole, noting how the way he approaches Thomas leads to insightful conclusions about the *Summa*. Prof. Persson is such a brilliant reader of Thomas because he illuminates the organic nature of Thomistic theology. So many of us readers of Thomas overspecialize in one area of his thought and thus become lopsided in our interpretations. This specialization skews our reading of the whole. Prof. Persson's careful reading of the entire *Summa* enables him to appreciate the music while at the same time pointing out some prescient criticisms of Thomas. It is because he reads the *Summa* as an organic enterprise that he is able to write about the relationship of theology to philosophy so eloquently [this is my favorite line in the book]:

A whole new range of action is ... opened up for reason, though no change in its natural structure or method of operation is involved. Theology is thus to be understood primarily not as the master of philosophy but as its liberator and perfecter (236).

<sup>1</sup> Persson's reading of the *Summa theologiae* finds a natural counterpart in Thomas Hibbs' reading of the *Summa contra gentiles* in: *Dialectic Narrative in Aquinas: Interpretation of the Summa Contra Gentiles* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995).

Let us take a look into how theology liberates philosophy from the confines of its reach in this reading of Thomas. Prof. Persson suggests that the *Summa* is organized around the different ways that God is present in the world:

God is in everything primarily by the very fact that a thing exists and is therefore utterly dependent on him. But he is also specially present in the righteous as the object of the will and intellect that have been brought to perfection in them by grace. Finally, he is also in Christ, in that the human nature of Christ has been raised to union with one of the persons of the godhead, and exists with his *esse* (223).

Each way of being present corresponds, of course, with a part of the *Summa*. Each part presupposes and deepens the previous one. The structural elements of the presence of God remain the same – basically – throughout, that of a transcendent cause in an effect that is completely dependent upon this cause. But each encounter with that transcendent cause both deepens and elevates the human person, whether through creation, grace or Christ. Quoting Prof. Persson:

Man himself *is* and acts – and therefore is accountable for his deeds – but both his *esse* and *operatio* issue at every moment from God and are immediately dependent upon him. They are gifts given to men by a gracious and benevolent God, though their fashion and form is determined by the nature of the recipient (224).

Even in Christ God is present as transcendent cause in an effect that conforms to that cause. In Christ the “presence” is one of absolute dependence upon God. Persson finds that Thomas’s Christology runs into certain difficulties as it tries to reconcile certain biblical ideas with Thomas’ overarching metaphysical commitments. If these biblical ideas

were really allowed to speak their own distinctive word, they would destroy the structure of thought which in the last resort gives Thomas’s synthesis its unity and cohesion (289-290).

In particular, ideas such as the fact that God is self-giving or a being made man would

ultimately destroy the causal relation between God and man... Where such ideas do appear in scripture, Thomas is forced by his presuppositions to reformulate them, for the causal relation itself assumes that there is an insuperable *diversitas* between divine and human (289-290).

First let me note that I laughed out loud when I read Persson’s account of Thomas’ uneasiness with certain biblical texts. As someone who also approaches Thomas with a hermeneutic of generosity, mine was a laughter of recognition. Persson notes, as many of us do when reading the *Summa theologiae*, that the fusion of biblical and Greek thought in that work makes Thomas sometimes seem more comfortable with the Greek than the biblical. When reading Persson’s commentary here I immediately thought of Thomas’ response in *Prima pars* Question One, article two concerning whether *sacra doctrina* is a *scientia*. The objector states quite understandably that *sacra doctrina* deals with individual facts, such as the deeds of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But an Aristotelian *scientia* trades in universals. Thomas replies that individual facts are treated in *sacra doctrina* only

as examples to be followed in our lives (as in moral sciences) and in order to establish the authority of those men through whom the divine revelation, on which this sacred scripture or doctrine is based, has come down to us.<sup>2</sup>

One wonders what one should do with the individual person of Christ, who did that individual deed of getting himself hung on a cross. Prof. Persson notes that this commitment to confirming everything within the general *ordo Deum* of the *Summa* leads Thomas into certain nettles that he cannot resolve in the *Tertia pars*.

Current work on Thomas that draws on his biblical commentaries in particular, could offer ways of reading the *Summa* that address this uneasiness in the work. Let me draw your attention to one interpreter who has recently provided original insights into how Thomas uses Old Testament models in his Christology. Matthew Levering has argued convincingly that Thomas’ reading of the Old Testament is crucial for un-

<sup>2</sup> *Summa theologiae*, I.1.2.ad2.

derstanding how he outlines salvation in the *Summa theologiae*. The Old Law comes to its term and completion with the coming of Christ, who especially in his Passion gives to Torah and Temple their definitive meaning. Levering insists that Thomas intended to portray Christ's work in terms of Israel's threefold office of priest, prophet, and king, with the corresponding fulfillment of the three types of Old Law: precept, the ceremonial, moral, and judicial (53; 66ff.). The Christology of the *Summa* shows how the Messianic expectations of Israel are fulfilled in this one particular and specific way, in the one person of Christ. This is not to deny the uneasiness that Persson uncovers. It is, rather, to uncover another thread of biblical reasoning in the *Summa* that preserves Thomas' commitment to the distinctive role of Christ in the *Summa theologiae*.

I would also like to echo Prof. Persson's criticisms of Roman Catholic thinkers who understand tradition as "a constitutive source of faith standing on an equal line with scripture"<sup>3</sup> since no such independent source can be found in Thomas. Persson makes much of the sparse use of the term *traditio* in Thomas to this end. Persson astutely points out that in Thomas:

...tradition is not *complementary* but *interpretive*. Thus the scriptural principle does not mean that scripture is in any way opposed to the interpretation of the church, the tradition of the fathers, and the pronouncements of the *magisterium*. These three elements constitute a unity – and even as early as this we can see the developments in theology which gradually led to the dogma of infallibility – but this unity means that the teaching of the church, *doctrina ecclesiae*, is to be understood essentially as *the interpretation of scripture* (69-70).

Prof. Persson notes also that *traditio* is as natural to Thomas as church, another term that does not occur often in the *Summa* and yet is a reality that

Thomas lives and breathes in his daily life. I would add that with *traditio* in particular there is a performative element in the *Summa* that would reveal its centrality to Thomas' theology. The practice of *disputatio* out of which the *Summa* is composed is performed in conversation with an explicit *traditio*. Thomas uses the *quaestio* format to speak from within this *traditio*, wrestling with some historical members of this tradition, in conversation with others. While this *traditio* does not of course constitute some independent source of authority, and it gives voice to arguments that only have *probaliter* authority, it is organically related to both the source of *sacra scriptura* and the practice of *sacra doctrina*. And the resolutions that Thomas offers to the web of questions in the *summa* arose out of an intense grappling with this *traditio* of interpreters, whether they emerge in the objections, the *sed contra*, or in Thomas' own replies.

Let me close by making one final note. Sometimes, in reading an author we get the sense of that author as a teacher. This definitely happened to me when reading this book. The precision, the patience, the clarity, the careful use of language, all pointed to someone who clearly was dedicated to the pedagogical task. That must be one of the reasons why Prof. Persson was drawn to Thomas Aquinas. He explains the relative infrequent use of the term *theologia* in Thomas in comparison with his contemporaries by the fact that *theologia* cannot convey "the sense of teaching and the outward activity which clearly for Thomas constitute the theological task" (71). Reading both Thomas and Persson leads this reader to note that for neither is theology undertaken for its own sake, but as instruction of students for the knowledge of salvation. I join you today in honoring Prof. Persson by wishing that I, too, had had him as my teacher in person, not just on the written page.

<sup>3</sup> Persson, 67, cite original citation within Persson text. Originally in A. Lang, *Die Loci theologici des Melchior Cano und die Methode des dogmatischen Beweises. Ein Beitrag zur theologischen Methodologie und ihrer Geschichte* (Münchener Studien zur historischen Theologie 6) Munich 1925, p. 112.

# Facing Unity

## A Catholic View on the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue

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### Introduction

The year 1967 was an important year for various reasons and on different levels. For my own life it was very important because I started school in September, 1967. It was also the year The Beatles released their famous and most influential Album "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band", which some of you may know, and I hope also like as I do. Furthermore, it was the year the Joint Lutheran-Roman Catholic Study Commission held its first session in Zürich, Switzerland, the same commission that in 1972 published the so called "Malta Report" on "The Gospel and the Church".<sup>1</sup> One member of the Lutheran delegation was the person we honor by this symposium, Per Erik Persson.

Up to now I think that this title still marks the special emphases of Lutheran and Roman Catholic theology and doctrine, which a later document expresses by the title "Church and Justifi-

cation".<sup>2</sup> The way Roman Catholic and Lutheran doctrines define the relation of these two points marks the difference between the Churches, though I am convinced that this difference does not divide our churches but is a differentiated consensus, and I think especially the document "Church and Justification" shows that the special emphases are not mutually exclusive.

If you read this report from 1972, including the special statements of some members of the commission, after more than forty years of dialogue, you may get the impression that this text is already a kind of summary of many results of the official dialogue and the questions this dialogue raises. Reading this text against the background of the other dialogues, it seems to me that most of the theses of this text were justified or clarified by documents that were to follow.

The most obvious example is the doctrine of justification. A particular sentence of the "Malta Report" seems to be one of the most frequent quotations on this doctrine – in No. 26 the report states: "Today, however, a far-reaching consensus is developing in the interpretation of justifi-

<sup>1</sup> "Report of the Joint Lutheran – Roman Catholic Study Commission on "The Gospel and the Church", 1972" ("Malta Report"), in: *Growth in Agreement: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level*. Ed. by H. Meyer and L. Vischer, New York-Geneva 1984 (FOP 108), 168-189.

<sup>2</sup> *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982-1998*. Ed. by J. Gros, H. Meyer, W.G. Rusch, Geneva-Grand Rapids 2000 (FOP 187), 484-565.

cation.” 27 years later this statement was officially accepted by the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation by signing the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification in October 31<sup>st</sup> 1999 in Augsburg, Germany.<sup>3</sup> But the fact that it took so long tells us that we need a lot of patience on the way forward to the unity we seek.

It might be helpful, as well as comforting and encouraging, to compare this document to the ongoing dialogue, and ask for similar results. As one of the third generation of ecumenists, I would like to give a brief overview on the themes of this dialogue, in no way complete or detailed, of course, and to ask some questions or name some problems. I consciously use the title of the last document of the second phase of this dialogue, “Facing Unity”, but, as you can see, I put a question mark behind this title. So, this is the question that stands behind my brief statement: Are we really facing unity today?

## 1. The themes of the dialogue

If you look at the international Lutheran/Roman Catholic dialogue, I think one could speak of a “honeymoon” concerning the first years that form the first and the second phase of this dialogue. It was the most productive time of the dialogue; after the “Malta Report” the commission published six documents up to 1984, and especially the documents on the Eucharist (1978)<sup>4</sup> and on the Ministry in the Church (1981)<sup>5</sup> are milestones that are still challenging our churches. They still pose the question whether we have received and implemented them in the doctrine, the life and the liturgy of our churches. But also the statements to the Augsburg confession “All under one Christ” (1980)<sup>6</sup> and to Martin Luther “Martin Luther – Witness to Christ” (1984)<sup>7</sup> are still worth reading and could, I think, be very helpful in approaching the year 2017 together. It is only to be expected that the end of this phase saw the publica-

tion of the document “Facing Unity” (1984),<sup>8</sup> which even braved a kind of roadmap to unity. So these years could be regarded as a kind of honeymoon; the first phase of a new and vivid relationship, which sooner or later has to deal with the everyday life and the fact that the partner still remains different from me and my fantasies. And maybe this last document in particular was published too early, expressing a hope or vision that now faces the challenges of everyday life.

The density and the briefness of these documents is challenging and fascinating. The documents of the following phases – “Church and Justification” and “The Apostolicity of the Church”<sup>9</sup> – become more voluminous, discussing the different subjects in more detail and with a great amount of biblical, historical and systematic material (which of course is very helpful for a seminary or for academic lectures). The document “Church and Justification” is in my opinion still very helpful for discerning the different ways of understanding the church and its relation to the Gospel according to Lutheran and Roman Catholic doctrine.

Besides the aforementioned Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, however, the dialogue came to focus more and more on the question of the Church, and the ministry in the church. While they are all helpful proposals, it seems to me that the dialogue here comes to an end of sorts – nearly everything is now said, and it remains for the churches to react and answer. In regard of all this, you may well ask yourself the central question: Are we today closer to unity or not? Looking back at the situation in 1967 and comparing it to the present, the only answer is: “Yes, we are”. The results of the ecumenical dialogue are obvious. We have all influenced and learned from one another; we have gone a long way together towards unity and cannot go back.

Yet I wish to ask more precisely what we have reached so far. Certainly, we have reached much more than we could have expected at the begin-

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 566-582.

<sup>4</sup> *Growth in Agreement*, 192-214.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 248-275.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 241-247.

<sup>7</sup> *Growth in Agreement II*, 438-442.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 443-484.

<sup>9</sup> *The Apostolicity of the Church: Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity*, Minneapolis 2006.

ning of the dialogue, but I would like to add that we have reached less than what is possible, comparing the results of the dialogue itself to the points the churches have accepted and received hitherto. I don't think I have to argue for the former part of my answer. Just compare a typical catholic handbook of dogmatic theology from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to a corresponding handbook of today. The changes in the way we regard and appreciate each other are obvious. As for the latter part, I dare say that we are not facing unity in the way described by the document of 1984. It seems to be farther away. I would like to list some thoughts and suggestions on the problems we are dealing with in the ecumenical dialogue at large, not only between Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

## 2. Current problems of the ecumenical dialogue

### *a) The problem of identity*

One of the main problems the churches are dealing with, consciously or unconsciously, seems to be one of identity. What is Christian identity in a pluralistic world, facing all the different religions and convictions and ideologies? And, after almost fifty years of ecumenical dialogue, what is Roman Catholic or Lutheran identity?

Some years ago a short debate about an "ecumenism of profiles" ("Ökumene der Profile") took place in Germany.<sup>10</sup> Though the term itself may be outdated, the question how we can save our ecclesial identity is still relevant. One critical reproach to the ecumenical dialogue as a whole, and especially to those who are engaged in this dialogue, is that too much of one's own ecclesial identity is given up, or even betrayed. Though I think this is completely wrong, and always state that true ecumenism does not mean to give up or betray one's own faith but to get enriched by the ecumenical partner, I do understand the problem and I think it must be considered and discussed if the ecumenical dialogue is to be fruitful.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. W. Huber, *Im Geist der Freiheit. Für eine Ökumene der Profile*, Freiburg i.Br. 2007

The Lutheran discussion on the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification is a good example, especially in Germany, for the role denominational or ecclesial identity plays on our shared road toward unity. My predecessor at the Johann-Adam-Möhler Institute, Prof. Hans Jörg Urban, once noted that if there were to be a Joint Declaration on Eucharist and Ministry, the discussion within the Roman Catholic church would be as heavy and as controversial as it had been in the Lutheran churches when the Joint Declaration was about to be signed.

### *b) The lack of reception*

So I come to my next point, which seems almost as old as the ecumenical dialogue itself. I am speaking of the problem of reception. The lack of reception of the results of the ecumenical dialogue within our churches, in doctrine, liturgy and life is one of the key challenges of ecumenism. Of course, this is a challenge for the *church authorities*, the bishops and synods in our churches. Besides the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, no other results of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue have been officially received by our churches. And the Joint Declaration demonstrates the importance of such official acts and signs.

You are familiar, perhaps, with the proposal of the Lutheran theologian Harding Meyer, that the Churches should make so called "In-via" declarations; declarations that do not state a more or less full consensus on certain questions, but state and save what we have already achieved, and what we don't want to give up or don't need to discuss anymore.<sup>11</sup> The document "Harvesting the fruits" published by Cardinal Walter Kasper was an answer to this proposal,<sup>12</sup> and I was very glad to recently read an interview with Cardinal Koch, the President of the Pontifical Council for

<sup>11</sup> Cf. H. Meyer, *Stillstand oder neuer Kairos? Zur Zukunft des evangelisch/katholischen Dialogs*, in: ders., *Versöhnte Verschiedenheit. Aufsätze zur ökumenischen Theologie III*, Frankfurt a.M.–Paderborn 2009, 132-144.

<sup>12</sup> W. Kasper, *Harvesting the Fruits. Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue*, London 2009.



Promoting Christian Unity, that the council is looking for ways to carry on with this project.<sup>13</sup>

But here I would like to emphasise the role and responsibility of *theology*. Though I do not want to reject what I stated about the change in theological handbooks, I am very often astonished, and sometimes disappointed, that the theological results of so many dialogues haven't yet found their way into systematic theology. For ultimately, theology has a great responsibility in influencing the ministers, the teachers and many others in the church that will then be able and willing to implant these results in the life and practice of our communities. The gap that sometimes appears between the efforts of ecumenical dialogue and the theological formation is a main reason for the lack of reception in our churches.

### c) *The hermeneutical question*

This takes me to another point that is crucial for the effort of the ecumenical dialogue. I mean the hermeneutical question, which is probably one of the most complex questions in ecumenism.<sup>14</sup>

Though there many books and articles on this subject, the problem is, in my opinion, not yet solved. And needless to say, I am not able to solve it either. I just want to offer some observations that might be helpful for the ongoing debate. As already mentioned, ecumenical theologians often have to deal with the fear or the presupposition that ecumenical theology goes too far, that it is in danger of giving up the truth in the struggle for unity. It is difficult to reply or reproach this fear because it is not only a question of reason but also emotion. Nevertheless, one must always try.

First of all, I think no one engaged in the ecumenical dialogue would agree to that fear. The intense and often controversial discussions in these dialogues rather prove that no one is

willing to give up his or her own faith for the sake of unity. But they try to go as far as possible, because they are convinced that the unity Christ prayed for is worth it. And one could ask if the search for unity could be one of the signs that this theology really is the work of the Holy Spirit. To me it seems that within the so called discernment of the Spirits, the search for unity could be understood as such a sign for the work of the Holy Spirit.

But one reason for such fear and presupposition is that we very often do not realize the new situation; our new frame of self-understanding that has resulted from the ecumenical dialogue on all levels. We can no longer understand ourselves as the one true church and outside there is only heresy. We all know that the deeper reflection on the church led the II. Vatican Council to accept that the borders of the Roman Catholic Church are not the borders of the Church of Christ. As Pope John Paul II observed in his encyclical *Ut unum sint*: "It is not that beyond the boundaries of the Catholic community there is an ecclesial vacuum" (No. 13). Moreover, the first fruit of the ecumenical dialogue mentioned is the "rediscovered brotherhood" (No. 41f.). So we all are brothers and sisters in Christ, despite the fact that we live in different and still separated churches. This is a new situation, a new frame of understanding ourselves in relation to the other churches and Christians.

The upshot is that we have to reflect on this new frame because it challenges us to develop a new kind of hermeneutics. But to do that, we have to accept the efforts of the ecumenical dialogue, and then ask what these efforts show us about the questions of unity and diversity; not within our churches but between our churches. This, in turn, means that hermeneutical reflections, while necessary, are secondary or subordinate. First, we have to accept the efforts and results of ecumenism, not necessarily as a whole, of course, but with a critical discussion. Then, we have to reflect on what these results or efforts tell us about human understanding, what they tell us about the development of doctrine, the relation of unity and diversity, and many other questions. But it seems to me that very often these results are not accepted because one does not

<sup>13</sup> J. Schidelko, *Neue Impulse gesucht*. Kardinal Koch zieht zur Einheitswoche ökumenische Bilanz, in: KNA-ÖKI Nr. 5, 2.1. 2013, 5f., 5.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. T. Lindfeld, *Einheit in der Wahrheit. Konfessionelle Denkformen und die Suche nach ökumenischer Hermeneutik*, Paderborn 2008 (KKTS 78); W. Thönissen, *Dogma und Symbol. Eine ökumenische Hermeneutik*, Freiburg i.Br. 2008.

want to change the basic hermeneutical frame or pattern.

I may be wrong, but I sometimes think that many of those that do not accept the results of ecumenical dialogue do so because they think these efforts cannot be true. There is a famous poem of Christian Morgenstern, titled “Die unmögliche Tatsache / The impossible fact” which ends with the lines (and I would like to quote the German text first):

Weil, so schließt er messerscharf,  
nicht sein kann, was nicht sein darf.<sup>15</sup>

Translated:

”for, he reasons pointedly,  
that which must not, cannot be.”<sup>16</sup>

I think that this is a real problem. There are the results of the ecumenical dialogue, and in many cases I think they are convincing. But to accept them implies that you accept the fact that questions that separated and divided the Churches in the 16<sup>th</sup> century maybe no longer separate and divide them in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>17</sup> Thus the question arises how this can be possible (given that the believers and theologians in the 16<sup>th</sup> century were as intelligent and faithful as we think we are today!). If you accept this fact, you have to

<sup>15</sup> Chr. Morgenstern, *Gedichte in einem Band*, Frankfurt a.M. 42009, 78f.

<sup>16</sup> URL: <[http://www.alb-neckar-schwarzwald.de/morgenstern/morgenstern\\_poems.html](http://www.alb-neckar-schwarzwald.de/morgenstern/morgenstern_poems.html)> (28.1.2013)

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Lehrverurteilungen-kirchentrennend? I. Rechtfertigung, Sakramente und Amt im Zeitalter der Reformation und heute*. Hg. von K. Lehmann und W. Pannenberg, Freiburg i.Br.-Göttingen 31988 (DiKi 4); Transl.: *The condemnations of the Reformation era: do they still divide?* Ed. by K. Lehmann and W. Pannenberg, Minneapolis 1990; *Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend? II. Materialien zu den Lehrverurteilungen und zur Theologie der Rechtfertigung*. Hg. von K. Lehmann, Freiburg i.Br.-Göttingen 1989 (DiKi 5); *Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend? III. Materialien zur Lehre von den Sakramenten und vom kirchlichen Amt*. Hg. von W. Pannenberg, Freiburg i.Br.-Göttingen 1990 (DiKi 6); *Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend? IV. Antworten auf kirchliche Stellungnahmen*. Hg. von W. Pannenberg u. Th. Schneider, Freiburg i.Br.-Göttingen 1994 (DiKi 8).

reflect on the consequences for your faith, for your understanding of history, or the development of Christian doctrine, and all the questions that are connected to that issue. And if you don't want to accept these new questions you tend to deny the results of the dialogue. So the challenge of ecumenical hermeneutics is the reflection on how it is possible to rethink the discussions of the Reformation era and to come to different solutions.

Here it may be helpful to investigate the relation of diversity and plurality within our churches and also within the different forms of church communions. E.g. I fail to understand why, on the one hand, in several countries there is full communion between Lutheran and Methodist Churches, though there is a deep difference on the understanding of the *simul iustus et peccator*, while on the other some Lutheran theologians regard this question as the main and still Church dividing difference between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Churches. So a lot of theological work remains to be done on this field.

#### *d) The different understanding and realization of unity*

Church communion is another keyword. Facing unity implies that we face the same unity, but obviously, this is not the case. That is why we discuss the church, the sacraments and the ministry in the church. And, of course, we can only hope to come closer to the unity we seek if we do not differ in the understanding of this unity.

From a catholic point of view, this problem is closely connected to the different forms of union or communion of churches between the protestant churches worldwide. For Roman Catholic doctrine and theology it is very difficult to understand how these differences within the protestant churches are possible. And here we are again at the “Malta Report” and the statements of some theologians at the end of this report that point to the inner-Lutheran differences especially on the understanding of ministry. In Germany, most of the Lutheran Churches are members of the “Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe” (CPCE) which is based on the Leuenberg Agreement. In my view the Con-

cord of Leuenberg from 1973 is based on a certain interpretation of the Article VII of the Augsburg Confession which seems to me to collide with some statements made by the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue on the necessity of an ordained ministry for the church.

Of course, I do not want to blame the Lutheran Churches or the other Protestant Churches for this. I just want to point to this problem because I think it is crucial for our ongoing relations. It is very difficult for Roman Catholic theology to understand these different interpretations of the Lutheran Confessions and their consequences for the different forms of church communion. Of course, as a Roman Catholic theologian I prefer a Church communion on the basis of the Porvoo Common Statement from 1993 to a communion on the basis of Leuenberg. But both ways of communion do exist, both are accepted and lived by Lutheran Churches and so raise the question for the shape or form of the unity we seek.

#### *e) The challenge of conversion*

One of my problems with the Leuenberg Agreement is the difference between the intention of Leuenberg and its realization. It intends to be the *beginning* of a way to a growing and deepening communion,<sup>18</sup> but in my view – though I may be wrong – it is in fact a form of mutual acceptance based on the *status quo* without any change within the churches. I ask whether this can be a stable, reliable form of unity. For I think that the unity of the churches is impossible without reform and renewal, and that means it is impossible without change.

I am convinced that this problem concerns all our churches, and I repeat that I do not want to be misunderstood as blaming the Protestant Churches for the Leuenberg Agreement. What I want to underscore is that not only a “change of heart” is essential for the way to unity, which the Decree on ecumenism calls one necessary element of the so called “spiritual ecumenism” (along with the “holiness of life” and the “public and private prayer for the unity of Christians”<sup>19</sup>),

but also the reform of the churches.<sup>20</sup> In No. 4 the Decree on ecumenism says: “Finally, all are led to examine their own faithfulness to Christ’s will for the Church and accordingly to undertake with vigor the task of renewal and reform.” And No. 6 says:

Christ summons the Church to continual reformation as she sojourns here on earth. The Church is always in need of this, in so far as she is an institution of men [and women] here on earth.

This means that the call for unity is intrinsically tied to the call to reform, renewal, reformation. The document of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue on “Martin Luther – witness to Christ” states:

Luther’s call for church reform, a call to repentance, is still relevant for us. He summons us to listen anew to the gospel, to recognize our own unfaithfulness to the gospel and to witness credibly to it. This cannot happen today without attention to the other church and to its witness and without the surrender of polemical stereotypes and the search for reconciliation. (No. 6)

I think this is the main challenge on our way to unity and even the most difficult of the problems I mentioned here. We all confess that reform is necessary for our churches, we all accept the famous sentence of the “*ecclesia semper reformanda*”, but the problem is to put it into practice. But if we do not really dare to go this way, and if we do not listen to the legitimate questions of our brothers and sisters in Christ, we have to ask ourselves whether we really are on the way to unity and whether we really want to go this way.

## Concluding remarks

Let me come to the end. Maybe you know the famous labyrinth in the cathedral in Chartres. A Benedictine once showed me that just before you get to the center you are at the edge of the whole

<sup>18</sup> Vgl. No. 35-41.

<sup>19</sup> UR 8.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Groupe des Dombes, *Pour la conversion des Églises*, Paris 1991; transl.: *For the Conversion of the Churches*, Geneva 1993.

labyrinth that means you seem to be as far away as possible. Maybe our way towards unity can be considered as a kind of labyrinth. The difference between a maze and a typical labyrinth is that a labyrinth consists of just one path, so it is impossible to get lost in it. So maybe if the unity is not as near as one could hope or wish after more than forty years of dialogue, we can still be confident that we are on the way to unity. And we all hope for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As the "Malta Report" says: "Lutheran and Catholics are convinced that the Holy Spirit unceasingly leads and keeps the church in the truth"

(No. 22). The road we share toward unity is part of the truth of the Gospel. So if we trust in this guidance we may hope that the Holy Spirit also guides us today, and maybe the impression that we are still far away from the center is just the beginning of his guidance to the center, to the one who unites us, our Lord Jesus Christ. Maybe in 2025, at the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the II. Vatican Council, we will be facing unity in a way we could not even imagine in 2013. It would be a good year (and now I have to quote Sgt. Pepper!), the year "when I'm sixty-four."

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# REMEMBERING THE PAST – LIVING THE FUTURE

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Svenska kyrkan 

# Det kirkelige embedes væsen og opgave

## Lutherske bemærkninger til en økumenisk kontrovers

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De følgende overvejelser er tænkt som en slags randbemærkninger til væsentlige temaer, der tilsyneladende ikke ophører med at volde problemer i relationen mellem konfessionerne og ikke mindst belaster forholdet mellem katolicismen og lutherdommen. Sigtet er at belyse, hvad det kirkelige embede overhovedet er, hvem der udøver det og på hvilke niveauer, og hvad intentionen med denne embedsudøvelse er.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I det følgende anvendes en række forkortelser:

BEM – Lima-Erklæringen (Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry)

BSELK – Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche (Göttingen 1956)

CA – Confessio Augustana

DwÜ – Dokumente wachsender Übereinstimmung 1, ed. Harding Meyer, Hans Jörg Urban und Lukas Vischer, Paderborn und Frankfurt am Main 1983

EKL – Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon

GiA – Growth in Agreement 1, ed. Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, New York and Geneva 1984

LG – Vaticanum II, Lumen Gentium

LVF – Det Lutherske Verdensforbund

MPL – Migne, Patrologia Latina

### Det kirkelige embedes

### nødvendighed, indehavere og opgave

Det kontinuerlige vidnesbyrd om frelsen i Kristus er den nødvendige forudsætning for menighedens fortsatte eksistens (jf. Joh 20,21; Luk 10, 16; Joh 13,20), og i dialogen mellem konfessionerne har spørgsmålet om det kirkelige embedes nødvendighed i sig selv ikke været kontroversielt. Forkyndelsen må finde sted, om fællesskabet ikke skal opløses og forsvinde. Derfor er embedet i en eller anden form nødvendigt, og dets opgave er at tjene den menighed, der overhovedet er resultatet af den oprindelige forkyndelse af Gudsriget. Uden at præjudicere og mobilisere, hvad teologihistorien har udviklet til belysning af embedets teologi og struktur, kan det primært konstateres, at et sådant kirkeligt embede er nødvendigt, og at dets inderste væsen er tjeneste i form af trofast videregivelse af Kristi evangelium i den første apostolske menigheds tolkning.

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PCS – Porvoo Common Statement

UR – Vaticanum II, Unitatis Redintegratio

WA – Martin Luther, Weimarer Ausgabe

Ifølge Ny Testamente og en lang tradition i kirkens historie omfatter Jesu forkyndelsesopfordring alle og enhver, der lytter til evangeliet og kommer til tro på det. Forestillingen om den troendes ved dåben formidlede delagtighed i Kristi sendelse og dermed i hans præstelige og kongelige embede var udbredt overbevisning i oldkirken<sup>2</sup> og middelalderen og udviklede sig senere ikke mindst i reformatorisk teologi til læren om de troendes almindelige præstedømme (jf. 1 Pet 2,9). Dette indebar alle døbtets adgang til alle præstelige funktioner som bøn, forbøn og forkyndelse, herunder sågar muligheden for at fejre nadveren under fremsigelse af indsættelsesordene og frembærelsen af offeret, hvilket efter den daværende katolske opfattelse kun kunne opfattes som ekstremt provokerende, selv om messeofferet blev reinterpreteret og tolket som den troendes selvhengivelse i tjeneste for Gud og næsten i henhold til Rom 12,1 og 1 Pet 2,5. Konsekvent nok sætter den unge Luther trumf på og erklærer, at

alle kristne tilhører ... den gejstlige stand, og der er ikke anden forskel imellem dem end den, der ligger i embedet. ... Thi hvad der er krøbet ud af dåben, kan rose sig af allerede at være indviet til præst, biskop og pave, selv om det ikke sømmer sig for enhver at udøve sådan et embede. Thi selv om vi alle i lige grad er præster, så må ingen selv træde frem og uden vor billigelse og vort valg fordriste sig til at øve det, som vi alle har lige stor myndighed til. Thi det, der er fælles, kan ingen uden menighedens vilje og befaling tiltage sig.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Se fx *Augustin i De civitate Dei* XX,10: Quod autem, cum dixisset [sc. Johannes]: In istis [sc. dem, der har del i den første opstandelse] secunda mors non habet potestatem; adiunxit atque ait: Sed erunt sacerdotes Dei et Christi et regnabunt cum eo mille annis [cf. Apoc 20,6]; non utique de solis episcopis et presbyteris dictum est, qui proprie iam vocantur in Ecclesia sacerdotes; sed sicut omnes christos dicimus propter mysticum chrisma, sic omnes sacerdotes, quoniam membra sunt unius sacerdotis. MPL 41, 675-676.

<sup>3</sup> An den christlichen Adel; da. overs. i *Torben Christensen (red.)*, Luthers Skrifter i Udvalg IV. Evangelium og Samfundsliv, Århus 1980, 46-47. Tilsvarende hedder det i *De captivitate Babylonica*: Esto itaque certus ... omnes nos aequaliter esse sacerdotes, hoc

Det er vanskeligt at overdrive, hvor revolutionerende sådanne formuleringer må have lydt i katolske ører. De indeholder imidlertid væsentlige reservationer, der sætter de kategoriske udmeldinger i perspektiv. For det første understreges det, at det, som alle døbt har, nl. adgang til og del i præsteembedet, ikke er den enkelte troendes prerogativ, men kun noget, som han/hun har i det fællesskab, som vedkommende som medlem af det skal tjene. Det er stedse *una sancta catholica* (og inden for dennes rammer), som den døbt er sendt til at tjene. Det er derfor også det i denne forstand katolske fællesskab, der ud af de troendes helhed udpeger nogle til at udøve præstetjeneste og således giver dem fuldmagt til på alles vegne at udføre det, som alle i kraft af dåben er udrustet til.<sup>4</sup>

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est, eandem in verbo et sacramento quocunque habere potestatem, verum, non licere quemquam hac ipsa uti nisi consensu communitatis aut vocatione maioris. Quod enim omnium est communiter, nullus singulariter potest sibi arrogare, donec vocetur. WA 6, 566, 26 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Denne embedets katolske dimension formuleres forbillegligt af *Wolfhart Pannenberg*: "Der gemeinsame Auftrag aller Christen, ihren Glauben zu bekennen und die Botschaft des Evangeliums weiterzugeben, indem sie sie durch ihr Leben bezeugen, schließt auch eine gemeinsame Verantwortung dafür ein, daß das entsprechend der Einheit der Glaubenden in Jesus Christus und also gemeinschaftlich geschieht. Der gemeinsame Auftrag der Christen wäre nicht erfüllt, wenn jeder für sich – und auch im Widerspruch zu anderen – das eigene Zeugnis für Jesus Christus ablegte. Vielmehr verlangt der allen Christen gegebene Auftrag, daß er als ein gemeinsamer Auftrag erfüllt wird. Solche Gemeinsamkeit muß beim Zeugnis des Glaubens ebenso wie bei der Feier des Herrenmahls gewahrt werden. Aber sie entsteht nicht von selbst, und es kann auch nicht um irgendeine Gemeinsamkeit gehen, sondern nur um die im Evangelium Jesu Christi begründete. Sie ist der Vielheit der Glieder der Kirche immer schon vorgegeben, aber sie muß auch zur Vielheit der individuellen Beiträge zum Leben der Gemeinde in Beziehung gesetzt werden, um sie in die Einheit des Christuszeugnisses zu integrieren. Eine Instanz, die diese Funktion erfüllen soll, ist einerseits angewiesen auf das gemeinsame Glaubensbewußtsein der Glieder der Kirche, repräsentiert aber andererseits ihnen gegenüber die Einheit des Auftrags Jesu Christi, in welchem jenes gemeinsame Glaubensbewußtsein selber gründet und aus dem es sich immer wieder er-

Det er den offentlige udøvelse af denne fuldmagt, der i egentlig forstand markerer forskellen mellem totaliteten af døbte og dem af dem, der har fået overdraget den særlige opgave på trosfællesskabets vegne at opfylde det forkyndelsesopdrag, som Kristus har givet alle. De, der er kaldet til denne tjeneste, udgør en ægte delmængde af alle troende: de to grupper har uden at være identiske samme karakteristika, men de har forskellige funktioner. Det døbte gudsfolk har den opgave at bevidne evangeliet og frelsen i deres liv og dagligdag, mens de, der er kaldet til præstetjeneste opfylder vidneforpligtelsen ved en eksplicit og offentlig forkyndelse i ord og sakramenter (jf. formuleringen i frihedstraktaten [WA 7,58,20]: *publice servire et docere*). Det er denne offentlighed i tjenesten, der adskiller embedsindehaverne fra de øvrige troende.<sup>5</sup>

Afgørelsen om, hvem af og i de troendes fællesskab der konkret skal betros denne offentlige tjeneste, træffes af gudsfolket selv, idet det kal-

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neuern muß.“ Systematische Theologie III, Göttingen 1993, 409-410.

<sup>5</sup> Specielt Pannenberg har understreget denne offentlighedsdimension som kriterium til skelnen mellem gejstlig og læg (op. cit., 410). Han lægger i denne sammenhæng afstand til den opfattelse, der forklarer forskellen under henvisning til, at præsten til forskel fra lægfolket handler *in persona Christi* (se fx *Per Erik Persson*, Kyrkans ämbete som Kristus-representation. En kritisk analys av nyare ämbeteologi, Lund 1961) og pointerer, at det mindre er Kristus-representationen i sig selv, end det er denne repræsentations offentlighed, der markerer forskellen: ”Die ... ’Öffentlichkeit’ des kirchlichen Predigt- und Leitungs-amtes bedeutet, daß der Amtsträger nicht im eigenen Namen, sondern in der Autorität des der ganzen Christenheit gegebenen Auftrags zur Lehre des Evangeliums handelt und also im Auftrag Jesu Christi selbst: In diesem spezifischen Sinne handeln die öffentlichen Amtsträger der Kirche *in persona Christi* und zugleich im Namen der ganzen Christenheit und des ihr durch die Sendung der Apostel gegebenen Auftrags.“ Systematische Theologie III, 424-425. Uden at ville bagatellisere anliggendet i denne understregning af embedets offentlige aspekt, der faktisk er væsentligt, forekommer det berettiget at spørge, om det ikke netop er denne offentlighedsdimension, som også repræsentationstanken vil understrege. At der så kan ligge andet og mere i forestillingen om embedets karakter af Kristus-representation, der ikke umiddelbart er kompatibelt med et reformatorsk embedssyn, er en anden sag.

der denne eller hin person til at udøve præstelig tjeneste. Denne offentlige *vocatio* (jf. CA 14) giver vedkommende adgang til den særlige funktion og det særlige embede, som præstetjenesten er, og autoriserer ham/hende til at *publice docere* og til på denne specifikke måde at tjene trosfællesskabet. Dåben er grundsakramentet, der danner forudsætningen for medlemskab af den kristne menighed og – under forudsætning af dennes eksplicite kaldelse – for udøvelse af embedsfunktioner af enhver art. Alle forestillinger om en væsensmæssig forskel mellem lægfolk og embedsbærere er i den forbindelse sekundære: læge og ordinerede medlemmer af gudsfolket er fælles om at være kristne, men de ordinerede har på grundlag af menighedens kaldelse fået tildelt særlige opgaver og funktioner, navnlig evangeliets forkyndelse og sakramentsforvaltningen, herunder varetagelsen af kirken apostolicitet og katolicitet, der er nødvendig, om menigheden overhovedet skal have en fremtid (jf. forestillingen om kirken som *creatura verbi*).<sup>6</sup>

Selv om modsætningen mellem et (reformatorsk) forkyndelsesembede og et (katolsk) sakramentsembede, som traditionelt blev skærpet i dønningerne efter reformationen, her og der endnu kan forekomme slidstærk og brydsom, har moderne økumeniske kontakter på mange måder afdramatiseret og reduceret de traditionelle kontroverser, så man i dag for længst udfolder em-

<sup>6</sup> Dette bekræftes i den lutherske tradition, når den lige siden CA (specielt artt. 5, 14 og 28) understreger det nødvendige bånd mellem kirken og et *iure divino* indstiftet embede og i øvrigt har gjort det reformatorske materialprincip til det afgørende kriterium for alt i fællesskabets liv og lære og således gør det helt klart, at kirken og dens embede er underordnet det evangelium, der alene er nødvendigt til frelse. I den forstand er dogmer, bekendelsesskrifter, symboler og det kirkelige embede i dets særlige historiske form ikke del af det, der strengt taget er nødvendigt for kirken, dvs. i luthersk terminologi nødvendigt til frelse. Alt i kirken, incl. dens højeste læremyndighed, er underordnet evangeliet som det kritiske kriterium, fordi forbindelsen mellem kirken og embedet, så vital og snæver den end må være, i praksis aldrig kan beskyttes mod hærse og magtmisbrug. En definitivt bindende myndighed kan ingensinde tilskrives andet end evangeliet selv, og kun i tilslutning til dette princip står kirken i apostolsk succession (se nedenfor).

bedsteologien på grundlag af en fælles grundoverbevisning og enighed om det fundamentale<sup>7</sup>:

In der Lehre vom gemeinsamen Priestertum aller Getauften und vom Dienstcharakter der Ämter in der Kirche und für die Kirche besteht heute für Lutheraner und Katholiken ein *gemeinsamer Ausgangspunkt* zur Klärung der noch offenen Fragen im Verständnis des geistlichen Amtes in der Kirche.<sup>8</sup>

Dog kunne Romerkirken så sent som på Vaticanum II hævde, at ”de troendes almindelige præstedømme og det præstelige hierarkiske præstedømme i deres væsen og ikke blot i grad (*essentia et non gradu tantum*; LG 10) er forskellige”. Betydningen og rækkevidden af denne formulering er omstridt. Selv om man antog, at koncilet dermed ønskede at understrege, at der kristent set ikke er forskel mellem lægfolk og præster, og at disse altså ikke ved ordinationen udrustes med en større delagtighed i Kristi præstedømme, forekommer det forhastet og alt andet end selvfølgeligt at konkludere, at præsten så ikke udmærker sig ved nogen form for ontisk overlegenhed.<sup>9</sup> At tolke formuleringen som svarende til prædikeembedets ovenfor omtalte of-

<sup>7</sup> Således fx i BEM, Ministry 13: ”The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments, and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry.” GiA, 485.

<sup>8</sup> Således stedfortrædende fx i den katolsk-lutherske læresamtale om *Das geistliche Amt in der Kirche* (par. 15). DwÜ, 334. Jf. ligeledes BEM-Ministry 6 (GiA 1, 484).

<sup>9</sup> Se hertil *Peter Neuner*, *Ökumenische Theologie*, Darmstadt 1997, 225-226. Sammenhængende hermed er også fx reformatorenes tilbageholdenhed over for det særligt katolske præstebegreb, der forstår præsten i betydningen ”offerpræst” (*sacerdos*), hvilket kunne misforstås som en reduktion af Kristi én gang for alle fuldbragte gerning. Denne uheldige tolkning imødegår den katolsk-lutherske dialog ved at anlægge et anamnetisk perspektiv og forstå præstens rolle som en aktualisering af Kristi unikke præstedømme: ”Wenn Amtsträger in der katholischen Tradition als Priester bezeichnet werden, dann in dem Sinn, daß sie im Heiligen Geist Anteil erhalten an dem einen Priestertum Jesu Christi und es vergegenwärtigen” (*Das geistliche Amt in der Kirche*, par. 21; DwÜ 1, 336).

fentlighedskarakter, som det irenisk sker hos Pannenberg (*Systematische Theologie* III, 423), forekommer ikke overbevisende. Tilbage står under alle omstændigheder, at forestillingen om det almindelige præstedømme, som konfessionerne angiveligt er enige om, ofte i sidste instans viser sig at blive interpreteret i lyset af de traditionelle konfessionelle koder, så den påståede enighed alligevel truer med at fordampe.

## Ordinationen

Overdragelsen af det kirkelige embede og de dermed forbundne fuldmagter (forkyndelsen, sakramentsforvaltningen og dermed implikativt en form for enhedsstiftende og enhedsbevarende opgave, navnlig for bispeembedets vedkommende) er siden Oldkirkens dage sket under bøn og håndspålæggelse (ordinationen). Denne handling forstås i kristenhedens katolske og ortodokse kirker som et sakramente, mens dette i de reformatoriske kirkesamfund normalt ikke er tilfældet.<sup>10</sup> Denne forskel betyder imidlertid ikke, at det, der også i de reformatoriske kirker betegnes som ordination, er teologisk indholdstom og reduceres til en ceremoniel embedsindsættelse, og lutherdommen skelner i dag mellem ordination som livslang overdragelse af det kirkelige embede og indsættelse (*installatio*) i et tidsbegrænset, konkret præsteembede. Derfor kan det i høj grad diskuteres, om der faktisk består den store saglige forskel mellem højrefløjskirkernes ordination og reformationskirkernes embedsindvielse, hvorfor den katolsk-lutherske dialog da også understreger, at hidtil kirkeadskillende forskelle på dette område forekommer at være ophævet i det omfang, hvori dialogparterne kan være enige om at opfatte ordinationen som det sted, hvor Helligånden udruster ordinanden til livslang udøvelse af ordets og sakramenternes tjeneste.

<sup>10</sup> Luther afviser i *De captivitate Babylonica* ordinationen som sakramente, fordi den ikke kan dokumenteres nytestamentligt og mangler *promissio gratiae*: Hoc sacramentum Ecclesia Christi ignorat, inventumque est ab Ecclesia Papae. WA 6, 560, 20 f. Det senere reformationsforløb viser imidlertid, at Luther netop i spørgsmålet om ordinationen havde ganske vanskeligt ved at finde sine egne ben.



Die *katholische* Tradition bezeichnet diesen kirchlichen Akt, in dem unter Wort und Zeichen der Heilige Geist wirkt, als ein Sakrament. In der Katholischen Kirche ist dieses sakramentale Verständnis der Ordination verbindlich. Die *lutherische* Tradition benutzt einen engeren Sakramentsbegriff und spricht deshalb nicht vom Sakrament der Ordination. Dennoch wird die Anwendung des Sakramentsbegriffs auf das Amt nicht grundsätzlich abgelehnt. – Wo gelehrt wird, daß durch den Akt der Ordination der Heilige Geist den Ordinierten mit seiner Gnadengabe für immer zum Dienst an Wort und Sakrament befähigt, muß gefragt werden, ob nicht in dieser Frage bisherige kirchentrennende Unterschiede aufgehoben sind. Unvereinbar mit diesem Verständnis von Ordination ist es für Katholiken wie Lutheraner, die Ordination nur als Art und Weise einer kirchlichen Anstellung und Amtseinweisung zu verstehen.<sup>11</sup>

Den officielle katolicisme har haft vanskeligere ved at bygge bro over de embedsteologiske modsætninger, når selv Andet Vatikankoncil kunne hævde, at de reformatoriske kirkesamfund ikke havde bevaret det eukaristiske mysteriums ægte og fulde indhold ”især på grund af manglen på ordinationens sakramente”.<sup>12</sup>

En sammenlignelig uklarhed råder med henblik på effekten af ordinationshandlingen, når reformatorisk teologi afviser den katolske tale om en *character indelebilis*, som ordinationen udruster den ordinerede med. Det saglige anliggende, der ligger i denne terminus (sc. at ordinationen i lighed med dåbens og firmelsens sakramente præger modtageren for livet og derfor ikke kan gentages), deles på den anden side af

både den katolske og reformatoriske tradition.<sup>13</sup> Men hvis ordinationen ikke er et sakramente, kan den naturligvis heller ikke meddele nogen *character indelebilis*. Konsekvensen bliver et rent funktionalt embedssyn: hvis en ordineret person for en periode *de facto* ikke udøver præstelig tjeneste, er vedkommende ikke længere præst og kan først genoptage præstelige funktioner efter fornyet kaldelse fra en menighed. Dette svarer imidlertid ikke til de faktiske forhold, fx i Den Danske Folkekirke. Er man ordineret i denne kirke, forbliver man livet igennem præst og kan selv uden fast ansættelsesmæssig tilknytning lejlighedsvist forrette præstelige tjenester – med mindre man er gerådet i konflikt med de statskirkelige myndigheder og har fået frataget sit embede. Så kan man ganske vist også stadig udøve præstelig tjeneste, men først efter udtrykkelig tilladelse fra de kirkelige myndigheder. Konklusionen må være den, at der mildt sagt er rod i begreberne. Måske kunne man kalde ordinationen, som den praktiseres fx i Danmark, for en quasi-sakramental handling, men en sådan definition udmærker sig i grunden kun ved netop ikke at definere noget som helst og ved at markere, at den teologiske og kirkelige virkelighed undertiden er så kaotisk, at den unddrager sig konceptualisering.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> ”Wo dieses Verständnis der ein für allemal erfolgenden Ordination besteht und wo die Einseitigkeiten und Fehlentwicklungen überwunden sind, kann von einem *Konsens* in der Sache gesprochen werden.” *Das geistliche Amt in der Kirche*, par. 39 (DwÜ 1, 343).

<sup>14</sup> Pannenberg argumenterer for, at ordinationen ikke nødvendigvis må frakendes enhver form for sakramentalitet, idet også den kan tolkes som en konkretisering af det ene frelsesmysterium. På den anden side er det også for Pannenberg klart, at den ikke formidler den retfærdiggørende nåde, men forudsætter det allerede i dåben begrundede tilhørsforhold til Kristus og i kraft heraf skænker ordinanden en særlig karisma, der imidlertid ikke refererer til hans/hendes person, men kun til den funktion, der herefter skal udøves. Man kan ikke helt undgå det indtryk, at Pannenberg her snarere tager sit udgangspunkt i en før-reformatorisk kirkelig praksis, der har overlevet reformationens turbulenser, end i en luthersk teologi, der har svært ved at finde rum for ordinationen. Helt tydeligt bliver dette, når han under stiltiende rekurs til ordinationshandlingens faktisk formodede sakramentalitet forsøger at redde anliggendet i læren

<sup>11</sup> *Das geistliche Amt in der Kirche*, par. 33 (DwÜ 1, 341). Jf. til det lutherske syn på ordinationen *Peder Nørgaard-Højen*, Den Danske Folkekirkes Bekendelsesskrifter. Kommentar, København 2006, 281 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Jf. UR 22: ”... praesertim propter sacramenti Ordinis defectum, ...” Det forekommer uklart, hvordan udtrykket *defectus* skal forstås. Er der tale om en mangel på ordinationens sakramente, at det m.a.o. mangler og er fraværende, eller skal *defectus* snarere oversættes ved *svaghed*, så koncilsteksten taler om ordinationens svagere, men ikke dermed fraværende stilling og betydning i reformatorisk teologi? Jf. hertil *Neuner*, Ökumenische Theologie, 220; 232.

## Ordination og repræsentation

I forbindelse med ordinationen kræver også forståelsen af det præstelige embede som *repraesentatio Christi* afklaring, idet ordinationen kan opfattes som den handling, ved hvilken ordinanden får fuldmagt til at repræsentere Kristus (*auctoritas repraesentationis*) og således eventuelt får tillagt en form for myndighed, som den ikke-ordinerede troende ikke besidder. Idéhistorisk er selve repræsentationsbegrebet næppe vokset frem i den teologiske have; det er snarere primært et juridisk og sociologisk-politisk begreb. I navnlig den katolske teologi anvendes det imidlertid for at anskueliggøre og aktualisere (ty. *vergegenwärtigen*) en åndelig realitet, der kun er virkelighed og som sådan håndgribelig og disponibel i denne anskueliggørelsens og aktualiseringens modus. Således formidler og visualiserer kirken sakramentalt Guds frelseshandlen med mennesket og repræsenterer for så vidt den guddommelige frelsesplan og frelsesvilje. Tilsvarende anskueliggør og aktualiserer messeofferet Guds unikke korsoffer, så den troende får del i det. Biskoppen, hhv. præsten frembærer *in persona Christi* og på vegne af hele gudsfolket det eukaristiske offer (LG 10) og anskueliggør således i en dobbeltrepræsentation på én og samme tid både Guds Golgatha-offer og de troendes frembærelse af det, og i biskoppens person er Kristus *præsent* og *re-præsenteres* som kirkens hoved. Embedet bliver instrumentet for den sakramentale formidling af frelsen og tjener på samme tid denne frelses institutionelle nærvær, hvilket danner grundlag for institutionens konkrete struktur. Dette bliver specielt tydeligt i paveembedet, hvis indehaver som *vicarius Christi* på samme tid anskueliggør (tilmed ufejlbarligt!) og institutionaliserer den kontinuerligt sig åbenbarende sandhed. På den baggrund giver det god mening, når *Erwin Fahlbusch* kan bestemme re-

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om *character indelebilis*: ”Wie der Getaufte ein für allemal ein Getaufter bleibt, so bleibt auch der Ordinierte für alle Zeit ein öffentlich zum Amt der Kirche Berufener, auch wenn er dieses Amt nicht mehr ausübt oder seine Ausübung ihm untersagt wird.” *Wolfhart Pannenberg*, *Systematische Theologie III*, 435. Under alle omstændigheder er sådanne overvejelser vanskeligt forenelige med den tidlige Luther.

præsentationen som ”(d)as ekklesiale Handlungsprinzip”.<sup>15</sup>

Tilbage står det ovenfor rejste spørgsmål, om en eventuel *auctoritas repraesentationis* kan begribes som det, der gør ordinerede troende forskellige fra læge. *Wolfhart Pannenberg* ser med rette repræsentationen som omfattet af og indeholdt i den offentlighed, som menighedens kaldelse stiller et udvalgt medlem af de troendes fællesskab ind i, hvorved vedkommende funktionalt, men ikke i nogen ontisk forstand får det opdrag at være præst og forkynder, uden at han/hun af den grund væsensmæssigt bliver andet og mere end delagtig i det almindelige præstedømme. Kristi repræsentant i og over for fællesskabet af troende bliver den kaldede og ordinerede præst ikke i nogen anden forstand end den, hvori han/hun er det som medlem af hele gudsfolket, hvilket ifølge Luther indebærer, at enhver skal blive en Kristus for sin næste.<sup>16</sup> Fra et lidt andet perspektiv påviser *Per Erik Persson* i en analyse af repræsentationsforestillingen i dens forhold til de lutherske bekendelsesskrifter, at embedsindehaverne ikke som sådanne repræsenterer Kristus. Det gør de nemlig kun, når de forkynder ordet og forvalter sakramenterne i overensstemmelse med evangeliet.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Erwin Fahlbusch*, Art. Römisch-katholische Kirche, EKL 3, 1680-1698, citat 1692. Se tillige *idem*, Art. Repräsentation, EKL 3, 1631-1633.

<sup>16</sup> ”Fraglich ist nur, ob der Gedanke der *repraesentatio Christi* bereits die *Eigenart* des ordinierten Amtes zu bezeichnen vermag. Wenn es richtig ist, daß alle Christen durch die Christusgemeinschaft des Glaubens an Christi Amt und Sendung teilhaben, dann folgt daraus, wie Luther einst schrieb, daß jeder dem anderen gleichsam ein Christus werde (unusquisque alteri Christus quidam fieri [WA 7, 66, 3 ff]). Darin besteht also noch keine Besonderheit des ordinierten Amtes. Würde die Repräsentation Christi gegenüber den Glaubenden *exklusiv* dem ordinierten Amt zugeschrieben, dann würde damit ... die Tatsache der Teilhabe jedes Glaubenden an der Sendung Christi verleugnet. Die Teilhabe an der Sendung Christi impliziert das Christus repräsentierende Eintreten für andere.“ *Wolfhart Pannenberg*, *Ökumenisches Amtsverständnis*, i: *Ethik und Ekklesiologie*. Gesammelte Aufsätze, Göttingen 1977, 268-285, citat 279.

<sup>17</sup> Skønt embedsindehaverne ”repraesentant Christi personam propter vocationem ecclesiae, [et] non repraesentant proprias personas”, udover de kun deres

Er dette ikke tilfældet, taler de ikke *Christi vice et loco*, men er at regne for uværdige og falske forkyndere, som trosfællesskabet har pligt til at bekæmpe. Konklusionen må blive, at Kristusrepræsentationen kun meget betinget og end ikke eksklusivt kan tillægges de kirkelige embedsindehavere alene.

## Apostolsk succession

Som ovenfor omtalt er det det kirkelige embedes opgave at tjene kirkens enhed ved at tage vare på forkyndelsen af evangeliet og forvaltningen af sakramenterne. Nu er det selvfølgelig ikke en tilfældig forkyndelse eller sakramentsforvaltning, der er tale om. Det er en forkyndelse og en sakramentsadministration med et ganske bestemt indhold, der kræves, for at et embede kan kaldes autentisk. Dette er tilfældet, når embedet i prædiken og sakramentsstjeneste formidler det oprindelige apostolske budskab og dermed på samme tid bidrager til kirkens enhed. Kirken er nemlig ét og én, når den er apostolsk og dermed trofast over for sin oprindelse. Dette sikres ifølge en historisk stærk tradition i den såkaldte *successio apostolica*, der imidlertid forstås forskelligt i de forskellige konfessioner.

Men til trods for forskelle i enkeltheder er Romerkirken og de ortodokse kirker som bekendt enige om at knytte den apostolske succes-

sion snævert til bispeembedet og således opfatte den eksklusivt som embedssuccession, skønt der i de senere år har vist sig tendenser til at understrege denne form for succession som et blandt flere kriterier til at skelne mellem hæresi og det ægte apostolske budskab. Embedssuccessionen er ikke i sig selv apostoliciteten, men et (af flere) tegn på den.<sup>18</sup> I de fleste protestantiske kirker løsrives den apostolske succession derimod fra bispeembedet, hvis indehavere efter reformatorenes mening havde vist sig uegnede som garanter for apostoliciteten, og defineres sagligt som kirkens overensstemmelse med evangeliet og dermed som læresuccession. Dog vedblev bispeembedet i den anglikanske tradition at spille en betydelig rolle som et for kirken principielt grundlæggende embede, der overdrages ved håndspålæggelse i den hensigt at værne om uforanderligheden og kontinuiteten i det oprindelige apostolske budskab. Det apostolske embedes og specielt bispeembedets opgave, der i den økumeniske terminologi tit omtales som *episkopé*, er at opbygge Kristi Legeme og koordinere de nådegaver, Gud har skænket sit folk,<sup>19</sup> i tillid til Herrens eget løfte om, at han ved sin Ånd vil vejlede den til sandheden. Denne Åndens vejledning knytter anglikanismen specielt til bispeembedet og bispevielsen, ved hvilken kirken under bøn og håndspålæggelse anmoder Gud om at udruste ordinanden og kirken som helhed med Helligånden.

Den økumeniske diskussion relativiserer successionens eksklusive tilknytning til det biskopelige embede og understreger, at bispesuccessionen kun er én af de måder, hvorpå

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tjeneste *Christi vice et loco*, "[c]um verbum Christi, cum sacramenta porrigunt". Apol. til CA 7-8, BSELK 240. Persson tolker: Spørgsmålet er, "när och varför den som står i kyrkans ämbete kan säges tala och handla 'på Kristi vägnar', ty då visar det sig omedelbart att detta icke är avhängigt av någon speciell ämbetsfullmakt, som innebär en förblivanda 'förmåga' till Kristus-representation, utan betingas blott av en enda sak, som ensam är det allt avgörande, nämligen om han frambär Kristi ord, 'evangeliet'. 'Cum verbum Christi, cum sacramenta porrigunt, Christi vice et loco porrigunt' – då de frambär Kristi ord och sakrament, är ämbetsinnehavarnes ord och handling också Kristi ord och handling, men detta gäller blott när och så länge dessa ord och handlingar är uttryck för evangeliet. Blott då gäller Kristi ord: 'den som hör eder, han hör mig', ty dessa ord innebär, att han kräver att de skall predika och lära så att man hör honom själv." Per Erik Persson, *Kyrkans ämbete som Kristus-representation*, 268 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Ratzinger sammenfatter forholdet mellem succession og apostolsk tradition således: "Die Nachfolge ist die Gestalt der Überlieferung. Die Überlieferung ist der Gehalt der Nachfolge." *Joseph Ratzinger, Primat, Episkopat und successio apostolica*, i: *Joseph Ratzinger und Karl Rahner, Episkopat und Primat. Quaestiones Disputatae 11*, Freiburg-Basel-Wien 1961, 49. Jf. *Neuner, Ökumenische Theologie*, 230.

<sup>19</sup> Dette embede omtales fx i PCS som "the ministry of oversight, *episcopate*, a caring for the life of a whole community, a pastoring of the pastors and a true feeding of Christ's flock, ... *Episcopate* (oversight) is a requirement of the whole Church and its faithful exercise in the light of the gospel is of fundamental importance to its life" (PCS, § 42).

overleveringen af evangeliet udtrykkes. Der skelnes derfor mellem hele kirkens og embedets apostolske tradition. Kirkens apostolicitet bliver det primære og embedets først det sekundære i rækken af eventuelt flere andre tegn på og udtryk for apostolsk tradition:

Apostolic tradition in the Church means continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation and fresh interpretation of the Gospel, celebration of baptism and the eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibilities, communion in prayer, love, joy and suffering, service to the sick and the needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each.<sup>20</sup>

I forlængelse heraf konstaterer BEM, at der i episkopalt strukturerede kirker efterhånden er en voksende forståelse af, at også kirker, ”which have not retained the form of historic episcopate”<sup>21</sup> (som det udtrykkes i et umiskendeligt anglikansk sprogbrug), kan have bevaret kontinuiteten i den apostolske tro, forkyndelse og sendelse. Dette indebærer imidlertid udtrykkeligt ikke nogen devaluering af bispeembedet – så meget mindre som denne ændrede holdning forventes at kunne motivere non-episkopale kirker til at forstå bispesuccessionen ”as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church” og derfor også bane vejen for deres faktiske accept af ”episcopal succession as a sign of the apostolicity of the life of the whole Church”.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> BEM-Ministry 34 + Commentary.

<sup>21</sup> BEM-Ministry 37.

<sup>22</sup> BEM-Ministry 38. Synspunkterne fra Lima danner tydeligvis baggrund for fx formuleringen af PCS. Selv om det understreges, at *hele* gudsfolket er kaldet, pointeres utvivlsomt det tre-leddede embede som det ønskværdige og normative. Denne embedsordning bliver ligefrem betegnet som ”an expression of the unity we seek and also a means for achieving it” (BEM-Ministry 22).

## Bispeembedet

De egentlige økumeniske problemer rejser sig i forståelsen af bispeembedet.<sup>23</sup> Allerede ved Kirkernes Verdensråds første generalforsamling i Amsterdam 1948 opdelte man kristenheden i katolsk og protestantisk orienterede kirker. En stærk betoning af kirkens synlige og historiske kontinuitet, som den kommer til udtryk i den apostolske succession i bispeembedet, kontrasteres med en protestantisk tilknytning af successionen til evangeliet selv og dermed til forkyndelsens og lærens indhold. Denne grovinddeling af de kristne kirker formuleres også andetsteds, fx på Andet Vatikankoncil, der ved sig i nært slægtskab med de ortodokse, men også gammelkatolske og anglikanske kirker ”i kraft af den apostolske succession” (UR 15), men som ovenfor drøftet på samme tid tilkendegiver en tilsvarende distance over for de reformatoriske kirker især på grund af deres mangel på ordinationens sakramente (*defectus ordinis*, UR 22).

Rom insisterer på at tilskrive episkopatet successionen og opretholder det tredelte embede som en guddommelig institution og bispeembedet og den apostolske succession ”als geordnete Weitergabe des ordinationsgebundenen Amtes” og derfor ”für die Kirche als Kirche wesentlich und in diesem Sinne notwendig und unverzichtbar”.<sup>24</sup> Derimod har lutheranerne tendens til at

<sup>23</sup> Til det lutherske syn på bispeembedet se endvidere *Nørgaard-Højen*, *Den Danske Folkekirkes Bekendelsesskrifter*. Kommentar, 284 ff, og udførligt *Georg Kretschmar*, *Das bischöfliche Amt. Kirchengeschichtliche und ökumenische Studien zur Frage des kirchlichen Amtes*. Hrsg. Dorothea Wendebourg, Göttingen 1999.

<sup>24</sup> *Kirche und Rechtfertigung*, 99 (§ 196). Det er imidlertid et stadig uløst økumenisk problem, at den apostolske efterfølges eksklusive binding til bispeinstitutionen mindre synes at være en historisk kendsgerning end en fiktiv idealforestilling, der ikke afspejler de reelle forhold i kirkens tidlige udvikling, og derfor mister teologisk troværdighed. Bagatellisering af dette faktum under henvisning til, at bispeembedet engang i kirkens tidlige historie, omend geografisk og måske også tidsmæssigt begrænset, *de facto* har haft ansvaret for at bevare menighederne i troen, og bispesuccessionen derfor i selve sit anliggende skulle kunne udøve sin traditionelle normative funktion, fore-

betragte de fleste embedsinstitutioner som kontingente, historisk betingede fænomener, der kun kan gøre krav på autentisk autoritet, når de er i overensstemmelse med evangeliets krav. Når og hvor dette imidlertid er tilfældet, er kirken forpligtet på sine apostolske rødder og bevarer den apostolske succession uden hensyn til den eller de embedsinstitution(er), til hvilke(n) apostoliciteten til enhver tid måtte være knyttet. Den apostolske succession kan under sådanne omstændigheder være episkopal, men den kan lige så godt være presbyteral eller kongregational (som det eksempelvis er tilfældet hos Grundtvig). Det er temmelig sikkert utopisk – og under alle omstændigheder ulogisk – at forestille sig, at luthersk teologi ville acceptere ideen om apostolsk succession som eksklusivt biskoppelig – af teologiske, økumeniske eller af rene og skære kirkepolitiske grunde, alene fordi det ville være ensbetydende med at bryde enheden med de lutherske kirker, der ikke kender episkopatet, for slet ikke at tale om kirker (fx Leuenberg-Fællesskabet), som lutherdommen andetsteds er økumenisk forpligtet på. Men skulle det dog være ganske utænkeligt at huse forskellige holdninger til succession og bispeembede under et fælles kirketag, så længe både katolikker og lutheranere (og mange andre) kan mobilisere en enighed om intentionen med forkyndelsen og embedet, hvilket jeg antager er tilfældet?

De seneste tendenser i verdenslutherdommen forekommer imidlertid i det ydre at tage en ændret tolkning af bispeembedet alvorligt uden på den anden side at forlade gammelkendte lutherske positioner. Således knytter en erklæring fra LVF om *Das bischöfliche Amt im Rahmen der Apostolizität der Kirche* (2002)<sup>25</sup> embede og succession sammen på en måde, der klart forsøger at imødekomme den ”episkopalisering”, der har gjort sig tydeligt gældende i de senere års interkonfessionelle dialoger, selv om tonen her er mere forsigtig og mindre kategorisk. At det særlige, ordinerede embede uden omsvøb beskrives som konstitutivt for kirken (§ 14) og bis-

peembedet som en særlig form for det ene embede, er der intet overraskende i. Alligevel understreges bispeembedets betydning for den kirkelige enhed så vehement, at det i det mindste forekommer usædvanligt, skønt ikke umuligt i en luthersk kontekst. ”Die Sorge für die Einheit der Kirche gehört zum *eigentlichen* (kursiv PN-H) Wesen des bischöflichen Amtes” (§ 37), og biskoppen har et særligt ansvar for kirkens bevarelse i den apostolske tro.

Hertil udrustes han/hun i bispeordinationen, der udføres på hele gudsfolkets vegne, og ved håndspålæggelsen som et tegn på enhed og kontinuitet med hele *Una Sancta* (§ 38-39). Bispeembedets kontinuitet i den apostolske sendelse er overhovedet det primære indhold af biskoppelig succession (§ 40), der imidlertid ikke garanterer en kirkes eller biskops trofasthed over for det apostolske budskab, men nok en stadig udfordring til at vise den. De fleste af den slags formuleringer kan vel godt rummes inden for et luthersk teologisk univers, selv om melodien unægtelig er fremmedartet. Det eneste, som det kan blive vanskeligt at få plads til efter en traditionel luthersk tankegang, er forestillingen om en bispeordination, der næppe er kompatibel med ideen om det ene embede. Hvis man bispevier en person, der allerede er ordineret til præst, har man *eo ipso* skabt et særligt biskoppeligt embede, hvilket forekommer at være på kollisionskurs med luthersk embedsteologi. Understregningen af, at ingen særlig kirkestruktur (nl. den biskoppelige) er ”ein unfehlbares Zeichen für die Leitung durch den Heiligen Geist” (§ 42), ændrer intet herved.

På opdrag af LVF og Vatikanets Enhedsråd gennemførte den katolsk-lutherske dialogkommission 1995-2006 en række samtaler om kirkens apostolicitet, herunder om relationen mellem apostolsk succession og det ordinerede embede. Deltagerne er enige om at understrege alle døbttes delagtighed i Kristi præstedømme og deraf følgende kald til at forkynde frelsen i ham, og de er tilmed overens om, at der ved siden af dette almene præstedømme er brug for et særligt præsteembede, der ikke anfægter de troendes almindelige præstedømme, men tværtimod for-

kommer søgt og lidet overbevisende. Således *Pannenberg*, Systematische Theologie III, 414.

<sup>25</sup> *Das bischöfliche Amt im Rahmen der Apostolizität der Kirche. Eine lutherische Erklärung 2002*, 4-sproget udg. (engelsk, tysk, fransk og spansk), The Lutheran World Federation, Geneva 2003.

står sig selv som tjener for dette,<sup>26</sup> og de kan også svinge sig op til at betone et fælles luthersk-katolsk syn på ”the objective necessity of a differentiation within ministerial office” og derfor erklære, at ”the *episcopé* of ministry must be exercised at two different levels, that is, both locally in the congregation and regionally”.<sup>27</sup> Denne ikke ubetydelige enighed imødegås imidlertid af den i hvert fald indtil videre kompromisløse romerske overbevisning om, at kirkens ordinerede embede skal udformes i overensstemmelse med den i kraft af kirkens indefektibilitet og dogmeudviklingen normativt forståede, fra den tidlige kirke overleverede treleddede embedsstruktur (biskop, præst, diakon), hvis bevarelse, resp. genindførelse så bliver kriteriet for kirkelig fylde.<sup>28</sup> Tvisten mellem katolikker og lutheranere går ikke på, om kirken skal have et biskoppeligt tilsynsembede eller ej. Det er de begge enige om, at den skal. Men sagen handler om, hvad der gør en person til en ret indehaver af denne *episkopé*-funktion, og i kraft af hvad han har myndighed til at ordinere. ”It is Catholic doctrine that the practice and doctrine of apostolic succession in the episcopate is, together with the threefold ministry, part of the complete structure of the church.”<sup>29</sup> Fordi lutherdommen efter katolsk opfattelse ved reformationen mistede den episkopale apostolske succession, er den lutherske ordination som allerede tidligere omtalt deficitær. Den katolske biskops særlige opdrag er at tage vare på den eukaristiske enhed mellem lokalmenighederne i hans stift og på den eukaristiske enhed mellem dette og de øvrige lokalkirker. Han bliver således formidler mellem kirkens lokale, regionale og universale plan og tager i den forstand – i forening med bispekollegiet og i fællesskab med paven som dette kolle-

giums overhoved – vare på kirkens katolicitet. For lutheranerne ligger vægten primært på den lokale kirke og først i anden række på universalkirken. Lokalkirken er i fuld betydning *kirke*, men det kan den kun være, fordi den står i et væsentligt forhold til universalkirken: lokalmenigheden er i fuld forstand kirke, selv om den ikke er hele kirken.<sup>30</sup>

## Et universalkirkeligt tilsynsembede

Katolikker og lutheranere er ikke enige i spørgsmålet om en øverste universalkirkelig myndighed. Katolicismen er principielt afklaret på dette punkt, mens lutherdommen i dens faktiske og officielle form stadig er i tvivl både om et sådant embedes nødvendighed og (i positivt fald) struktur. Men dialogkommissionen forsøger at nå et skridt længere ved faktisk at pege på nødvendigheden af et læreembede som instrument for kirkens indefektibilitet:

Were a teaching office not present and functioning in specific ways on the levels of both the local congregations and for regions of several or many congregations, the church would be defective.<sup>31</sup>

Det er dette embedes ansvar at bevare kirken i sandheden ved at vidne om den i den til enhver tid aktuelle historiske kontekst: "... the teaching office or ministry is a necessary means by which the church is maintained in the truth of the gospel of Christ", og der er enighed om, at "the teaching ministry must include the authoritative discernment of doctrine offered publicly, leading to judgments that preserve true teaching".<sup>32</sup>

Forsøgte den officielle katolsk-lutherske dialogkommission således i meget generelle vendinger at definere et universalt læreembedes opgaver, gik en inofficiel, i princippet privat dialog om *Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und Petrusamt*,

<sup>26</sup> *Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, The Apostolicity of the Church*, Minneapolis/Minn. 2006, § 270 ff.

<sup>27</sup> *The Apostolicity of the Church*, § 280.

<sup>28</sup> "Because the Holy Spirit guides the church along its way, Catholics are convinced that the very early and lasting development of the threefold ministry must be understood as the formation of a basic structure which, having once evolved, is from then on irreversible and belongs to the fullness of the nature of the church." *The Apostolicity of the Church*, § 281.

<sup>29</sup> *The Apostolicity of the Church*, § 283.

<sup>30</sup> "When Lutherans say that the local church is church in the full sense, they presuppose that the congregation assembled for worship stands in an essential relation to the universal church. This is so because the local church is not the whole church although it is wholly church." *The Apostolicity of the Church*, § 285.

<sup>31</sup> *The Apostolicity of the Church*, § 453.

<sup>32</sup> *The Apostolicity of the Church*, § 458-459.

der blev gennemført 2005-2009 i den såkaldte *Gruppe von Farfa Sabina*, endnu et skridt videre.<sup>33</sup> Foranlediget af pave Johannes Paul II's enhedsencyklika *Ut unum sint* og på initiativ af Det Internationale Birgitta-Center i Farfa nordøst for Rom drøftede 16 katolske og lutherske teologer på baggrund af en fornyet læsning af de to Vatikan-koncilers tekster om paveembedet her muligheden for etableringen af en fælles- og universalkirkelig enhedsinstans til varetagelse af tilsynet med henblik på kirkens forbliven i sandheden (*indefectibilitas ecclesiae*) i henhold til den guddommelige forjættelse herom:

Die Verheißung ist an die Kirche Christi als solche gerichtet, als deren authentische Zeugin jene kirchliche Autorität überhaupt erst handelt, wenn sie die Wahrheit definiert und die Gläubigen hütet und leitet. Daraus erhellt, dass Konzilsentscheidungen und päpstliche Akte stets der Rezeption durch das Volk Gottes bedürfen, um das zu werden, was sie zu sein beabsichtigen: Ausdruck des Bleibens der Kirche in der Wahrheit und des unermüdlichen Ringens um sie angesichts der zahlreichen Herausforderungen, mit denen die Kirchen konfrontiert werden. In dieser Situation wird das Fehlen eines für die gesamtkirchliche Verständigung lutherischer Kirchen zuständigen Amtes besonders schmerzlich empfunden.<sup>34</sup>

I betragtning af Roms ubestridelige, historiske position som kristenhedens centrum peger Farfa-Gruppens nærliggende, men i øvrigt ikke voldsomt konkretiserede vision på et forandret, revideret Petrus-embede som bærer af en sådan autoritet i et fremtidigt *communio ecclesiarum*, der kunne give plads for en ”partnerschaftliche() und kollegiale() Form der Wahrheitsfindung und Entscheidung”.<sup>35</sup> Om dette har nogen jordisk chance for at blive virkeliggjort inden for en overskuelig tidshorisont eller overhovedet nogensinde, kan kun tiden vise.

Men selve problemet forsvinder ikke, og om ikke for andet, så for troværdighedens skyld må kirkerne komme til rette med det. Kirken modta-

ger og videregiver budskabet om Kristus og frelsen i ham til mennesker i en bestemt tid og på et bestemt sted og har ansvaret for at kommunikere det på en sådan måde, at de troende møder den samme autentiske Kristus, som den apostolske menighed forkyndte. Dette er en gigantisk hermeneutisk opgave, og det kan ikke undre, at kirkerne for at løse dette opdrag har udviklet specifikke embedsstrukturer med det formål at bevare kirkens apostolicitet og enhed. Dette gælder også lutherdommen, selv om konturerne af de relevante embeder af og til truer med at sløres, ja udviskes. Begge kirker har indrettet sig med et tilsynsembede (*episkopé*) med ansvar for apostolsk kontinuitet og dermed kirkelig enhed. De er uenige på en række væsentlige punkter netop med henblik på embedssynet, men de er ikke uenige om, at et kirkeligt embede i almindelighed og et tilsynsembede i særdeleshed er nødvendigt. De går imidlertid forskellige veje med henblik på den konkrete embedsstruktur (herunder det ufejlbarlige paveembede), der jo efter katolsk opfattelse er selve den hermeneutiske garant for kirkens forbliven i sandheden. Men det hindrer dem ikke (og talrige andre konfessioner med dem) i at dele det teologiske anliggende, som de ønsker at give konkret form i teologi og kirkestruktur.

Med afsæt i overbevisningen om kirkens indefektibilitet ved kirken sig forpligtet til at gøre rede for, hvad indefektibiliteten til enhver tid konkret og aktuelt indebærer. Det er den måde, hvorpå kirken udøver sit profetiske embede, og derfor har katolicismen udviklet dogmet om den pavelige infallibilitet, mens protestantismen snarere taler om erklæringen af en *status confessionis*. Katolikker og protestanter er enige om det teologiske anliggende, men de går forskellige veje for at komme til rette med de problemer, som dette anliggende giver anledning til: Over for katolicismens undertiden forekommende overbetoning af læreembedets betydning med deraf følgende faktisk majorisering af gudsfolket står protestantismens tendens til underbetoning af enhver autoritativ struktur med deraf resulterende kirkelig handlingslammelse. En formidling mellem de to positioner kunne konkretisere sig i overdragelsen af myndigheden til at træffe definitive afgørelser (og således formulere sandheden) til det universale koncil for dermed at

<sup>33</sup> *Gruppe von Farfa Sabina*, Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und Petrusamt. Lutherisch-katholische Annäherungen, hg. Peder Nørgaard-Højen u. James F. Puglisi, Frankfurt am Main 2010.

<sup>34</sup> Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und Petrusamt, § 272.

<sup>35</sup> Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und Petrusamt, § 274.

fremme en mere overbevisende samtidig sikring af katolicitetens dimension og lægfolkets participation (*sensus fidelium*).<sup>36</sup>

Det hermeneutiske resultat af disse overvejelser vil være erkendelsen af, at sandheden for at kunne bruges til noget og for at kunne forkyndes med myndighed skal være konkret og kunne defineres af en bestemt instans. En ikke formulerbar sandhed findes ikke. Det nærmeste, man kommer et svar på spørgsmålet om, hvem der så formulerer sandheden, ser i sidste ende ud til mindre at være et Petrus-embede, der aktuelt næppe har mange chancer for den nødvendige revision, end et koncil (hhv. tilsvarende synodale strukturer), der til dato er den institution, der i hvert tilfælde på det teoretiske plan bedst og mest overbevisende tilgodeser alle dimensioner af kirken og trods alt mere end andre løsningsmodeller formår at inkorporere *sensus fidelium* og bidraget fra det almindelige præstedømme. At planerne om et sådant *conciliar fellowship* alligevel heller ikke er så umiddelbart realisable, er en anden sag. Så skønt forestillingen om en fælles økumenisk udøvelse af *episkopé* nok bliver taget alvorligt, er den foreløbig i langt højere grad et desideratum end en realitet.

### Embedsproblematikken ved en korsvej

Hvor står konfessionerne så aktuelt i embedsspørgsmålet generelt? Skønt det sikkert stadig er for tidligt at gøre status, kan det vel med rimelighed og al mulig reservation hævdes, at de stadig eksisterende divergenser – så tungtvejende de end måtte forekomme de fleste af os, hvis vi holder os til vore traditionelle tankemønstre og fastholder vore konfessionelle koder – ikke bør vægtes så tungt, at de fortsat får lov til at danne kirkeadskillende barrierer – og det gælder såmænd hele vejen fra præsteembedet til paveinstitutionen.

Der er intet, der tyder på, at vi ikke er enige om at betragte embedet som *iure divino*, og vi synes også at kunne komme overens om selve formålet med embedet. Embedet er nødvendigt, fordi kirkerne nu som før er lidenskabeligt overbeviste om, at det for mennesker og menneskeheden er livet om at gøre at forkynde evangeliet om ham, der dengang, nu og til evig tid er menneskers eneste Herre og Frelser. Glemmer vi dette overordnede perspektiv, vil der snart ikke være brug for noget embede overhovedet. Denne livsvigtige opgave kan – og skal formentlig også – løftes inden for forskellige strukturer og teologiske systemer, som derfor også for sagens skyld må have plads til hinanden og i forsonet forskellighed tjene kirkernes fælles Herre *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*.

Hvis dette skal lykkes, må kirkerne imidlertid omvende sig og vende ryggen til den form for økumenisk udveksling, der ikke så sjældent mere minder om en mere eller mindre åbenlys diplomatisk bestræbelse for at få samtalepartneren til at acceptere, hvad man selv står for, end om en fælles indsats for at formulere den fælles aktuelle tro. Ingen af os kan deltage i dialogen mellem konfessionerne uden at være bundet til og forpligtet på vore respektive traditioner, men disse er, så væsentlige og uomtvistelige de forekommer os, ”kun” den åndelige og spirituelle baggrund (og som sådan skal de i høj grad tages alvorligt!) for vor fælles aktuelle bekendelse af vor fælles Herre og Frelser i dag. Dette betyder ingenlunde en relativisering og tilsidesættelse af de ovenfor drøftede kriterier for apostolicitet, katolicitet og sandhed, men det styrer os uden om deres absolutering. Hvis denne øvelse lykkes for os, kan vi med sindsro tolerere forskellige tolkninger og strukturer også af det kirkelige embede i overbevisning om, at de ikke blot historisk har tjent, men også nutidigt fortsat tjener den forkyndelse, for hvis skyld vi overhovedet har det.

(English summary on p. 42.)

<sup>36</sup> Se hertil mine overvejelser i *James F. Puglisi (ed.), How can the Petrine Ministry be a Service to the Unity of the Universal Church? Grand Rapids/Michigan and Cambridge/UK 2010, 6 ff og 194 ff.*



## ***Ex oriente lux?***

### **Recent developments in Eastern Orthodox Theology**

GÖSTA HALLONSTEN

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In his inaugural lecture as a professor of Systematic Theology at this university, Per Erik Persson started by quoting the famous words of Rudyard Kipling: "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." The inaugural lecture was entitled "East and West in Theology" and was given almost exactly 50 years ago, on March 9, 1963. Two years earlier, when being interviewed for the same post, Per Erik Persson had given another lecture, which testified to his early interest and deep knowledge of contemporary Eastern Orthodox Theology. The topic of the latter lecture was "The Problem of Synergism, as seen from the Perspective of the Theology of the Orthodox Churches".<sup>1</sup>

#### **"The Distinctive Character of Orthodox Theology"**

We should not assume, however, that the young Dr Persson concurred with Kipling regarding the impossibility of a rapprochement between East

and West, theologically speaking. As a matter of fact Per Erik Persson, though firmly grounded in the Lutheran tradition, had set out to explore the possibilities for a dialogue between the three main branches of Christianity: Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. In an unpublished manuscript, which was part of his application for the post, he had analyzed contemporary Orthodox theology. "Divine and Human. Studies on the distinctive Character of Orthodox Theology in Relation to Western tradition" – the title again might suggest that Kipling would gain the upper hand.<sup>2</sup> This, however, is not the case. Rather, Per Erik Persson in that manuscript argued persuasively that the "distinctive character" of Eastern Orthodox theology should be taken as a challenge and an invitation for a dialogue between East and West. From the perspective of the Roman-Catholic-Lutheran controversies on Faith and Works, Scripture and Tradition, Church and ministry, a quite different perspective opens up in Eastern Orthodox theology. Orthodox theology basically does not fit into Western concepts. It transcends our differences.

Basing his argument on Orthodox authors available in modern Western languages fifty years ago, Persson worked out very clearly, in the mentioned writings, the main critique of the

<sup>1</sup> Per Erik Persson, "Synergismens problem, belyst utifrån de ortodoxa kyrkornas teologi". In: *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift* 37 (1961), 236-47 (German translation in: *Materialdienst des konfessionskundlichen Instituts Bensheim* 1962, 81-87.) Id, "Öst och Väst i teologin". In: *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift* 39 (1963), 88-97.

<sup>2</sup> The unpublished manuscript was written in Swedish.

Orthodox over against Western tradition as represented by those Orthodox theologians. Among the authors referred to by Persson were a number of Greek theologians, active in the Ecumenical movement. Further, he referred to important Russian theologians in exile; notably Nikolaj Berdjajev, Sergei Bulgakov, Paul Evdokimov, Georges Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky and Nikolai Zernov should be especially mentioned. The importance of the fact that Per Erik Persson around 1960 focused upon this vibrant Russian theology cannot be over-emphasized. The influence of Orthodox theology and tradition in the West and in the Ecumenical movement has increased ever since.

In addressing the topic of “recent trends in Eastern Orthodox theology”, I would like to take as my point of departure the type of Orthodox theology that Per Erik Persson analyzed in his writings fifty years ago. What was the concern of this theology? What are the main points of criticism over against Western theology and what options does it offer to overcome Western deadlocks in theology? To answer those questions it is of importance to also pay attention to the background and context regarding this type of Orthodox theology. We should also take into account the general ecumenical context fifty years ago on the brink of the Second Vatican Council. Departing from this, I would like to continue by comparing this situation and the concerns and critique of those Orthodox theologians with the development of Orthodox-Western theological dialogue in course of the last fifty years. Here I shall refer first to the official dialogues between Orthodoxy and the West. I will pose the question: to what extent did the issues that were so important to Orthodox theology and exerted influence upon the West fifty years ago play out in the dialogue between the Churches? Then, as a third part, I would like to come back to more contemporary Orthodox theology in the academic sense, pointing out some interesting developments that both confirm and call in question some of the concerns and theses of an earlier generation of Orthodox theologians.

## East and West - The Controversy

Reading books by Greek or Russian Orthodox theologians in exile written before the 1960s or 70s, what immediately strikes you is the harsh polemics, first of all over against Roman Catholic and (neo-) Scholastic theology. It is not only that the old issues of the schism between East and West are repeated, especially the *filioque* and the Primacy of the Pope. There is heavy criticism especially towards such concepts as “created grace”, as well as a number of concepts and distinctions that were designed by Scholasticism and further refined in course of the Neo-Scholastic period. Critique is given over against Roman Catholic teaching on penance, including the distinction between venial and mortal sins, between temporal and eternal punishments, and further towards the teachings of Purgatory and Indulgences. This seems that Orthodox and Reformation theology are proceeding along the same lines of polemics. As Per Erik Persson points to in his writings on Orthodoxy, this however is not the case. Protestantism and Roman Catholicism basically share a common tradition, which makes up the context within which those controversies are worked out. If Roman Catholic theology is seen as the thesis, then Protestant theology, naturally, makes up the anti-thesis. Yet Orthodox theology is by no means the synthesis, combining elements from both. Rather it is of a quite different kind. This can be exemplified by the famous correspondence between the Wittenberg theologians and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in the 1570s.<sup>3</sup> The shared critique over against Rome did not result in the expected support of the Greek Orthodox towards Reformation theology. As a matter of fact the mentioned correspondence shows that there was not much common ground between the parties, and the Patriarch asked the Wittenberg theologians to end the correspondence. In connection with those contacts, the already existing Greek translation of the Augsburg Confession played a certain role. The difficulties in finding

<sup>3</sup> Dorothea Wendebourg, *Reformation und Orthodoxie: Der ökumenische Briefwechsel zwischen der Leitung der Württembergischen Kirche und Patriarch Jeremias II. von Konstantinopel in den Jahren 1573-81*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1986.

Greek equivalents for words like *meritum* and *satisfactio* clearly illustrates the difference between East and West at the time. Merit and satisfaction, as we know, were not only concepts used in Scholastic teachings on good works and on penance, respectively. Here the Reformers rejected the use of the concepts. Yet, since the High Middle Ages the doctrine of Satisfaction of Anselm of Canterbury had become the leading idea in talking about the importance of Christ's death for sinners. Regarding this issue the Reformers basically took over medieval atonement theology, and this has remained the dominant tradition in most Western theology until recently.<sup>4</sup>

A further, highly interesting point, which Per Erik Persson focused upon in one of his lectures, is the problem of synergism. As is well known, in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, there arose a controversy in Lutheran circles over synergism. This controversy emerged out of the very heart of the Reformation concerns. At stake was the teaching on Justification through faith alone, without works. Hence, although the *sola fide* from the very beginning was a main concern of the Lutheran reformation, the issue of faith and works, or grace and good works, remained controversial.<sup>5</sup> What is more, however, this testifies to the shared tradition of the West in contradistinction to the East. The relation of grace and free will, between faith and works, had been on the agenda of Western theology since Augustine and the Pelagian controversy.<sup>6</sup> Not so in the East. The Eastern teaching on grace and free will has a quite different shape. Although free will is affirmed even in fallen human beings, Eastern theology of grace was never "pelagian" in any sense. To quote Per Erik Persson: "The decisive line goes for the Orthodox not between divine and human activity or between divine or human works...It is rather that we on the one side find the *theandric*, divine-human activity and on the

other the works of sin and death, those latter being a deformation of true humanity".<sup>7</sup>

What has been said so far is clearly focused upon by the Orthodox theologians that Per Erik Persson refers to in his writings. Orthodox theology of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has clearly worked out its profile in contradistinction to Western theology. It is not only that Orthodox theology transcends the dichotomies and controversies of Western tradition. When reading the writings especially of Russian exile theologians one easily gets the impression that this type of Orthodox theology needs to be seen against the dark background of Western tradition with all its unnecessary controversies and deadlocks. And as a matter of fact, this has been so to a great extent. Anti-Western emotions and certain resentment characterize much of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theology.

## The Role of (Neo-)Scholasticism and German Idealism

There is an historical explanation for this resentment which I will only be able to hint at in this lecture. Briefly stated: The polemics over against the West in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theology is as much directed towards its own recent past as it is a critique of contemporary Roman Catholic and Protestant theology. As a matter of fact Western, especially Neo-Scholastic textbooks were used in Russian Orthodox schools after the reforms of Tsar Peter, and even so in Greece after its liberation from Ottoman rule. Academies and theological faculties were built up in Eastern Europe after the models of the West, and German idealism, as is well known, became instrumental in the Russian religious renaissance of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. For some time Latin was the language of education in the famous Kiev Academy and other seats of learning within the Russian empire.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> On the *Confessio Augustana Graeca* and the problems of translating *meritum* and *satisfactio* see Wendebourg, 155-62.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. art. "Synergism", by Christian Link in *Religion, Past and Present*.

<sup>6</sup> See Otto Hermann Pesch, Albrecht Peters, *Einführung in die Lehre von Gnade und Rechtfertigung*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1981.

<sup>7</sup> Persson, "Synergismens problem...". My translation. – On Pelagianism, historically and as label on the heresy, see: art. "Pelagius/Pelagians/Semi-Pelagians" in: *Religion Past and Present*.

<sup>8</sup> See Aidan Nichols, *Theology in the Russian Diaspora: Church, Fathers, Eucharist in Nikolai Afan*

Most importantly, however, in this story is that Orthodox theology took over many of the concepts and distinctions of Scholasticism and applied them to its own doctrine, leaving out of course teachings like *filioque* and the primacy and infallibility of the Pope.<sup>9</sup> It should be added here, that a certain influence of Reformed theology also occurred in Orthodoxy during this period. The most famous example is Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris (1570-1638) whose theology was rather Calvinistic.<sup>10</sup>

This fact might come as a surprise to many a reader of contemporary Orthodox theology. As is so strongly emphasized, Orthodox theology is based on the Greek Fathers from Irenaeus up to Gregory Palamas. Yet, this emphasis on the patristic grounding and the heritage of Orthodox theology is something that needs a comment. On the one hand this is of course correct. Even in those days when influenced by Western textbooks, Orthodox theology always referred to and quoted the Greek Fathers. Yet, the way Patristic sources were used was quite parallel to the use of sources in Western textbooks, mainly as testimonies for the doctrines taught. This, however, is exactly what has changed so drastically in both East and West during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The Patristic renaissance encompasses both Western and Eastern theology. The renewal of Orthodox theology that is so clearly seen in the writings of exile Russian theologians has its parallel in the Catholic *Nouvelle théologie* of Mid-Century France. It stands out as an important fact that the main figures of this renewal on both sides were acquainted and had a fruitful exchange.<sup>11</sup> The

Ecumenical movement, of course, and especially the Faith and Order Conferences were important meeting places for Orthodox theologians living in the West with Protestants and even ecumenically engaged Catholic theologians. The conclusion from all this is that theology does not evolve in confessional isolation. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theology to a great extent emerged and was formed in an effort to overcome its recent captivity to Neo-Scholastic theology and to reconnect to the Church Fathers. This, however, was done simultaneously and in vivid exchange with the same movement on the Catholic side.

## The Retrieval of Tradition

20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox Theology, therefore, has to be situated within the general movement of Christian Theology of that Century towards retrieving patristic sources and overcoming the confessional divisions. Yet, this is not the whole story. There are additional factors that came to characterize especially the Russian exile theology of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. I'm thinking now of the intellectual and theological renewal in pre-revolutionary Russia at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This again is an example of exchange and influence between the West and the East that does not fit neatly into the picture of a self-contained Eastern tradition that you obtain from authors like Vladimir Lossky. The influence, namely of romanticism and German idealism is discernible not only in the so-called Sophiology of Vladimir Soloviev and his followers. Even the Slavophil movement, which emphasized the characteristic Slavonic mentality and thinking in contradistinction to Western is clearly inspired by romanticism.<sup>12</sup>

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*nase'v, 1893-1966*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1989, 3-16 ("Russian Scholasticism"). See also art. "Kiev. II. Theological Academy", in: *Religion Past and Present*. – On the reception and use of Scholastic theology in the East see also: Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Reading of Aquinas*. Oxford: Oxford UP 2012.

<sup>9</sup> This applies especially to Metropolitan Peter Mogila 1596-1647. See art. "Mogila, Petr", in: *Religion Past and Present*.

<sup>10</sup> See art. "Lucaris, Cyril", in: *Religion Past and Present*.

<sup>11</sup> See Andrew Louth, "The patristic revival and its protagonists", 188-202 in: *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology* ed. By Mary B. Cun-

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*ningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2008, esp. 191-93.

<sup>12</sup> See Nicolas Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Harper&Row 1963; Paul Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov*. *Orthodox Theology in a New Key*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1999; Michael Plekon, "The Russian religious revival and its theological legacy", 203-17 in: *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology* ed. By Mary

Prominent Russian exile theologians as Georges Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky among others, were clearly aware of this dependence of sophiology upon German idealism. They distanced themselves from this and criticized the influence of philosophy on both Scholasticism and on Sophiology.<sup>13</sup>

So, to summarize this part, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theology was determined by polemics towards (neo-) Scholastic philosophy and theology on the one hand, and German idealism on the other. This led to an emphasis on the integrity of the Eastern tradition as formed by the Greek Fathers up to and including Gregory Palamas.

Regarding Palamas, it is well known that Orthodox theology of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is characterized by a renaissance for his theology. The neopatristic trend of contemporary Orthodox theology might to a great extent also be labeled Neo-Palamite. Although never totally absent from Orthodox theology since the endorsement of some of his teachings at local Byzantine synods of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, Gregory Palamas did not play the key role as catalyst for the assumed opposition between Eastern and Western theology, as we have learned from Lossky, Meyendorff and others. The essence and energies distinction, connected to the doctrine of *theosis*, and hence the rejection of the Scholastic doctrine of created grace, is traditional. Yet, the role of Palamas as the pivotal anti-Scholastic and symbol of what is distinctly Eastern seems to be a creation of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>14</sup>

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B. Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2008.

<sup>13</sup> See Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Orthodoxy, Postmodernity and Ecumenism: The Difference that Divine-Human Communion Makes", 527-46 in: *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. 42 (2007) and Brandon Gallaher, "'Waiting for the Barbarians': Identity and Polemism in the Neo-Patristic Synthesis of Georges Florovsky". In: *Modern Theology* 27:4 (2011), 659-91.

<sup>14</sup> Marcus Plested, in his *Orthodox Readings of Thomas Aquinas* shows that Palamas was much more open towards Western theology, especially Augustine, and towards Scholasticism than has been assumed in recent Orthodox theology. See Chapter 2 (Gregory Palamas and the Latin West). He also clarifies the position of Barlaam the Calabrian as being fiercely anti-

This adds further to the characterization of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theology, which I have given. It should be added, further, that many contemporary Orthodox theologians trace the Palamite distinction of God's essence and energy all the way back to the Early Church, at least to the Cappadocian Fathers.<sup>15</sup> This, however, remains doubtful from a historical point of view. Clear, though, is that the Palamite distinction was never received in the West.<sup>16</sup>

## Contemporary Dialogues between East and West

Coming now to my second part on the dialogue between East and West during the last fifty years, what most strikes you is this: The topics that I mentioned earlier as part of the Orthodox polemics over against Roman Catholic or especially (neo-) Scholastic theology are rarely even mentioned in the official dialogue between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. This testifies to the common renewal of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox and Catholic theology. The concept of "created grace", which sounds so offensive to an Orthodox ear, does not play any role in contemporary Catholic theology. Concepts and distinctions within the teaching and practice of penance and other typically Roman Catholic doctrines, like e.g. purgatory, seldom surface at all in the dialogues. I take it that those Scholastic teachings and definitions have been reinterpreted in contemporary Catholic theology in

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Latin and anti-Scholastic. See esp. 54-57, 67. – Although there was clearly a "redécouverte du palamisme dans l'Orthodoxie russe" (de Halleux, 782-83), Palamas theology was never totally absent from Orthodox theology. See Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453-1821)*. München: C.H. Beck 1988, 36-46. Cf also Yannis Spiteris, *Palamas: la grazia e l'esperienza. Gregorio Palamas nella discussione teologica*. Roma: Lipa 1996.

<sup>15</sup> Vladimir Lossky, *The Vision of God. ET*. Bedfordshire: The Faith Press 1963.

<sup>16</sup> Neither was it formally rejected. See André de Halleux, "Palamisme et Scholastique", 782-815 in: Id. *Patrologie et Oecuménisme: Recueil d'études*. Leuven: Leuven UP & Peeters 1999, esp. 786-787.

a way that is acceptable to the Orthodox. One might label this a sort of differentiated consensus.<sup>17</sup> Instead, the official dialogue between the Orthodox and the Catholic Churches focuses on Church and Sacraments. In this area, there is a basic agreement between the two parts on the sacramental structure of the Church. It leads to difficulties, however, when this basic ecclesiological consensus is concretized in terms of the local and universal Church, the issue of primacy, and so on.<sup>18</sup>

Regarding the issue of *filioque*, this old controversy does not surface much in bilateral dialogues, but has been subject to thorough discussion and investigation in multi-lateral ones. The literature on the subject is growing continually. Although this issue may in the end not constitute the main obstacle for communion between East and West – contrary to the opinion of Vladimir Lossky – there does not seem to be a final solution within reach for the time being.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The term was coined in connection with the Joint Declaration of Justification between Lutherans and Catholics signed 1999, although the term does not appear in the Declaration itself.

<sup>18</sup> The documents from the official international dialogue between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches are published in English in *Growth in Agreement Vol. I-III*. Geneva: WCC 1984-2007. See also: *The Quest for Unity: Orthodox and Catholics in Dialogue*. Ed. by John Borelli & John H. Erickson. Crestwood, NY: St. Valdimir's Seminary Press 1996. For an update on ongoing dialogues see also the website of the Papal Council for Promoting Christian Unity, URL: <[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/index.htm)> and the Home Page of the Centro Pro Unione, URL: <<http://www.pro.urbe.it/new/eng/index.html#>>

<sup>19</sup> On the *filioque* see especially *The Greek and Latin Traditions regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit*. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, URL: <<http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/peccufilq.htm>> *The Filioque: A Church Dividing Issue?: An Agreed Statement By The North American Orthodox - Catholic Theological Consultation*, URL: <<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/Orthodox/filioque-church-dividing-issue-english.cfm>>. See also: Michael Böhnke, Assaad Elias Kattan, Bernd Oberdorfer (Hg.), *Die Filioque-Kontroverse: Historische, ökumenische und dogmatische Perspektiven 1200 Jahre nach der Aachener Synode*. Freiburg i. Br.:

Regarding Orthodox-Protestant dialogue I would like to start by making an observation regarding the role of the Anselmian doctrine of satisfaction, which was the target of much 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theology.<sup>20</sup> This critique, however, does seldom surface in the dialogues. As a matter of fact; starting perhaps with the observation of Gustaf Aulén in his study *Christus Victor* the re-orientation towards patristic soteriology has become a dominant trend.<sup>21</sup> As dominant as the doctrine of satisfaction was until recently in Western theology, as absent it seems to be today. One might, however, take even a step further. It is not only that the Anselmian doctrine of satisfaction has almost disappeared from the horizon of Western soteriology. The Eastern alternative, so to speak, has become more and more influential. I am thinking now of the doctrine of *theosis*, deification, that characterizes Eastern soteriology. In recent years this doctrine has become a widespread theme in both Catholic and especially in Protestant theology. The “discovery” (although this is not really new) that even in Western tradition there is a traditional talk of “becoming Gods” has been focused upon. Articles, books and conferences on this theme in Western authors flourish, such as Thomas Aquinas, Calvin, Wesley, etc.<sup>22</sup> To what extent this is a phenomenon that justifies the talk of a *doctrine* of deification within the Western tradition is an open question. Yet deification is clearly a liturgical and spiritual theme also in the West.<sup>23</sup>

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Herder 2011 (Quaestiones Disputatae 245) and A. Edward Siecienski, *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy*. Oxford: Oxford UP 2010.

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. Vladimir Lossky, “Redemption and Deification”, 99-103 in: *In the Image and Likeness of God*. New York 1974. – Paradoxically, the well-known Byzantine Nicholas Cabasilas took over parts of Anselm's redemption theory. See Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 101-102.

<sup>21</sup> Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement*. 1931. Reprint: Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock.

<sup>22</sup> See the various contributions to: *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions*. Edited by Michael J. Christensen and Jeffery A. Wittung. Cranbury, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson UP 2007.

<sup>23</sup> See Gösta Hallonsten, “*Theosis* in Recent Research: A Renewal of Interest and a Need for Clarity”, 281-93

That Luther used the language of deification in his early writings is well known and is the point of departure for the so-called Finnish interpretation of Luther, which emerged in the 1970s and 1980s stimulated by the bilateral dialogue between the Lutheran Church in Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church. Tuomo Mannermaa and his followers contended that Luther taught a doctrine of deification. Although Luther did not consistently use deification terminology throughout his life, as a matter of fact his doctrine of justification should be interpreted in ways that brings it closer to the Eastern Orthodox 'transformationist' perspective than was the case with the Luther of the German and Swedish Luther renaissance. A quote from Luther *In ipsa fides Christus adest* ("Christ present in faith") is frequently used by Mannermaa to characterize this type of "deification doctrine".<sup>24</sup> The Finnish-Russian Orthodox dialogue documents contain promising passages on the affinity between Eastern deification and Lutheran Justification doctrine, although no full consensus has been achieved. Other Lutheran-Orthodox dialogues also have taken up the theme, without any great break-through, however.<sup>25</sup>

### The "Neo-Patristic Synthesis" and "Christian Hellenism"

Coming to the third part of this lecture, I would like to first sum up the foregoing like this. It

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in: *Partakers of the Divine Nature...* For the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of *Theosis*, see e.g. Norman Russell, *Fellow Workers With God: Orthodox Thinking on Theosis*. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Originally published in Finnish and German, Tuomo Mannermaa's most important work is now available in English: *Christ present in Faith: Luther's View of Justification*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005.

<sup>25</sup> Risto Saarinen, *Faith and Holiness: Lutheran-Orthodox Dialogue 1959-1994*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht 1997. See especially Chapter 7.2 (Soteriology). See further *Salvation in Christ: A Lutheran-Orthodox Dialogue*. Edited and with an Introduction by John Meyendorff & Robert Tobias. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press 1992.

stands out as rather clear that in fifty years retrospective much of the old controversial issues between the Churches have lost their acuity. It is not only in the Reformation-Rome controversy that so many of the traditional problems have lost their acuteness and even their sense and adequacy altogether. The "differentiated consensus" characterizing the Common Declaration on Justification between Lutherans and Catholics could be used as a catchword for inner-Western relations. Although there is no full consensus in sight or even communion between the Roman-Catholic church and the churches of the Reformation, we do not any longer spill much ink on traditional issues like *Heilsgewissheit* (assurance of salvation), purgatory or transubstantiation.<sup>26</sup> The same applies, to a great extent, to the East-West controversies. I referred earlier in this lecture to the heavy criticism especially of the Russian exile theologians of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century over against teachings, concepts and distinctions of Scholastic and Neo-Scholastic theology. As regards specific teachings and concepts, it must be emphasized, that this critique is not relevant any more. Yet, on a more fundamental level, much of the criticism is still there, at least through the continuing influence of authors like Florovsky, Lossky and the Greek Christos Yannaras. Common to those authors, as to many others, is the view that Western tradition, and Scholastic theology especially, is a deviation from the Great tradition of the undivided Church. In practice this means the Greek Fathers. There are degrees and variations in this view on Christian history, as e.g. in the judgments on Augustine.<sup>27</sup> Yet, the basic concept is the same: The Greek Fathers are the norm for Orthodoxy. Georges Florovsky even turned the thesis of Harnack on its head and contended that there was in fact no Hellenizing of Christianity but rather a Christianizing of Hel-

<sup>26</sup> For a summary on the achievements of Western dialogues see: Walter Cardinal Kasper, *Harvesting the Fruits: Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group 2009.

<sup>27</sup> See Aristotle Papanikolaou & George E. Demacopoulos, "Augustine and the Orthodox: 'The West' in the East", 11-40, in: Papanikolaou- Demacopoulos editors, *Orthodox Readings of Augustine*. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press 2008.

lenism. This Christian Hellenism then, according to Florovsky, remains normative for the Church even in the West. Florovsky also coined the label “Neo-Patristic Synthesis” for the type of theology that he wanted to promote as an alternative to the degenerated Orthodox theology of the post-Byzantine era. This program did not only build upon the slogan “Back to the Fathers” but also took issue with the influence of philosophy in Western theology. According to Florovsky the Greek Fathers Christianized and transformed Classical culture but were not really dependent on (foreign) philosophical concepts and assumptions. Not so Scholasticism. Here pagan philosophy got the upper hand and transformed Christian faith into a philosophical system.<sup>28</sup> Orthodox theologians like Lossky, Florovsky, Meyendorff and many others viewed the reception of Aristotelian philosophy in High Scholasticism with suspicion. This was a deviation from true tradition and might explain many of the aberrations and controversies of Western theology.<sup>29</sup> A point that best illustrates this verdict, and the impact it has had on contemporary Western theology is Trinitarian theology. The mentioned Orthodox theologians, followed today by the influential John Zizioulas, contend that traditional Latin Trinitarian theology takes as its point of departure the common essence or substance of the Trinitarian God. By way of meditation on the unity of God Western theology allegedly deduces the three persons from this unity, or more specifically from the inner relations of God as a unity of substance. A philosophical notion of

unity of substance comes into play here, the Orthodox theologians critically remark. In contradistinction to this the Orthodox theologians emphasize that the Greek Fathers meditated upon the triune God departing from the person of the Father.<sup>30</sup> This is a point especially important to John Zizioulas.<sup>31</sup> Contemporary Western Trinitarian theology has taken over this view and frequently faults Latin tradition for following a false line of Trinitarian theology. Jürgen Moltmann, to take but one prominent example, consciously teaches a “social Trinitarian theology”, emphasizing the inter-personal communion as the important point of the doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>32</sup>

### Overcoming the Stereotypes

Recent scholarship, however, has questioned this whole picture of the contrast between Eastern and Western Trinitarian theology. It is not difficult to falsify the statement that Augustine or Thomas Aquinas “start” their Trinitarian theology from the essence of God. As a matter of fact, the doctrine of the “monarchy of the Father” which is often propagated as something specifically Eastern, has always been a common dogmatic assumption of East and West. It is further not the case that Greek theology in this sense would be thoroughly “personalistic”. Tendencies towards “essentialism” and “personalism” with regard to Trinitarian theology are to be found in both traditions.<sup>33</sup> Recent research offers two interesting insights in this connection. First, the view held by modern Orthodox theologians contrasting Eastern “personalism” with Western

<sup>28</sup> See Brandon Gallaher, “Waiting for the Barbarians’...”, esp. 663-68. Cf. also Brandon Gallaher, “Georges Florovsky”, in: *Key Theological Thinkers: Modern and Postmodern*. Edited by Staale Johannes Kristiansen and Svein Rise. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate 2013.

<sup>29</sup> Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 4: “But the most startling development in the Orthodox reception of Aquinas is that while his first emergence into the Byzantine world after 1354 was met with remarkable enthusiasm across the political and theological spectrum, the majority of modern Orthodox commentators have, by contrast, united in proclaiming Aquinas a *very bad thing*.” Plested further shows to what a great extent Aristotle was used within what he calls the characteristic “Byzantine Scholasticism”.

<sup>30</sup> This is a commonplace in contemporary textbooks. Cf. the critical assessment by Bruce D. Marshall, “Trinity”, in: *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*, edited by Gareth Jones. Oxford: Blackwell 2004.

<sup>31</sup> See esp. Zizioulas, *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 2008, Ch. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*. ET, San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row 1981.

<sup>33</sup> See André de Halleux, “Personnalisme ou essentialisme trinitaire chez les Pères cappadociens?”, 215-268 in: Id. *Patrologie et Oecuménisme: Recueil d'études*. Leuven: Leuven UP & Peeters 1999.



“essentialism” in fact has a Western origin. The Roman Catholic scholar Théodore de Régnon seems to be the one that introduced the idea in his *Études de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité* 1892-98. This does not mean, however, that de Régnon held a simplistic view on the difference between Eastern and Western Trinitarian theology. Rather, his thorough and subtle study has been subject to a simplifying reception.<sup>34</sup> The second matter that should be mentioned here is that recent scholarship on the Trinitarian theology of Augustine has falsified many longstanding theses of the textbooks, as e.g. that Augustine distanced himself from Greek Trinitarian theology and embraced a basically Platonic emphasis on divine unity. Further, the role of the so-called psychological analogy for distinguishing between the divine persons has been overstated, and the role of Biblical exegesis underestimated. Hence, the distance between Eastern and Western theology is growing more and more tight.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> The Orthodox theologian David Bentley Hart writes: “The notion that, from the patristic period to the present, the Trinitarian theologies of the Eastern and Western catholic traditions have obeyed contrary logics and have in consequence arrived at conclusions inimical each to the other – a particularly tedious, persistent, and pernicious falsehood – will no doubt one day fade away from want of documentary evidence. ... It was, learned opinion generally concurs, Théodore de Régnon who probably first “discovered” the distinction between Western and Eastern styles of Trinitarian theology...” *Rethinking Gregory of Nyssa*. Edited by Sarah Coakley. Oxford: Blackwell 2003 (111-131: Bentley Hart, “The Mirror of the Infinite: Gregory of Nyssa on the *Vestigia Trinitatis*”. Quote from 111). See further Sarah Coakley, “Introduction: Disputed Questions in Trinitarian Theology”, *Harvard Theological Review* 100:2 (2007), 125-38, especially 132-33 on de Régnon. Cf. also Michael Barnes, “De Régnon Reconsidered”, 51-79 in: *Augustinian Studies* 26 (1995).

<sup>35</sup> See Lewis Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010, Id. *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*. Oxford: Oxford UP 2004. – Sarah Coakley writes (reference of foregoing footnote, 132): “Once the false wedge between East and West in this early period is removed, certain sorts of polemicizing about the innate superiority of one approach over the other becomes suspect, and we are

The place of Augustine in the view of the history of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theologians, it should be mentioned here, varies substantially. Whereas the Greek theologian John Romanides, followed by Christos Yannaras, contends that the “fall” of Latin theology starts with Augustine, Vladimir Lossky and others reckon Augustine as a common Father of East and West. To Lossky it is Scholasticism that introduces the wrong lines of thought, although his respect towards St Thomas is great. Given this background, one of the most promising signs of the times within contemporary Orthodox theology is the interest in taking a fresh look upon Latin tradition. A conference held at Fordham University, NY City, in 2007, addressed the place of Augustine in Orthodox tradition and contemporary theology. The conference volume *Orthodox Readings of Augustine* is highly interesting.<sup>36</sup> From this volume one might learn that Augustine was always venerated as a Saint and a Church Father in the East, although he was not translated until the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. Paradoxically, one of the stout defenders of Augustine in the East happens to be the Patriarch Photios in the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, a vehement critic of the *filioque*. Yet, his polemics on that point did not ramify Augustine. Even more of paradox, it seems, is the fact that after Augustine’s major work *On the Trinity* had been translated into Greek in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, the great Gregory Palamas pondered it thoroughly. Although Palamas and Augustine were not in full agreement, this fact shows the extent to which our prejudices on historical opposites might be of rather recent provenience.

The book *Orthodox Readings of Augustine* testifies to a trend in today’s Orthodox theology,

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returned to the texts themselves with fresh eyes, and – by implication – with fresh possibilities for ecumenical engagement. The marked capacity of Western systematicians, in recent years, to self-flagellate about the shortcomings of their own Augustinian tradition, and to prefer instead the ‘Eastern promise’ of so-called social trinitarianism, looks suspect indeed once the misreadings on which such a propulsion has been based are brought into the light of day.”

<sup>36</sup> Aristotle Papanikolaou & George E. Demacopoulos, editors, *Orthodox Readings of Augustine*. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press 2008.

at least in the English-speaking world. A new generation of Orthodox theologians is on their way to revise much of the judgments of the generation of Lossky, Florovsky and Meyendorff on Western tradition and its influence on Orthodox theology. As I remarked earlier, that generation of Russian exile theologians, as well as Greek theologians, in practice were taking a standoff with their own recent history and tradition. They wanted to get rid of the influence of Neo-Scholastic manuals and German idealism. As regards the rejection of Neo-Scholastic theological conceptuality and the turn to the Fathers, that generation of theologians clearly succeeded in their efforts.

### The Future of Orthodox Theology

Regarding the relation of Orthodox theology to Western thought and culture, however, this is different. The Orthodox theologians of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century made a huge effort to get rid of the influence of German idealism that was so prominent a feature of the Russian religious revival in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, specifically of the so-called Sophiology of Vladimir Solovjov and others. Yet, the Oxford scholar Brandon Gallaher has recently shown that the neo-patristic synthesis of Georges Florovsky was in fact taking over notions and assumptions from the German idealism that he vehemently condemned in the guise of Soloviev's and Bulgakov's sophiology. Further, the Catholic Tübingen theologian Johann Adam Möhler, whose theology was influenced by Schelling and the romantics, in his ecclesiology influenced Florovsky directly. Even the renaissance of patristic studies cannot be disconnected from Romanticism, but was rather inspired by it. The return to the Fathers and Romanticism, therefore, cannot be disjoined in the way Florovsky and other exile theologians thought. Brandon Gallaher contends that Florovsky and much contemporary Orthodox theology build upon a false opposition between East and West. The renewal of Orthodox theology in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was in fact accomplished by designing an Orthodox identity in opposition to the West. As in the poem by the Greek author Konstantin Kavafis, "Waiting for the barbarians", the

Greeks needed the barbarians as the enemy against which their own identity becomes clear. And Gallaher concludes that Orthodox theology

in its assertion of its Eastern Orthodox identity needs someone who can fulfill the role of barbarian. It needs someone, that is, against whom it can define itself, embodying everything that is negative. However, by affirming its difference through condemning its Western barbarians, modern Orthodox theology has not found a solution to its confusion, but has actually become more dependent upon the West. Its polemicism blinds it to the fact that it actually draws its identity from the Other.<sup>37</sup>

Brandon Gallaher is not alone among younger Orthodox theologians in this analysis. His views are shared with many others, as can be exemplified by the mentioned "Orthodox readings of Augustine". A brand new book by the Cambridge scholar Marcus Plested, has the title *Orthodox Readings of St. Thomas* and points in the same direction.<sup>38</sup> A volume on *Orthodox Constructions of the West* will be published this year. To quote again of Brandon Gallaher:

The future of Orthodox theology is presently widely discussed by Orthodox theologians in the wake of Florovsky. It would seem that the resolution of the current discussions depends much on a frank acknowledgement that a common Christian identity for both East and West and an effective response to the various versions of modernity cannot be constructed from a theological synthesis that retains a romantic Byzantinism and an anti-Western polemicism, for this, as we have argued, inevitably hides a secret dependence on the West.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Brandon Gallaher, "Waiting for the Barbarians'...", 679.

<sup>38</sup> Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*. Oxford: Oxford UP 2012. – This remarkable book shows the constant interest and high estimation of Thomas Aquinas in Byzantine and even in early modern Greek and Russian theology, notwithstanding doctrinal differences and with some exceptional detractors. The book also gives a fine overview over the development of Eastern Orthodox theology from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century up until recently.

<sup>39</sup> Gallaher, "Waiting for the Barbarians...", 680.

The recipe of Gallaher, then, is to openly acknowledge the dependence of contemporary Orthodox theology on the West. And so he concludes: "Quite simply, Western European thought has become Eastern Orthodoxy's heritage".<sup>40</sup>

## The Mystery of Divine-Human Communion

Drawing this all too brief overview on recent developments in Eastern Orthodox theology to a conclusion, I would like to come back to the question, asked by Per Erik Persson in the early 1960s: What is the "distinctive character" and contribution of Eastern Orthodox theology? The answer it seems to me, must be somewhat adjusted. As has already been emphasized, most of the specific concepts, doctrines and controversies dividing different Christian traditions that were still in focus fifty years ago is not that relevant any more. This does not mean, though, that Eastern Orthodox theology has lost its distinctive character. It stands out very clearly that the Orthodox churches have given a substantial contribution to the ecumenical movement, and a non-polemical one at that. The Orthodox tradition has acted as a reminder to churches of Western tradition of the common Christian heritage of the Early Church. The Eastern tradition has contributed to a renewal of liturgical theology and practice in the West, and has inspired a retrieval of early Christian spirituality. As regards theology, I am convinced that Eastern Orthodox theology will preserve its distinctive character even if it abandons its sometimes-harsh polemical rejection of all that is Western. The acknowledgement among younger Orthodox theologians of the dependence on modern Western ideas does not make Eastern Orthodoxy less attractive for dialogue. The overstatement of Eastern distinctiveness in relation to specific Western conceptualities and currents of thought does not make up the heart of Orthodox theology. Let me take two of the most widely read Orthodox theologians as example, Vladimir Lossky and John Zizioulas. Both are part of the neo-

patristic school and both tend to overstate the specifics of Orthodox theology in relation to Western. The revision of anti-Western judgments to which I have referred has clear consequences for both theologians. Lossky's radical interpretation of the apophatic theology of Dionysios the Areopagite and his strong emphasis on the Palamite distinction between the essence and energies of God do not really promote a rapprochement with the West. Neither is it typical for Orthodox theology, at least not historically. And yet, Lossky remains a great theologian, always worth reading. The latter would definitely apply also to John Zizioulas who is still living and publishing. His Trinitarian theology is heavily dependent on a radical interpretation of Cappadocian theology and in that sense not negotiable with Western, even in the new and revised understanding of Augustine. And yet, it serves his fascinating and creative concept of Personhood. Interestingly, Zizioulas' theology in contradistinction to that of Lossky, does not connect constructively to the Palamite teachings. To Zizioulas it is not so much the divine energies that accomplish the deification of human beings. Rather, Zizioulas grounds the deification in the Eucharist. The Eucharist further is the place and act in which human beings enter into communion with the Triune God. The mystical, apophatic theology of Vladimir Lossky that aims at the ascension to the unknowable mystery of God does not play any prominent role in Zizioulas. And so, as the Greek-American theologian Aristotle Papanikolaou has worked out in a study on the two theologians, Lossky and Zizioulas follow quite different lines of thought, although remaining within the same tradition.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Aristotle Papanikolaou, *Being with God: Trinity, Apophaticism, and Divine-Human Communion*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press 2006. As regards Lossky, his specific position stands out especially clear in chapter 1-4 of his *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. ET, Cambridge and London: James Clark 1957. Zizioulas' writings consists mostly of collections of articles: John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. London : Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985, *The Eucharistic Communion and the World*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark 2011. See also his *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Ib.

Papanikolaou also contends that the shared and basic assumption of both Lossky and Zizioulas and so of Eastern Orthodox theology in general is that of the mystery of Divine-Human communion in Christ. And this applies to all 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox theologians, whatever differences there are. The emphasis on the realism of this communion and hence the emphasis on *theosis*, deification, makes up the distinctive character of Eastern Orthodox theology.<sup>42</sup> This might not sound very specific. After all, the be-

lief in the incarnation of the Son of God, his cross and Resurrection are common to all Christians. And yet, the firm adherence to the Trinitarian and Christological dogmas of the seven ecumenical councils in combination with the realism of Divine-Human communion in the process of deification or *theosis* by means of the sacramental life in the Church, this still makes the Eastern Orthodox vision both appealing and challenging.

*Summary of Peder Nørgaard-Højen, "Det kirkelige embedes væsen og opgave. Lutherske bemærkninger til en økumenisk kontrovers."* (pp. 19-30)

The article comments the Lutheran-Catholic controversy on the *nature and mission of the ordained ministry* from a Lutheran perspective. This controversial issue does not cease to cause severe difficulties between the confessions, although the notorious divergencies between Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism are in fact less significant and compelling than the actual quarrels in this area suggest. The different function of the concept of the priesthood of all believers does not prevent both confessions from agreeing on the necessity and mission of the ordained ministry, and – all detailed differentiations notwithstanding – even their visions of ordination as the ecclesial authorization to life-long proclamation of the Gospel in word and sacraments have so much in common that it appears to be difficult to maintain them as good reasons for abiding by the separated churches. The Catholic understanding of apostolic succession as episcopal succession over against the Lutheran as a succession in doctrine implies a corresponding difference in the view of the episcopal office that – perhaps more than many other controversial issues – threatens to divide Lutherans from Catholics. However, the question may be raised if the actually prevailing agreement regarding the crux of the matter is not so substantial that it should not be allowed to cause further divisions, but rather express the necessity of a means, by which the church is maintained in the truth of the Gospel. Such insight, in turn, paves the way in both churches for considering together the possibility of a universal church ministry, and provided the necessary conversion and will to unity it ought certainly be possible to fulfill the common mission of all churches within the framework of different, but reconciled and therefore not divisive structures and theological systems.

<sup>42</sup> Cf also the conclusion of Gallaher, "Waiting for the Barbarians...", Gallaher 681.

## Vänskap och samarbete i 60 år

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Det började i öppen fiendskap. Året var 1944. Tidpunkten siste juni och förste juli i över 30° värme. Platsen var Skillingaryds skjutfält ett par mil söder om Jönköping. Du tillhörde de trupper som försvarade fosterlandet. Uppgiften var att oskadliggöra och fördriva inkräktarna på svenskt territorium. Jag tillhörde de från officersutbildningen på Karlberg till Skillingaryd nertransporterade invasionstrupperna. Vi mötte aldrig varandra som fiender i stridens hetta – vad vi vet i varje fall – men vårt första möte var ett långt, arbetsamt och svettigt dygn med bullrande stridsvagnar, ständig automateld och slutligen skarp artilleriskjutning mot det skyttegravssystem som ni grävt på bergsslutningen. Eld upphör blåstes. Vi hade båda överlevt. Våra vägar skildes. Efter vårt första krigiska möte återvände Du till Kronobergs regemente i Växjö och jag till Karlberg i Stockholm, men fiendskap skulle bli lång vänskap.

Först många år senare upptäckte vi vårt gemensamma förflutna i försvaret under kriget. Då var vi etablerade i Lund och hade börjat våra licstudier. Trots att vi var samtida i Lund ett par år i mitten av 1940-talet möttes inte våra vägar. Möjligen kan vi ha sett varandra på de attraktiva gästföreläsningar som kom i gång efter kriget och som innebar våra första internationella kontakter. En av dem var George Florovskij, ortodox teolog och professor i patristik i Paris, som föreläste här 1946. Det blev först i början av 1950-talet vi fick direkt kontakt. Sven Kjällström frågade om jag kände Dig. Du hade gjort en så bra tentamen för honom och han ville gärna att Du skulle fortsätta i hans ämne. Det blev inte så. Annars hade vi kommit att tillhöra samma grupp av licentiander och doktorander och – förmodligen – också blivit konkurrenter om samma professur – kanske på nytt fiender!

Dagens föreläsningar har träffsäkert fokuserat på de fyra dominanta temata som präglat olika perioder i Ditt liv. De har gett en levande bild av vad intensiv och noggrann forskning och analys kan leda till. De har också speglat både enhetligheten och mångfalden i Ditt arbete. Dessutom illustrerar de på ett utmärkt sätt den utveckling som successivt sker i en vetenskapsmans liv och hur nya idéer och aspekter växer fram både ur det egna arbetet och genom kontakter med andra.

För att bilden ska bli mer fullständig måste den vetenskapliga analysen kompletteras. Det finns en rad andra aktiviteter som skett parallellt med lärdomsinsatserna, aktiviteter som har både personlig, samhällelig och kyrklig karaktär.

Kontakten och vänskapen mellan oss grundades på två olika sätt under 1950-talets början. De som var licentiander och doktorander inom teologiska fakulteten träffades mer eller mindre regelbundet för överläggningar. Vi diskuterade gemensamma problem både vetenskapliga, ekonomiska och personliga. Vi var några stycken som kände behov av dialog och gemenskap – inte minst därför att vi upplevde fakulteten som splittrad – och initiativet vann gensvar. Det var i det sammanhanget Du berättade om att Ditt avhandlingsämne rörde sig om Thomas av Aquino. Du hade inspirerats av den danske professorn Kristen Ejnar Skydsgaard – känd för flera av oss som en av centralgestalterna i det kristna studentsamarbetet i Norden efter krigsslutet, en andlig ledargestalt på det nordiska studentmötet i Hillerød 1946 med mer än 400 deltagare från de nordiska länderna. Ditt ämnesval väckte viss förvåning – och nyfikenhet. En licentiand i systematisk teologi vid Lunds teologiska fakultet skulle inte skriva om Luther utan om en romersk-katolsk 1200-talsteolog. Det var avvikande och spännande. Du försvann till Paris ett

halvår för att med katolska teologer diskutera Ditt ämne. Du kom tillbaka till Lund fylld av nya intryck - och talade flytande franska. Vi var alla imponerade.

Det andra som förde oss två samman var Nordisk teologisk uppslagsbok, NTU. Initiativet till den togs ursprungligen av Yngve Brilioth redan på 1930-talet då han som professor i praktisk teologi var ledamot i styrelsen för Glerups bokförlag. Projektet NTU byggde på ett omfattande samarbete mellan företrädarna för de teologiska fakulteterna i de fyra nordiska länderna. Jag hade blivit engagerad hösten 1951 för kontroll av litteratur m m och som redaktionssekreterare. 1953 – möjligen 1954 – kunde jag inte vara på plats och arbeta med NTU under en period på grund av studieresor i samband med mitt eget avhandlingsarbete. Jag vände mig då till Dig och undrade om Du kunde ta över under en period. Jag minns att Du frågade mig hur jag kunde veta något om Din förmåga på det området. Svaret blev att jag ju sett Dig i funktion som mycket kunnig och noggrann.

I fortsättningen kom vi två att växelvis fungera som redaktionssekreterare. Arbetet avslutades mycket intensivt sommaren 1956 då registret för de tre banden kom till. Det stora förberedelsearbetet med att skriva ut lappar på namn och sakkuppgifter hade vi engagerat Gunnel att göra. Totalt rörde det sig om ca 120 000 kortlappar. Den slutliga bedömningen och genomgången gjorde vi två tillsammans på universitetsbiblioteket med start kl 8 på morgon fram till kvällen. Det tog två veckor. Vi sågs då ständigt tillsammans, nästan oskiljaktiga enligt omgivningens kommentarer. En som mötte oss vid flera tillfällen var Anders Nygren – som ju också var en av tillskyndarna till NTU. Han tyckte att vi var som parhästar och döpte oss till Castor och Pollux efter namnen på Zeus gossar, de båda dioskurererna med ett ännu delvis kvarstående tempel på Forum Romanum. Vi tyckte att den där benämningen på oss var rätt rolig och passade ganska bra och att den borde bevaras till eftervärlden. Därför förde vi en två nya uppslagsord i registret – de fanns inte på Gunnels lappar – ”Castor se Pollux” och ”Pollux se Castor”. Men modet svek oss och i korrekturet tog vi bort dem – tyvärr. Men de blev ändå bestående för framtiden. Våra särtryck sinsemellan signerades alltid från Pollux till Cas-

tor och omvänt från Castor till Pollux. Jag har ett antal sådana i min särtryckssamling. Så visst har humorn frodats i Lund.

Denna period i Ditt och mitt liv avslutades med att vi båda disputerade våren 1957. Då var jag 3. opponent på Din avhandling. Eftersom begreppet ”persona” spelade en stor roll i boken *Sacra doctrina* tog jag fasta på detta och hittade naturligtvis att persona egentligen var ett täckord för namnet Person och att boken egentligen var en självbiografi och att ”sacra doctrina” naturligtvis var en felskrivning för ”sacra doctorinna”, det vill säga Gunnel.

En ny fas med vidgade vyer inträdde med docenttiden. Vi fick bättre ekonomi. Vi fick nya internationella anknytningar. Du fick inbjudningar till lärosäten i Europa och USA. Där ville man höra om Din Thomas-forskning och studiet av medeltida romersk-katolsk teologi. Du satte den teologiska fakulteten i Lund på den internationella kartan på ett nytt sätt. Det var inte längre bara Luther-forskningen som kunde associeras med Lund. Den nya perioden innebar också att vi blev lärare i den teologiska översiktskursen och kom in i gemenskapen med andra lärare och med ständigt nya generationer studenter. Det var också lärargruppen som ca 1958 beslöt att införa en Du-reform mellan lärare och studenter, alltså 10 år tidigare än den slutliga reformen.

Nu skapade vi en ny gupp sedan vi lämnat lic. och doktorandgruppen, det blev docentgruppen. Vi träffades hemma hos varandra och fortsatte att informera varandra om vad vi höll på med och tog upp problem vi ville diskutera. Vid en sådan samling hemma hos Kai och Sven Lindgård i Kävlunge presenterade Du för oss övriga, intensivt lyssnande, Ditt projekt om ämbetsfrågan och Kristus-representationen. Jag minns fortfarande den förtätade stämningen när Du slutade. Vi kände att vi fått vara med om ett unikt ögonblick och att detta var något som skulle komma att stå i centrum av debatten så fort boken kom ut. I slutet av Ditt arbete med manuskriptet till boken träffades vi på Ditt rum ganska ofta och jag fick följa utvecklingen mycket nära och uppleva hur pusslet bit efter bit lades samman och till slut gav en helhetsbild. Det är nog ingen tillfällighet att Du har som hobby att lägga pussel!

Våra informella docentsammankomster två eller tre gånger per termin skapade ett förtroendefullt samarbete. Jag minns att Ragnar Bring undrade om han inte fick vara med, eftersom han hört hur intressant, roligt och trevligt vi hade. Svaret blev att detta var ju docentgruppen men han kunde väl starta en motsvarande professorsgrupp för där fanns ju behov av ett forum för dialog!

En rolig idé som vi diskuterade var att vi docenter gemensamt skulle lägga upp en föreläsningsserie under en termin kring ett gemensamt ämne och belysa det utifrån våra olika discipliner. Det skulle vara ett uttryck för att det fanns ett helhetsperspektiv inom fakulteten. Tyvärr förverkligades inte denna geniala idé. Jag har letat efter vårt utskrivna förslag bland mina papper men inte lyckats finna det. Kanske en idé gångbar även idag.

Docentgruppen försökte också göra en insats för att förbättra gemenskapen mellan fakultetens ledamöter. I maj ett år beslöt vi att gruppen skulle ta med sina hustrur och äta en god middag på Snogeholms restaurang. Var och en gick till sin professor och inbjöd honom att med maka komma med. De flesta av oss hade bil och lovade att hämta och köra hem de billösa professorerna. Vi inbjöd också Johannes Lindblom, som stod utanför konflikterna och var allmänt respekterad, att komma med och berätta om sin tid i Åbo och uppbyggnaden av Åbo akademi. Han blev ett dragplåster för fakultetens ledamöter. Det blev också en lyckad utfärd med alla deltagande.

1960-talet öppnades en ny värld för oss båda. Sedan Du blivit professor 1963 fick Du alltfler uppgifter utanför den egna tjänsten. Du visade Dig användbar och pålitlig. Du drogs in i det ekumeniska arbetet i Svenska ekumeniska nämnden, i Faith and Order och i Kyrkornas Världsråd. Plötsligt satt Du mitt i centrum för händelsernas utveckling. Du hade kommit in i en framtida verksamhet med stora insatser under många år i dialogen med den romersk-katolska kyrkan. Du informerade oss i kretsen omkring Dig om vad som hände. Det kyrkliga engagemanget ledde Dig till kyrkomötet och dess läronämnd men också till lokal församlingen Allhelgona i Lund och dess arbete.

Samtidigt drogs Du in i universitetsvärldens utvecklingsarbete. Det började lite stillsamt som expert först till lärarutbildningsakkunniga, se-

dan till den förkättrade UKAS-utredningen, där jag var ledamot, och där Du utarbetade en studieplan för grundkurs och påbyggnadskurs i religionskunskap. Nya uppgifter kom med förslaget 1968 till omstrukturering av de teologiska fakulteterna – ett mirakulöst nog fullständigt enhälligt förslag från båda de teologiska fakulteterna i Uppsala och Lund. Det fick stöd från alla håll – utom från departementet – men kom att ligga till grund för våra anslagsframställningar under de följande åren. Det arbetet fick för Din del en fortsättning i Utredningen om den religionsvetenskapliga utbildningens mål och organisation, RUMO som vi båda satt i. Som alltid när Du var inblandad i något satte Du tydliga spår efter Dig, här genom en verklig innovation.

Som ett led i utredningsarbetet och för att få internationella impulser besökte en grupp inom RUMO USA för att studera utbildningsfrågorna där. Det var Du jämte Ulla Åhgren-Lange på UKÄ och John Ronnås, tidigare skolkonsulent på SÖ men då chef för producentenheten för religiösa program på Sveriges radio. Ni reste till University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Där fick ni ta del av ett flerårigt förnyelsearbete för utbildningarna inom fakulteterna. Man hade infört ämneskombinationer över fakultetsgränserna med tvärvetenskapliga utbildningsprogram. En ledande princip var att studenterna själva i högre grad skulle ta initiativ till och ansvar för sin utbildning och utveckla sin förmåga till problemlösning genom att själva vara aktiva. Här fanns plats för både tvärvetenskapliga temata och traditionella universitetsämnen.

Ni kom hem med viktiga och inspirerande erfarenheter men framför allt med ett banbrytande innovationsförslag i bagaget. Det var det som i er tappning blev tema-terminen, en avslutnings-termin på det religionsvetenskapliga studiet med ”inriktning på centrala mänskliga och samhälleliga problem inom de grundläggande frågor som är givna med de mänskliga livsvillkoren t ex. liv och död, ansvar och skuld”, jämlikhet, miljö, rika och fattiga länder – en vidgning av det teologiska perspektivet. Det var ett radikalt nytt inslag i studieordningen inte minst därför att valet av tema-område skulle ske i intim samverkan mellan lärare och studenter – ett synnerligen konkret förverkligande av Wilhelm von Humboldts idé att professorer och studenter gemen-

samt skulle söka sanningen och också av hans idé att forskning och undervisning var oskiljaktigt förenade. I linje härmed engagerade Du Dig också i de frågor som 68-rörelsens studenter aktualiserade och som ledde till olika former av turbulens runt omkring oss.

De externa uppdragen fortsatte. Du ingick liksom Birger Gerhardsson och jag både i framtidsplaneringen för de teologiska ämnenas forskningsinriktning för humanistiska forskningsrådet och för utarbetandet av de nya studieplanerna i RUMO:s anda med nya kontakter bland både lärare och byråkrater inom universitetsvärlden. Under den här tiden var Du både dekan och prefekt och tog aktivt ansvar för både fakultetens och institutionens utveckling. Kanske var det inte så underligt att universitetet 1980 valde Dig till prorektor tillsammans med Nils Stjernquist som rektor. Du vann många förtroende, omvittnad som rättrådig och konstruktiv. Men rektorsuppgiften efter Nils 1983 tackade Du nej till.

Att vara efterfrågad på detta sätt för viktiga uppdrag visar bäst hur omgivningen upplevde Dig. För oss som kände Dig var det lätt att förstå. Du tillhörde de kollegor som inte yttrade sig i onödan, gärna lite eftertänksam, som inte tog till i överkant men hade tydliga och väl genomtänkta förslag som ofta accepterades. Telefonen använde Du inte så mycket. I stället skrev Du brev, välformulerade ofta med lite medföljande rökdoft. Pipan var Din ständigt närvarande följeslagare. Därför var fönstret i Ditt rum alltid lite på glänt.

Pipan fanns också med i professorsgruppen, den tredje gruppen vi båda var med och bildade som en personlig komplettering till vardagens

arbete. Du, Hampus Lyttkens, Birger Gerhardsson och jag bestämde oss för att träffas ett par gånger per termin hemma hos varandra. Vi hade behov av ett andningshål där vi kunde tala fritt och öppet om det mesta: vetenskap, universitet och mänskliga relationer. Vi diskuterade aktuella ärenden, remissvar, möjliga lösningar på problem, nya idéer, framtida strategier och fakultetsekonomiska bekymmer. Det är ju så akademien ser ut vid sidan av det offentliga.

Tid har varit en bristvara men Du har alltid haft tid för människorna omkring Dig: kollegor, arbetsgemenskaper, studenter och – inte minst – familjen. Er familjesammanhållning är känd. Era gemensamma cykelfärder på somrarna 20 familjemedlemmar i rad på vägen till olika delar av landet är ett föredömligt uttryck för övertygelsen att det är viktigt att engagera sig för dem som står en närmast.

Trots alla dessa många uppdrag – jag har lyft fram bara en del – hade Du hela tiden fullt ansvar för professorstjänsten. Du hade många som fortsatte sina studier i Ditt ämne. Resultatet blev ett 20-tal doktorsdisputationer – ett gott exempel på vad en inspirerande lärare och handledare som har tid för sina doktorander kan åstadkomma.

Sådant är livet. Produktiva insatser inom professionen flätas samman med andra engagemang som upplevs viktiga. Först så framträder konturerna och profilen på en mångsidig och helgjuten insats i ett brett och stimulerande nätverk. Så har vi upplevt Dig. Med tack för de många gemensamma åren önskas Du fortsatta stimulerande kontakter och uppgifter under det nya decenniet.



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