

The Development of the Concept of Authority
within the Romanian Orthodox Church during the
Twentieth Century

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

by

Paul Negruț

Brunel University

Supervised at London Bible College
an Associated Institution of Brunel University

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Abstract

Adopting the presupposition that religious authority is a relational category, both its nature and forms of expression are explored within the context of the specific goal of the ecclesial community as defined by the Orthodox paradigm of revelation-communion-deification. Accordingly, the role of authority in Orthodoxy is to enable the people of God and the entire creation to grow towards eschatological self-realization, that is, theosis. The key to understanding authority from a relational perspective is the concept of 'space', which provides for both freedom and relatedness between the elements involved.

However, since the concept of space is a dynamic category due to its organic link with concrete historical communities, it follows that every community is challenged by both internal and external factors to re-evaluate its approach to the question of authority. Such a process has taken place within the Romanian Orthodox Church during the twentieth century. More precisely, four events have influenced the Romanian Church's view of authority: the translation of Scripture into modern Romanian by Fr. D. Cornilescu; the tension between Scripture and Tradition emphasized in the work of Fr. T. Popescu; the emergence of the 'Lord's Army', a renewal movement founded by Fr. I. Trifa; and, finally, the encounter between the Church and dictatorial Nazi and Communist régimes.

The thesis falls into four major sections in an investigation of the impact of these events on the Orthodox approach to the question of authority of : (a) Scripture, from the perspective of the space between *episteme* and *praxis* ; (b) Tradition, from the perspective of the space between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions; (c) the Church, from the perspective of the space between both the 'Head' and the 'Body', and the 'Spirit' and the 'Institution'; and finally, (d) the Church and the State, from the perspective of the space between history and *eschata* .

The mode in which such a 'space' is conceived in each set of relations leads to the development of either *specific* or *general* authority, that is, to either an oppressive or an enabling authority.

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Contents

Introduction	1
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Section I Scripture and Authority

Chapter 1

Introduction.....	6
-------------------	---

Chapter 2

Theological Epistemology: <i>Via Negativa</i> and <i>Via Positiva</i>	14
2.1 Historical Background	14
2.2 Basic Presuppositions.....	15
2.3 V. Lossky: Mystical Epistemology.....	17
2.3.1 <i>Episteme</i> and <i>Gnosis</i>	17
2.3.2 <i>Oikonomia</i> and <i>Katabasis</i>	18
2.3.3 <i>Theologia</i> and <i>Anabasis</i>	18
2.4 Apophatic and Cataphatic Theologies	19
2.4.1 Cataphasis	19
2.4.2 Apophasis	21
2.5 Staniloae: Apophatic-Cataphatic Epistemology	28
2.5.1 Apophatic-Cataphatic Synthesis	28
2.5.2 Revelation: Divine-Human Dialogue	30
2.5.3 Acts and Words.....	32
2.5.4 Language and Hermeneutic.....	34
2.6 Observations	35
2.6.1 Methodological.....	35
2.6.2 Theological.....	36
2.6.3 Sociological	36

Chapter 3

Revelation, Communion, Scripture and Tradition.....	38
3.1 Revelation and Communion	38
3.2 Lossky: Scripture, Tradition and the Church.....	39
3.2.1 Christology and Pneumatology	39
3.2.2 'Two Levels' Model	41
3.2.2.1 Scripture: The Horizontal Level.....	41
3.2.2.2 Tradition: The Vertical Level	42
3.2.2.3 Tradition and Scripture: A Synthesis.....	43
3.3 Staniloae: Scripture, Tradition and the Church.....	45
3.3.1 <i>Perichoretic</i> Trinity	45
3.3.2 Scripture.....	45
3.3.3 Tradition	47
3.3.4 The Church.....	47
3.3.5 <i>Perichoretic</i> Model	48
3.4 Observations	49
3.4.1 Methodological.....	49
3.4.2 Theological	54

3.4.3 Sociological	60
<i>Chapter 4</i>	
Cornilescu and the Bible Translation	65
4.1 Historical Background	65
4.2 Scripture in Romania before Cornilescu	66
4.3 Cornilescu's Translation: Theological Implications	75
4.4 Cornilescu and the Non-Liturgical Use of Scripture.....	78
4.5 Observations	79
4.5.1 Methodological	79
4.5.2 Theological	79
4.5.3 Sociological	81
<i>Chapter 5</i>	
Conclusions	84

Section II Tradition and Authority

<i>Chapter 1</i>	
Introduction	89
<i>Chapter 2</i>	
Between Apostolic and Ecclesiastical Traditions.....	92
2.1 The Concept of 'Tradition'.....	92
2.2 The Origin of Tradition	94
2.2.1 Apostolic Tradition	94
2.2.2 Ecclesiastical Tradition.....	95
2.3. The Transmission of Tradition	95
2.3.1 Konstantinidis. The 'Two-Source' Approach.....	96
2.3.2 Ware. The 'One-Source' Approach.....	98
2.4. The Content of Tradition	100
2.5 Observations	103
2.5.1 Methodological	103
2.5.1.1 Apostolicity	103
2.5.1.2 Universality.....	108
2.5.2 Theological.....	112
2.5.3 Sociological	115
<i>Chapter 3</i>	
The Emergence of Ecclesiastical Tradition	117
3.1 The Cult of Mary	117
3.1.1 The Place of Mary within the Church.....	117
3.1.2 The Origin of Mariology	117
3.1.3 Mariology in Patristic Literature	119
3.1.3.1 The Pre-Nicene Fathers	119
3.1.3.2 The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers	121
3.1.4 From the Middle Ages to the Present Day.....	124
3.2 The Cult of the Saints.....	125

3.2.1 The Saints and the Departed within the Church	125
3.2.2 The Origin of the Cult of Saints.....	126
3.2.3 Saints and the Departed in Patristic Literature.....	128
3.2.3.1 The Pre-Nicene Fathers	128
3.2.3.2 The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers	130
3.2.4 From the Middle Ages until the Present Time.....	134
3.3 The Cult of Icons	137
3.3.1 The Place of Icons within the Church.....	137
3.3.2 The Origin of Image Worship	137
3.3.3 The Iconoclast Controversy.....	139
3.3.3.1 Historical Context	139
3.3.3.2 Agreements and Disagreements	140
3.3.3.3 The Iconoclast Evidence	141
3.3.3.4 The Iconodules Evidence	144
3.3.3.5 Theological Issues	148
3.4 Observation	150
3.4.1 Methodological	150
3.4.2 Theological.....	152
3.4.3 Sociological	155
 <i>Chapter 4</i>	
Popescu and the Authority of Tradition	161
4.1 Historical Background	162
4.2 Between Scripture and Tradition	162
4.3 Scripture, Tradition and the Church	164
4.3.1 The Authority of Scripture over Tradition and Church.....	164
4.3.2 The Sufficiency of Christ.....	165
4.3.3 True and False Traditions	165
4.4 Reformation or Renewal	166
4.5 Towards a New Tradition	168
4.6 Observations	169
4.6.1 Methodological.....	169
4.6.2 Theological.....	171
4.6.3 Sociological	172
 <i>Chapter 5</i>	
Conclusions	173

Section III Church and Authority

<i>Chapter 1</i>	
Introduction	177
 <i>Chapter 2</i>	
Orthodox Ecclesiology: The Nature of the Church	181
2.1 Historical Background	181
2.2 A Theandric Being-The Body of Christ.....	183
2.2.1 Description	183

2.2.2 The Body of Christ	185
2.3 Observations	187
2.3.1 Methodological	187
2.3.2 Theological	191
2.3.3 Sociological	194
2.4 The Spirit and the Institution	197
2.4.1 Charismatic Institution	197
2.4.2 'Two-Tier' Priesthood	198
2.4.3 <i>Sobornost</i> -The 'One' and the 'Many'	199
2.5 Observations	203
2.5.1 Methodological	203
2.5.2 Theological	205
2.5.3 Sociological	207

Chapter 3

Truth, Church and Infallibility	211
3.1 Truth and Community	212
3.2 Truth and Local Hierarchy	215
3.3 Truth and Regional Hierarchy	217
3.4 Truth and Church in Contemporary Orthodoxy	220
3.4.1 Truth Between the 'One' and the 'Many'	220
3.4.2. Infallibility and <i>Consensus Fidelium</i>	225
3.5 Observations	227
3.5.1 Methodological	227
3.5.2 Theological	228
3.5.3 Sociological	230

Chapter 4

Toward a New <i>Sobornost</i> The 'Lord's Army'	233
4.1 Historical Background	233
4.2 The Emergence of the 'Lord's Army'	234
4.3 Institution and the Spirit: A New Dimension	236
4.4 One Church: Two Ways	237
4.5 One Church: Two Structures	239
4.6 Toward One Church and One Structure	240
4.7 One Church.... Many Structures	242
4.8 Observations	244
4.8.1 Methodological	244
4.8.2 Theological	246
4.8.3 Sociological	247

Chapter 5

Conclusions	248
-------------------	-----

Section IV Church, State and Authority

Chapter 1

Introduction	250
--------------------	-----

<i>Chapter 2</i>	
Church - State: Orthodox Paradigm	256
2.1 The Model of 'Symphony'	256
2.2 Observations	258
2.2.1 Methodological	258
2.2.2 Theological	260
2.2.3 Sociological	263
 <i>Chapter 3</i>	
The Cross and the Sceptre in Romania.....	270
3.1 Between Theocracy and Absolutism	270
3.2 Between Absolutism and Democracy: Organic Statutes	272
3.3 Between Democracy and Absolutism: Secular Reform	274
3.4 Catholic Absolutism: Orthodox Reform	277
3.5 Between Democracy and Dictatorship	281
3.6 Observations	287
3.6.1 Methodological	287
3.6.2 Theological	288
3.6.3 Sociological	288
 <i>Chapter 4</i>	
The Cross, the Hammer and the Sickle	290
4.1 Marxism and Religion	290
4.2 Leninism and Religion	292
4.3 Bolshevism and Religion	294
 <i>Chapter 5</i>	
The Cross, the Hammer and the Sickle: A Romanian Synthesis	301
5.1 Towards Stalinism	303
5.1.1 Pragmatism	303
5.1.2 Legalism	305
5.1.3 Totalitarianism	310
5.2 Détente	314
5.2.1 Internationalism and Nationalism	314
5.2.2 Nationalist Pragmatism	315
5.3 Neo-Stalinism	319
5.3.1 Nationalism	321
5.3.2 Spokesmen	323
5.3.3 Silencing the Dissidents	324
5.3.4 Praising the Dictator	330
5.4 Observations	333
5.4.1 Methodological	334
5.4.2 Theological	335
5.4.3 Sociological	338
 <i>Chapter 6</i>	
Conclusions	340

Appendix I	
General Regime of Religion	346
Abbreviations	354
Sources	355
Bibliography.....	358

Introduction

The twentieth century has experienced, somewhat paradoxically, both the thirst for unlimited freedom and authority. Firm rule and decisive leadership, with their pathological accompaniments such as irrationality, blind fanaticism and the idolization of leaders,¹ on the one hand, and the spirit of liberty, the quest for autonomy, the freedom of democratic civilization with all their abuses and excesses² on the other, are both part of our recent history. Moreover, the paradox continues as some people cry for more authority³ whilst others, at the same time, campaign for more freedom.⁴

These tendencies, beyond their outward contradictory manifestation, illustrate a deeper malaise which is related to the belief that freedom and authority are opposite categories. It is true, however, that since the Enlightenment, freedom has been associated with self-determination and authority with external forces which *ipso facto* restrict the sphere of individual freedom. Consequently, it was affirmed that the oppressive authority of the *ancien régime* embodied in the institutions of Church and State must be deconstructed, and the seat of authority transferred from dogma to reason, from tradition to experience, and from society to individual.⁵

¹Adorno offers a very well documented analysis of the making of fascist mentality and approach to power. T.W. Adorno, ed., *The Authoritarian Personality*, Harper & Row, New York, 1950. Alternatively, Rupnik analyses the emergence of the Communist totalitarian regimes of Eastern Europe. J. Rupnik, *The Other Europe*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1989.

²Arendt explores the deconstruction of traditional oppressive authority at the hands of modernity. H. Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1977.

³Horkheimer points out that 'the whole political, religious and philosophical literature of the modern period is filled with praise of authority, obedience, and self-sacrifice and the hard fulfillment of duty' (M. Horkheimer, *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, Seabury Press, New York, 1972, p. 90). Dostoyevsky wrote in *The Brothers Karamazov* that 'man has no more agonizing anxiety than to find someone to whom he can hand over with all speed the gift of freedom with which the unhappy creature is born' (F. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, (Tr. D. Magarshack), vol. 1, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1958, p. 298). Fromm observes with cynicism that millions of his fellow countrymen were as eager to surrender their freedom as their forefathers were to fight for it. E. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1942, p. 2.

⁴Berlin describes this thirst for freedom as follows: 'I wish my life and decisions to depend on myself, not on external forces of whatever kind. I wish to be the instrument of my own, not of other men's acts of will...I wish to be somebody, not nobody; a doer-deciding, not being decided for, self-directed and not acted upon by external nature or by other men as if I were a thing, or an animal, or a slave incapable of playing a human role, that is of conceiving goals and policies of my own and realising them' (I. Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, OUP, Oxford, 1969, p. 131).

⁵I. Kant, *Political Writings*, ed., H. Reiss, (Tr. H.B. Nisbett, CUP, Cambridge, 1970, pp. 54-59.

It appears, however, that the tension between freedom and authority which characterized both the traditional belief of *sui generis* authority of the king or of the Church and the modern belief in the unlimited freedom of the individual sprung from a reductionist identification of each category with one of its related aspects. First, whilst *freedom* implies both the openness of being (*ek-stasis*), 'a movement towards communion which leads to a transcendence of the boundaries of "self"'⁶ and a mode of being (*hypostasis*) capable of affirming its own identity (particularity), the overemphasis of one at the expense of the other has significant consequences.⁷ Thus, without *hypostasis*, *ekstasis* leads to amorphous collectivism, whilst without *ekstasis*, *hypostasis* leads to atomistic individualism. As C.E. Gunton puts it, true freedom presupposes persons in relation: 'freedom becomes a function of unnecessitated reciprocity, something we confer...on each other by the manner of our bearing to one another.'⁸ Second, authority presupposes both *auctoritas* which denotes weighty counsel, 'more than advice and less than command',⁹ and *imperium* which means order, power, command, mastery, government.¹⁰ Without *auctoritas*, *imperium* is mere coercion, and without *imperium*, *auctoritas* is mere utopia, or a myth. Stated positively, *auctoritas* legitimizes *imperium*, whilst the latter actualizes the former.¹¹

However, since no authority exists in a vacuum, it results that all forms of authority find their *raison d'être* in the context of a particular community and in relation to the specific goal of that community.¹² Within this setting *auctoritas* and *imperium* have to co-exist in a dynamic tension in order to enable the community to achieve its goal(s). Such an approach confers to the concept of 'authority' a positive sense: that which causes to grow, to

⁶J. Zizioulas, 'Human Capacity and Human Incapacity: A Theological Exploration of Personhood,' in *STJ*, 28 (1975), p. 408.

⁷Berlin makes a distinction between negative and positive concepts of freedom. The former means liberty *from* external interference in one's activity, whilst the latter denotes the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master. See I. Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty. An Inaugural Lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 31 October 1958*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp. 7–37. See also J. Zizioulas, 'Human Capacity and Human Incapacity,' pp. 408–409.

⁸C.E. Gunton, *The One, The Three And The Many*, CUP, Cambridge, 1993, p. 64.

⁹E.D. Watt, *Authority*, St. Martin Press, New York, 1982, p. 14.

¹⁰*Potentia* means naked power. See S.W. Sykes, ed., *Authority in the Anglican Communion*, Anglican Book Centre, Toronto, 1987, pp. 34ff; E. Hill, *Ministry and Authority in the Catholic Church*, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1988, p. 16.

¹¹Barrett argues that a comparable distinction between authority and power is found in the New Testament words *exousia* and *dynamis*. *Exousia* denotes the right, the authority, 'the absolute possibility of action which is proper to God', whilst *dynamis* defines 'the power of God in action, force doing work...kinetic energy' (C.K. Barrett, *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition*, SPCK, 2nd, London, 1966, p. 78). In other words, *exousia* legitimates *dynamis*; mere dynamic phenomena are not spiritually significant or theologically valid, and alternatively, *exousia* without *dynamis* is a mere myth.

¹²Sesboüé affirms that the word 'authority' comes from Latin *auguere*, cognate with Greek *auxanein*, which means to cause to grow, to increase, to enlarge. See B. Sesboüé, 'Authority', in N. Lossky, eds., *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1991, p. 69; E.D. Watt, *Authority*, p. 105.

increase.¹³ Further, since each community is constituted of persons in relations, it follows that authority has a dynamic character, capable of taking different forms according to certain goal(s), which are in the final analysis determined by the value system(s) of the respective community.¹⁴ However, it must be underlined here that authority is not conceived as an impersonal reality which functions independently of community, but rather as a legitimate¹⁵ individual or collective agency which functions within a community in order to ensure its development (growth).

Generally speaking, Polanyi believes that each community adopts one of the two approaches to the question of authority: general authority and special authority. *General* authority does not attempt to specify detailed programmes or conclusions, but is concerned with fostering the appropriate presupposition that the members of the community are then free to follow in the light of conscience.

The General Authority itself is but a more or less organized expression of the general opinion—scientific, legal or religious—formed by the merging interplay of all these individual contributions. Such a regime assumes that individual members are capable of making genuine contact with the reality underlying the existing tradition and of adding new and authoritative interpretations to it.¹⁶

This conception of *dispersed* authority creates space for each member to participate in both affirming and enriching the tradition of the community. *Specific* authority, on the other hand, sets detailed policies, programmes and conclusions to be followed. Such authority requires obedience because it possesses the answers which needs simply to be accepted and implemented.

A Specific Authority...makes all important interpretations and innovations by pronouncement from the centre. This centre alone is thought to have authoritative contacts with the fundamental sources from which the existing tradition springs and can be renewed. Specific Authority demands therefore not only devotion to the tenets of a tradition but subordination of everyone's ultimate judgement to the discretionary decision by an official centre.¹⁷

Since this centralized approach tends to concentrate both the authority and the power in one office, it often happens that authority is absorbed by power.

¹³The root meaning of the English word 'authority' stems from the Latin verb *augere*, to make increase, to cause to grow, to fertilize, to strengthen to enlarge. This gave the noun root *auctor*, a doer, causer, creator, founder, beginner or leader. See S.W. Sykes, ed., *Authority*, pp. 34ff; E.D. Watt, *Authority*, p. 14; E. Hill, *Ministry*, p. 16.

¹⁴See H. Dieckmann, 'Some Aspects of the Development of Authority', in *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 22 (1977), pp. 230–242; E. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1942, p. 141.

¹⁵The criteria to establish what is or is not, a legitimate agency of authority vary from community to community and therefore cannot be taken as an universally accepted absolute.

¹⁶M. Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society*, OUP, Oxford, 1946, p. 43.

¹⁷M. Polanyi, *Science*, p. 45.

Subsequently the new centre of power develops its ideology to legitimate power and thus to oil the wheels of the authoritarian machine.¹⁸

Historically, the Church, as an institution, has been tempted to take a short cut to mere power and to forget that the true ground for power, without which it becomes oppressive, is *auctoritas*. However, history has shown that central authority can only exist in a state of increasing conflict with the plurality of tendencies amongst its subjects: sooner or later it collapses. Whenever that happens, it makes possible, Gadamar believes, a liberating, enabling, concept of authority to come to light, an authority based not on subjection and abdication of reason but on the acknowledgement of a superior knowledge, insight and judgement.¹⁹

Moreover, due to the fact that authority is organically linked to specific communities, it follows that the dynamic of the community influences the dynamic of authority and, as such, every community is challenged to re-evaluate its approach to the question of authority. Such a process took place within the Romanian Orthodox Church during the twentieth century. More precisely, four significant events have influenced the Romanian Church's view of authority: the translation of Scripture into modern Romanian by Fr. D. Cornilescu; the tension between Scripture and Tradition emphasized in the work of Fr. T. Popescu; the emergence of 'The Lord's Army', a renewal movement founded by Fr. I. Trifa; and finally, the encounter between the Church and the dictatorial Nazi and Communist regimes.

As we investigate these aspects, the thesis falls into four major sections: The first section, 'Scripture and Authority', explores both the traditional Orthodox view concerning the authority of Scripture in its relation to theological epistemology and ecclesiastical practice, and Cornilescu's contribution to the re-evaluation of the role of Scripture within the Church. The second section, 'Tradition and Authority', analyses the Orthodox view of the authority of Tradition from the perspective of the relation between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and the challenge posed to this approach by Popescu's view concerning the relation between Scripture and Tradition. The third section, 'Church and Authority', analyses the Orthodox view concerning the authority of the Church from the perspective of the relation between both the 'Head' and the 'Body' and between the 'Spirit' and the 'Institution', as well as the contribution of 'The Lord's Army' movement towards the emergence of a new *Sobornost*. The fourth section, 'Church, State and Authority', analyses the relation between Church and State concerning the issue of authority from the perspective of the tension between history and *eschata*. In particular, the encounter between the Church and both, the Nazi and Communist regimes challenged the Orthodox view of the Church as an eschatological community and its role in society.

These four sections come together under the overarching concept of *space*. Such a space is necessary in order to provide for freedom, relatedness and

¹⁸See P. Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed., G.H. Taylor, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986, p. 13.

¹⁹H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Sheed, London, 1970, pp. 246ff.

growth within community. Accordingly, the thesis will explore the mode in which the existing space between: *episteme* and *praxis*, Apostolic and ecclesiastical tradition, the 'Head' and the 'Body', the Spirit and the institution, history and *eschata* leads to either liberating or oppressive authority.

Section I

Scripture and Authority

Chapter 1

Introduction

The fundamental issue of any religion, affirms P.T. Forsyth, is the question of authority.

As soon as the problem of authority really lifts its head, all others fall to the rear...the principle of authority is ultimately the whole religious question.¹

The issue of religious authority, albeit very complex, and thus susceptible to numerous academic approaches, will be addressed in this section from the perspective of the relation between theological epistemology and ecclesiastical praxis. The epistemic dimension of theology refers to the way (mode) of knowing religious truths (religious truth-claims), and the praxiological dimension to the specific way in which religious truth influences or shapes the life of an individual or of communities which adhere to the respective religion; that is, the way in which religious truth becomes *de facto* normative.² In view of this relation, then, the task of theological epistemology is to identify that 'ultimate reality' which can serve as a legitimate ground for religious praxis.³

As Pinnock affirms:

The central problem for theology is *its own epistemological base*. From what fountainhead does theology acquire information from which she forms her doctrinal models and tests her hypotheses? What is the *principium theologiae* which measures and authenticates the subject matter for theology and preaching? No endeavour in theology can *begin* until some kind of answer is

¹P.T. Forsyth, *The Principle of Authority*, Independent Press, 2nd ed. London, 1952, pp. 1-2.

²C.E. Gunton argues that, in general, in any philosophical or religious system the truth-claims provide the basis for thought and behaviour. See C.E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many*, CUP, Cambridge, 1993, pp. 11-40.

³For a critical presentation of different views concerning the existence of knowledge *in abstracto*, or only in some form of historical-cultural circumstances see M.L. Lamb, 'The Dialectics of Theory and Praxis within Paradigm Analysis', in H. Küng and D. Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change in Theology*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1989, pp. 63-103. The view adopted in this paper is that knowledge does not exist in a 'disincarnate' mode, but only within certain 'plausibility structures'.

given... All issues pale before this one. It is the continental divide in Christian theology. Everything hangs on our solution to it.⁴

In traditional Christianity, the epistemological question concerning the source of authoritative truth finds its answer in the doctrines of revelation⁵ and scripture,⁶ and the praxiological question concerning the exercise of authority finds its answer in what Farley and Hodgson call the 'scripture principle'. This describes that process of handing down the deposit of divine revelation by an authoritative teaching tradition.⁷ Thus, once truth is established, it becomes a praxiological issue to find the appropriate way to translate it into the life of an individual and/or a community.

However, the history of epistemology has shown that there is (and has been) tension between epistemology and praxiology due, amongst other things, to the fact that the process of knowing is oriented towards breaking new ground, and thus it is engaged in an ongoing process of formulating and reformulating its hypotheses and theories,⁸ whilst praxiology tends to be

⁴C. Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1971, p. 11.

⁵G. Stroup, 'Revelation', in P.C. Hodgson and R. King, *Christian Theology*, p. 88. D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1980, p. 110).

⁶Until recently, almost the entire spectrum of theological opinion would have agreed that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, together with their doctrinal interpretations, occupy a unique and indispensable place of authority for Christian faith, practice, and reflection' (E. Farley and P.C. Hodgson, 'Scripture and Tradition', in P.C. Hodgson and R. King, eds., *Christian Theology: An Introduction to its Traditions and Tasks*, SPCK, (2nd impression 1989), London, 1982, p. 35). Further Barr affirms that the basic presuppositions which underlined the belief that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments represent the source of religious knowledge were that God exists, that he can be known, and that the authentic deposit of truth of/about God is to be found in Scripture (and Tradition). See J. Barr, *Old and New in Interpretation: A Study of the Two Testaments*, SCM Press, London, 1966, p. 89; G. Stroup, 'Revelation', in P.C. Hodgson and R. King, eds., *Christian Theology*, pp. 89-90). (E. Farley and P.C. Hodgson, 'Scripture and Tradition', in P.C. Hodgson and R. King, *Christian Theology*, p. 36).

⁷Both argue that the 'scripture principle' originated as a solution to the crisis of Jewish dispersion following the Babylonian Exile. The exile separated a part of the Jewish nation from those social and religious institutions (land, temple, priesthood) which were constitutive for their identity, and consequently, the nation ran the risk of cultural and religious assimilation. In order to overcome this threat, the Diaspora Jew created two new institutions: the synagogue and the written Torah. Under those circumstances 'scripture' came to mean a written deposit of the complete and definitive revelation of Yahweh to the people. As such the 'scripture' was functioning as the primary source of cultic and moral regulations for the community. Thus, Torah was held to be: (a) the exhaustive location of a now past divine communication, relevant to all present and future times and places, containing (at least implicitly) an answer for every situation; (b) totally and equally valid in all its parts and details; and (c) a source of strength and encouragement for an enslaved and dispersed nation due to the fact that it contained symbolic references to the nation, land, holy city and temple. For an analysis of the shift from the Jewish 'scripture principle' to the Christian 'scripture principle', see E. Farley and P.C. Hodgson, 'Scripture and Tradition', in P.C. Hodgson and R. King, eds., *Christian Theology*, pp. 36-46.

⁸Bertrand Russell affirms that, 'Every attempt to revive authority in intellectual matters is a retrograde step... One of the great benefits that science confers upon those who understand its spirit is that it enables them to live without the delusive support of

more traditional, stabilized, and eventually institutionalized.⁹ If the tendency towards continuity and stability is somehow replaced by an uncritical acceptance and institutionalization of certain norms or 'patterns' of doing things, the respective communities run the risk of directing their resources towards the defense of their *status quo*. In such a case *praxis* becomes 'repressive' due to the fact that it either opposes or manipulates the discovery of new truth (or new aspects of truth), and so knowledge stagnates.¹⁰

subjective authority' (B. Russell, *The Impact of Science on Society*, 1952; Cf. M. Polanyi, *Knowing and Being*, Routledge and Keagen Paul, London, 1969, p. 94). Refuting the claims of logical positivism (particularly the Vienna Circle associated with Moritz, Schlick and R. Carnap), Popper argues that a positive verification of universal scientific propositions ('all copper in the universe conducts electricity', 'all swans are white') is simply impossible. Consequently Popper affirms that not by 'verification' but only by 'falsification' (the discovery of a black swan in Australia refutes, or 'falsifies' the universal proposition) can new scientific hypotheses and theories be established. If that is so, then 'science appears to be a continually ongoing process of "trial and error", which leads not to a secure *possession* of the truth, but to a progressive *approach* to the truth: a process of continuous change and development' (H. Küng, 'Paradigm Change in Theology: A Proposal for Discussion', in H. Küng and D. Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change in Theology*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1989, p. 6). However, new developments in the theory of knowledge upheld the idea that neither logical positivism (the Vienna Circle) nor logico-critical theory (Popper) is sufficient, and that a theory of knowledge has to be balanced by a history of knowledge and the sociology of knowledge. Thus it is in the context of history, the community of inquiry and the human subject that the process of knowledge has to be addressed. For an account of the dispute between Thomas Kuhn and Stephen Toulmin concerning the views on 'revolution' or 'evolution' in epistemology, see H. Küng, 'Paradigm Change', in H. Küng and D. Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change*, pp. 3-33.

⁹Küng argues that for the scientist and theologian alike, facts are never 'naked' and experiences never 'raw', but are always subjectively arranged and interpreted, in other words, every 'seeing' takes place from the outset in a (scientific or pre-scientific) model of understanding. Similarly, Kuhn affirms that in practice students (of science or theology) accept certain models of understanding less as a result of proofs than because of the authority of the textbook they study and of the teacher to whom they listen. Further, Küng demonstrates that both in the natural sciences and in theology, real novelties within the scope of the established model are not really wanted, because they would change, upset, perhaps destroy the existing model. For an analysis of the traditional resistance to change and of the tension between epistemology and praxis see H. Küng, 'Paradigm Change', in H. Küng and D. Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change*, pp. 3-33. Rahner considers that theological reflection always moves at a distinct level from religious experiences, although is motivated by them and directed towards them. Theology will preserve its theo-logical identity only if it does not allow itself to be absorbed by any activity. See K. Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith; Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, Scabury Press, New York and London, 1978, pp. 20-22.

¹⁰Generally speaking, this phenomenon is widespread both in the scientific and religious worlds. Polanyi, for example, considers that in Marxist societies knowledge has been enslaved by Party politics and interests. See M. Polanyi, 'Planned Science' in *The Logic of Liberty*, University of Chicago Press, Routledge, London, 1951, pp.86ff; 'The Republic of Science' and 'The Growth of Science in Society', in *Knowing and Being*, pp. 49ff, and 73ff. L. Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, SPCK, London, 1992, p. 47. From a religious point of view Jeanrond analyzes the situation of theological epistemology in those traditions where the 'primacy of praxis' tends to eliminate or, at least, to marginalize critical theological reflection. W.G. Jeanrond, 'Between Praxis and Theory: Theology in Crisis of Orientation', in *Concilium*, 6 (1992), pp. 49-55.

Alternatively, if epistemology were to be individualistic and non-regulated by traditional values¹¹ or, some sort of 'communal belief'¹² Newbigin considers that, on the one hand, 'science would evaporate into futility', and on the other, the respective society would disintegrate.¹³

Whilst underlining the negative consequences upon human society when either one of these tendencies (the preeminence of *episteme* over against *praxis*, or the other way around) is pressed too far, Metz advocates a balance between the Enlightenment view of 'an undialectical subordination of praxis to theory and idea' and the traditional view of 'the intelligible power of praxis itself'.¹⁴ However, any attempt to construct such a model has to take into account the fact that the Enlightenment's challenge was directed not only towards the traditional relation between *episteme* and *praxis*,¹⁵ but also

¹¹Such an approach advocated, amongst others, by Feyerabend is described by Lamb as 'epistemological anarchism'. See P. Feyerabend, *Against Method*, London, 1975; *Science in a Free Society*, London, 1978; *Problems of Empiricism*, vol. 2, New York, 1981, pp. 21-24; 131-202. Cf. M.L. Lamb, 'Dialectics of Theory and Praxis within Paradigm Analysis', in H. Küng and D. Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change in Theology*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1989, p. 68.

¹²'The authority of science is essentially traditional.' M. Polanyi, *Knowing and Being*, p. 66. See also, *Science, Faith and Society*, University of Chicago Press, 1946.

¹³L. Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, SPCK, London, 1992, p. 47.

¹⁴J.B. Metz, *Glaube in Geschichte und Gesellschaft: Studien zu einer praktischen Fundamentaltheologie*, Mainz, 1977, p. 47. Cf. W.G. Jeanrond, 'Between Praxis and Theory', p. 52. In the absence of such balance, the tension between epistemology and praxiology can lead to a 'paradigm shift' which can take the form either of a revolt against the authority of 'establishment', as happened, for example, in the movement of the Enlightenment, and in the anti-Communist revolutions of 1989, or as a new form of totalitarianism such as the modern 'eschatology of the impersonal'. Thus, Havel argues that modernism brought the modern world under the tyranny of 'the irrational momentum of anonymous, impersonal, and inhuman power, the power of ideologies, systems, apparatus, bureaucracy, artificial language and political slogans' (V. Havel, *Open Letters. Selected Prose, 1965-1990*, ed., P. Wilson, Faber and Faber, London, 1991, p. 260, 267). Similarly, Kierkegaard speaks about the 'levelling' tendencies of the modern age under the pressure of 'a monstrous abstraction, an all-encompassing something that is nothing, a mirage-and this phantom is *the public*' (S. Kierkegaard, *Two Ages. The Age of Revolution and the Present Age. A Literary Review, Kierkegaard's Writings*, vol. 14, (Ed. and Tr. by H.V. and E.H. Hong, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978, p. 90). For a philosophical discussion of the relation between 'relativistic' and 'absolutist' approaches to epistemology and the respective presuppositions that underline their different approaches to the question of paradigm change see P. Feyerabend, *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchist Theory of Knowledge*, Verso, London, 1975; N. Goodman, *Ways of World Making*, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1978; T.S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press, (2nd. ed.) Chicago, 1970; J.W. Meiland and M. Krausz, eds., *Relativism: Cognitive and Moral*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1982; H. Putnam, *Reason, Truth, and History*, CUP, Cambridge, 1981; R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton; H. Siegel, *Relativism Refuted: A Critique of Contemporary Epistemological Relativism*, Reidel, Dordrecht, 1987. For an analysis of the factors involved in a paradigm shift and of the complexity of this phenomenon see T.S. Kuhn, *The Structure*; H. Küng, *Paradigm Change*; L. Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, SPCK, London, 1992, pp. 39-51.

¹⁵R.N. Bellah, 'Cultural Barriers to the Understanding of the Church and its Public Role', in *Missiology*, Vol. XIX, No. 4 (1991), pp. 461-473; P.L. Berger, B. Berger, and H. Keller,

towards the philosophy of epistemology.¹⁶ Consequently, the traditional approach to Scripture based upon the belief that it is the repository of divine revelation and the source of valid knowledge about God¹⁷ was replaced by 'biblical criticism'.¹⁸ Yet, in spite of the fact that there is significant disagreement among biblical critics concerning methodology and interpretation of the facts, (and, as Dods observes, the world is yet far from finding the 'ideal critic'¹⁹), nevertheless, for many scholars the role of Scripture as the source of valid theological truth has diminished significantly.²⁰

The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1977; P.L. Berger, *Facing up to Modernity*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1979; (P.L. Berger), *The Heretical Imperative: Contemporary Possibilities of Religious Affirmation*, Collins, London, 1980; H. Montefiore, ed., *The Gospel and Contemporary Culture*, Mowbray, London, 1992; N. Hampson, *The Enlightenment: An Evaluation of its Assumptions, Attitudes and Values*, Penguin Books, London, 1968 (rep. 1990). For a critical account of the impact of the Enlightenment upon Western society see C.E. Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation: An Essay towards a Trinitarian Theology*, Marshall, Morgan and Scott, London, 1985 (especially ch. III); L. Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*, , SPCK, (4th impression, 1991), London, 1986, pp. 22-29, 134-135, J. Milbank, 'The End of Enlightenment: Post-Modern or Post-Secular?' in *Concilium*, 6 (1992), pp.39-47. See L. Newbigin, *The Other Side of 1984; Foolishness to The Greeks; The Gospel*.

¹⁶From this perspective, traditional Christianity was found to have anachronistic elements totally unacceptable in the light of modern knowledge. Moreover, belief in the existence of God, his knowability and the meaning and coherence of the theological discourse were considered philosophically impossible, practically futile, expensive, and even harmful activities. Accordingly, the philosophical and theological concerns shifted from the classical reflection about the *nature* of the divine and the *character* of God's activity towards man, to questions such as the *possibility* of God's existence in a seemingly naturalistic world, the possibility of valid knowledge of God, the meaning or meaninglessness of theological discourse about God, the validity of religious 'experience' and the related social, ethical and eschatological implications of religion. L. Gilkey, 'God', in P.C. Hodgson and R. King, eds., *Christian Theology*, pp.62-63.

¹⁷See M.F. Wiles, *God's Action in the World*, SCM Press, London, 1986, p. 7.

¹⁸See R.W. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: The Septuagint after Qumran*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1974; P.K. McCarter, Jr., *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible*, Fortress Press,, Philadelphia, 1986; E. Nestle, *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Greek New Testament*, (Tr. W. Eadie), ed., A. Menzies (1st German ed. 1987), Williams and Norgate, London, 1901; M.J. Earickson, *Christian Theology*, vol. 1, Baker Book, Grand Rapids, 1983, pp. 81-104; M. Dods, *The Bible: Its Origin and Nature*, Scribner's, New York, 1905, pp. 113-173; W. Beardslee, *Literary Criticism of the New Testament*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970; N.C. Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Old Testament*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1971; H. Gunkel, *The Legend of Genesis: The Biblical Saga and History*, (Tr.W.H. Carruth), Schocken, New York, 1964; E.V. McKnight, *What Is Form Criticism?* , Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1969, pp. 10-13; R. Bultman, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, (Tr. J. Marsh), Harper and Row, New York, 1963.

¹⁹Stressing the role of subjective factors in biblical criticism, Dods asserts: 'Our hope is in criticism free, fair, full. But we have yet to search with a lantern for the ideal critic' M. Dods, *The Bible: Its Origin and Nature*, p. 175.

²⁰See E. Farley and P.C. Hodgson, 'Scripture and Tradition', in P.C. Hodgson and R. King, eds., *Christian Theology*, pp. 48-50; O. Chadwick, *The Secularization*, p. 6.

Others consider that the encounter between traditional Christianity and biblical criticism does not imply the death of Christianity, but rather requires a new interpretation of the relation between theological epistemology and ecclesial praxis.²¹ Since Christianity does not respond with a unified voice to these issues, they remain open to further study and clarification.²² However, one cannot fail to observe that, generally speaking, these are specific problems to Western Christianity,²³ whilst the Eastern Orthodox Church affirms that its faith and practice have been preserved unaltered since apostolic times.²⁴ The question at hand, then, concerns the reasons for this stability and continuity within the Eastern tradition, as well as the lessons that can be learned from it.

There is general agreement among scholars that in addition to the historical circumstances²⁵ the answer to these questions has to be sought also in their

²¹L. Garrett, *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1991, vol. 1, p. 137).

²²David H. Kelsey suggests seven different views concerning the doctrine of Scripture and its use (D.H. Kelsey, *The Uses of Scriptures in Recent Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1975; 'The Bible and Christian Theology', in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 48 (1980), pp. 385-402). B. Manly, Jr. identified six different theories (B. Manly, Jr., *The Bible Doctrine and Inspiration Explained and Vindicated*, Armstrong and Son, New York, 1888, pp. 44-60; H. Strong listed four major theories which are presented in D.M. Beegle, *The Inspiration of Scripture*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1963, pp. 124-124; M. Erickson lists five in *Christian Theology*, pp. 206-207).

²³Meyendorff argues that, 'Such issues as the criteria of doctrinal authority, the nature of communion with God, the relationship of human freedom to the power of the Spirit, are approached differently by Western Christians-whether they are Roman Catholic or Protestants-and by the Orthodox' (J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1981, pp. vi-vii).

²⁴Whatever our earthly conditions and temporal circumstances, we Orthodox Christians live in the same ecclesial and spiritual world. We identify with the same tradition of faith and life. We worship the same God through the same Christ. We are inspired by the same Spirit in the same church. We celebrate the same liturgy, participate in the same sacraments and say the same prayers. We meditate upon the same scriptures, which we believe to be God's Word inspired by God's Spirit, interpreting them within the same hermeneutical context. We accept the same councils and are guided by the same canons. We recognize the same teachers and venerate the same saints. We teach the same doctrines, defend the same dogmas, and employ the same symbol of faith. In our theology as well as in our worship, we use the same words and images which we affirm to be "adequate to God" and proper to the experience which we share within God's covenant community which we identify in history from the time of Abraham' (T. Hopko, 'God and Gender: Articulating the Orthodox View', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 2-3 (1993), p. 141).

²⁵Although the formal break between the Christian East and West occurred in 1054, Hopko argues that from as early as the fourth century A.D. the Christians of the East had very little contact with the Christians of the West. The Turkish rule which extended almost over the entire Orthodox world since the fifteenth century (fall of Constantinople 1453) and lasted until the end of the nineteenth century, further estranged the two churches. Consequently, political and cultural exchanges between East and West had been dramatically reduced, and due to this fact the ideas of the Renaissance, Protestant Reformation and the Enlightenment, which are considered to represent the genesis of modern Western culture, stopped short when they reached the borders of the Turkish Empire. See T. Ware, *Eustratios Argenti: A Study of the Greek Church under Turkish Rule*,

different approaches to theology.²⁶ Benz considers that the West developed its theology along the lines of a legal relationship between God and mankind out of which came the doctrine of justification. This legal approach was further extended to ecclesiology, and particularly to the doctrine of the ministry, to the role of dogmatic definitions and of canon law.²⁷ However, for the Eastern tradition theology is only a means towards an end, that is union with God, or *theosis*. Consequently, the emphasis lies not on developing positive theological systems, but on the mystical aspect of this union. The whole purpose of theological epistemology and ecclesial practice is to help the faithful to attain to deification.²⁸ Consequently, the Bible is not used by the Orthodox as a system of belief or as a *summa theologiae* but as the authentic record of the divine revelation which leads to deification.²⁹

Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1964; K.S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity: Three Centuries of Advance*, vol. 3, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1970, p. 3. See C.E. Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, Part One; I.N. Karmiris, 'Contemporary Orthodox Theology and Its Task', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, XIII (1969), pp. 11-32; H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *History of the Church*, vol.6, *The Church in the Age of Absolutism and Enlightenment*, Burns and Oates, London, 1981; K.S. Latourette, *A History*, vol. 3, pp. 3-6; P. Smith, *The Age of Reformation*, Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1950, pp. 5-11; E. Cameron, *The European Reformation*, Clarendon, Press, Oxford, 1991; G.R. Elton, ed., *The New Cambridge Modern History: The Reformation 1520-1559*, vol. 2, CUP, Cambridge, 1990; T. Hopko, *Meeting the Orthodox*, The Orthodox Church in America, New York, 1972, p. 5.

²⁶From an Orthodox viewpoint the Western Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, have similar theological frames of reference. Khomiakov asserts: 'All Protestants are Crypto-Papists...To use the concise language of algebra, all the West knows but one datum *a*; whether it be preceded by the positive sign +, as with the Romanists, or with the negative sign -, as with the Protestants, the *a* remains the same.' (A. Khomiakov in a letter to an English friend, which was printed in W.J. Birkbeck, *Russia and the English Church*, p. 67, quoted in T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1985, p. 9).

²⁷For a presentation of the development of Western thought (Catholic and Protestant) in a legal framework, see E. Benz, *The Eastern Orthodox Church: Its Thought and Life*, (Tr. R. and C. Winston), Anchor Books, Garden City, N.Y.: 1963; W. Niesel, *Reformed Symbolics: A Comparison of Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism*, (Tr. D. Lewis), Olivier and Boid, Edinburgh, 1962; M.J. Le Guillou, *The Spirit of Eastern Orthodoxy*, Hawthorn Books, New York, 1962, pp. 20-21; J.L. Gonzales, *A History of Christian Thought*, 3 vols., Abingdon, Nashville, 1970-1975; J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, 5 vols., University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1971-1989; S. Pfürtner, 'The Paradigms of Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther: Did Martin Luther's Message of Justification Mean a Paradigm Change?' in H. Küng and D. Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change*, pp. 130-158.

²⁸In practical terms this relation between revelation and deification is perfectly illustrated in the Christ-event. The sentence 'God made Himself man, that man might become God' sums up the essence of Christianity for the Eastern Church, because in Christ we see 'an ineffable descent of God to the ultimate limit of our fallen human condition, even unto death—a descent of God which opens to men a path of ascent, the unlimited vistas of the union of the created beings with the Divinity.' See Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, v (ANCL, vol. v, pp. 80-82); Athanasius, *De incarnatione verbi*, 54 (NPNF, vol. iv (2nd ed.), pp. 65-66); Gregory of Nazianzus, *Poema dogmatica*, 10, 5-9, (PG, 37-38); Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio catechetica magna*, 25 (PG, 45-106); V. Lossky, *In The Likeness*, p. 97; J. Stamoolis, *Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today*, Orbis, Maryknoll, NY: 1986, p. 6.

²⁹See G. Florovsky, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View*, Nordland Publishing Company, Belmont, Massachusetts, 1972, p. 29.

However, whilst both the Eastern and Western churches are actively involved in ecumenical dialogue,³⁰ it is agreed that any progress in this area is closely related to the question of authority. As Patriarch Pimen of Moscow puts it:

Much in this direction will depend on the possibility of achieving ecumenical agreement on the question of the authority of the Bible, of the Church as the guardian of the Holy Scripture and Tradition, and the authority of the Church as the teacher of the faith in the question of the interpretation of Holy Scripture. We are very far from agreement, even elementary, basic agreement, but these questions cannot be by-passed, for the way to Christian unity lies through them, i.e. through agreement to these questions.³¹

The purpose of this section, then, is to examine the Orthodox view of the authority of the Scriptures in the context of the relation between theological epistemology and ecclesial practice. Methodologically the issue of biblical authority in the life of an ecclesial community will be analysed through the concept of 'space' that provides for both relatedness and freedom between *episteme* and *praxis*. This space allows both the tradition of the community to influence but not to enslave the epistemic endeavour, and facilitates new discoveries which challenge the existing tradition without disintegrating the respective community.³² Within this frame of thought particular attention will be given to the issue of Scripture and authority within the Romanian Orthodox Church following the translation of the Bible into the vernacular by Cornilescu.

³⁰In his *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, WCC, Geneva, 1991, pp. 49-59, 83-91, I. Bria analyses both the Orthodox challenges to the ecumenical movement and the Orthodox gains from other churches.

³¹Patriarch Pimen of Moscow, 'An Orthodox View of Contemporary Ecumenism', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1978, p. 331.

³²See C.E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1991, p. 86.

Chapter 2

Theological Epistemology: *Via Negativa* and *Via Positiva*

2.1 Historical Background

In addition to the historical and cultural circumstances which have separated the Eastern and the Western traditions since the early patristic period,³³ Zizioulas considers that, epistemologically, the differences between various theological trends go back to the time of Christianity's encounter with Jewish³⁴ and Greek³⁵ thought.³⁶ In affirming that Christ is the truth Christianity rejected both Jewish 'linear historicism'³⁷ and Greek *cosmological*³⁸ approaches to the question of truth.³⁹ Alternatively, in its

³³The historical circumstances during the period which followed the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) placed Byzantium in a preeminent and to some degree self-sufficient position, from which it was to develop a theological tradition. Byzantium maintained its Christological commitment to the Council of Chalcedon, and for several centuries kept bridges towards the West intact, in spite of all tensions, political and doctrinal. During this period, however, neither the councils nor the theologians would show particular interest in positive theological systems. According to Meyendorff, with few exceptions, the conciliar statements assume a negative form; they condemned distortions of the Christian truth rather than elaborate its positive content. The greater part of the theological literature was either exegetical or polemical, and in both cases the Christian faith was assumed as a given reality upon which one comments or which one defends, but which one does not try to formulate exhaustively. See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, Fordham University Press, New York, 1974, p. 3-5; (J. Meyendorff), *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 40-41; J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1971, pp. 226-277.

³⁴See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 68; 'Preserving God's Creation', in *King's Theological Review*, XII (1989), p. 2; J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, OUP, London, 1961, pp. 34-38.

³⁵See E.R. Dodds, *The Greek and the Irrational*, University of California Press, 1951; F.C. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol.1, Doubleday, Garden City, NY:, 1962; W.D. Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1951; J.H. Randall, *Aristotle*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1960. J. Zizioulas, 'Preserving God's Creation, I', in *King's Theological Review*, XII (1989), p. 2. (J. Zizioulas), 'Human Capacities and Human Incapacities: A Theological Exploration of Personhood', in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 28 (1975), p. 403; (J. Zizioulas), *Being as Communion*, p. 69.

³⁶J. Zizioulas, 'Preserving God's Creation, I' in *King's Theological Review*, XII (1989), p. 2. See also M. Hengel, *The Son of God: The Origin of Christology and of the History of Jewish-Hellenistic Religion*, (Tr. J. Bowden), Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1976, pp. 10-57.

³⁷By 'referring to Christ as the Alpha and Omega of history, the New Testament has transformed radically the linear historicism of Hebrew thought, since in a certain way the end of history in Christ becomes *already* present here and now' (J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 70-71).

³⁸In affirming that the historical Christ is the truth, 'the New Testament hurls a challenge to Greek thought, since it is in the flow of history and through it, through its

attempt to explain how Christ the truth can be simultaneously a historical and *transcendental* being the Church adopted Greek and Jewish categories, which, in turn, have influenced the development of either cataphatic or apophatic approaches to theology.⁴⁰ Generally speaking, the Eastern Church, borrowing primarily from Greek philosophy, has been concerned primarily with those realities which are *beyond* history (the apophatic approach)⁴¹, whilst the West, borrowing more from the Jewish tradition, is more conscious of the positive aspect of revelation, of all that it adds to the knowledge which man can acquire by natural reason (the cataphatic approach).⁴² However, some Orthodox theologians are aware of the theological problems posed by a purely apophatic approach to theology, and consequently attempt to realize a synthesis between apophasis and cataphasis. The apophatic and the apophatic-cataphatic approaches to theology and their views concerning the question of biblical authority are illustrated in the theological reflections of Vladimir Lossky and Dumitru Staniloae.

2.2 Basic Presuppositions

Both apophatic and apophatic-cataphatic methods operate within a framework that is accepted by the entire Orthodox Church. The following three presuppositions are particularly relevant for theological epistemology. First, the Tri-une God is the 'ultimate reality', or the 'source of all being'.⁴³ From an epistemological perspective this presupposition identifies 'ultimate truth' with the being of God. Gregory of Nazianzus affirms: 'the Father is He who is True, the Son is the Truth, and the Holy Spirit the Spirit of Truth.'⁴⁴ Thus, the first presupposition identifies the 'object' of knowing. Second, God is *transcendent* in His nature and *immanent* in His manifestation,⁴⁵ and

changes and ambiguities, that man is called to discover the meaning of existence' (J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 71).

³⁹Zizioulas lists six different approaches to the question of truth during the patristic era: the 'Logos' approach; the Eucharistic approach; the Trinitarian approach; the 'Apophatic' approach; the Christological approach, and, the approach through the 'Eikon'. See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 72-101.

⁴⁰J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 71-72.

⁴¹Apophatic theology perceives revelation not only as the basis for all theological knowledge, but first and foremost as a foretaste of the world to come, a vision which causes man to desire to go 'beyond' man's rational limitation, contemplating upon divine mystery diffused as it were through a dark cloud. See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, James Clarke & Co., London, 1973, pp. 7-22.

⁴²See C.S. Calian, *Icon and Pulpit*, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1968, pp. 44-46.

⁴³D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1980, pp. 109-117; V. Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, (ed., J.H. Erickson), St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1985, pp. 13-43.

⁴⁴Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio XXIII (De Pace III)*, II, PG, XXXV, 1164 A.

⁴⁵Christianity held to the biblical view of radical difference between God and the world. See G.J. Vogel, 'Philosophia I. Studies in Greek Philosophy', in *Philosophical Texts and*

consequently, He is at the same time knowable and unknowable.⁴⁶ The way in which the otherness and the relatedness between God and creation is conceived, actually circumscribes not only the extent of God's knowability but also the content of this knowledge. Third, creation's meaning and purpose are realized in its response to God's economic movement.⁴⁷ The mode in which human beings, as part of the creation, respond to God, determines the way of knowledge.⁴⁸ However, according to the predominance of Jewish or Greek influences, these presuppositions are used to support either a 'historical'⁴⁹ or an 'eschatological'⁵⁰ approach to theological epistemology.⁵¹ Thus, when history is taken into account as the context in which God reveals Himself, categories such as language, Scripture and Tradition occupy a central place. Alternatively, when the emphasis is laid upon a direct encounter with God beyond historical realities the categories of essence, energies, mystical experience and the like, receive a prominent place.

Studies, 19:I (1970), pp. 397-416; J. Zizioulas, 'Human Capacity and Human Incapacity', pp. 401-447.

⁴⁶Lossky explains this paradox by pointing to the dogma of creation *ex nihilo* as an free act of the will of God. (V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1978, pp. 51-54. See also G.D. Dragas, 'St. Athanasius on the Holy Spirit and the Trinity', in T.F. Torrance, ed., *Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, vol. 2, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1993, pp. 39-58.

⁴⁷The capacity of creation to respond to God is described in the Eastern Patristic writings either by referring to the 'images of the world' as the thoughts of God, (Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carm. theol. IV de mundo*, V, 66-67; *PG*, 37, 421) or to the relation between *Logos-logoi* (Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, 7; *PG*, 91, 1081C). A central role in creation's response to God has been assigned to man. Gregory of Nazianzus affirms: 'In my quality of earth, I am attached to life here below, but being also a divine particle, I bear in my breast the desire for a future life' (Cf. V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 70). Zizioulas affirms that if Christianity excludes the assumption that the world has in its nature something *naturally* common with God's nature, the only other alternative for a link between God and creation is man as *Imago Dei*, or as 'the Priest of Creation'. J. Zizioulas, 'Preserving God's Creation. Three Lectures on Theology and Ecology. II', in *King's Theological Review*, XII (1989), p. 45. See also J. Zizioulas, 'Human Capacity', in *S.J.T.* 28 (1975), p. 403). See also D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, vol. 1, Ed. IBM, al BOR, București, 1978, p. 10; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, pp. 132-136; V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, pp. 51-70.

⁴⁸Although there are different (or even contradictory) interpretations of the syntagma 'the image and the likeness of God' in Orthodox anthropology, there is nevertheless agreement that its basic meaning underlines man's openness toward God and the *task* of man in the whole of creation. See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 138-149.

⁴⁹The 'historical' approach is devoted to *tradition* and to continuity with the apostolic church. V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 29; *I Clement* 42:1-2; 44: 1-2 (*ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 36-39); J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 172, 176-178.

⁵⁰The 'eschatological' approach influenced by Platonic and Neo-Platonic categories is concerned with the way in which here and now the Church encounters the *beyond* history, the ultimate reality. V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, pp. 27-29; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 171-208.

⁵¹J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 171-208.

2.3 V. Lossky: Mystical Epistemology

2.3.1 *Episteme* and *Gnosis*: There are, Lossky argues, two routes to human knowledge. The first, *episteme*, operates with searching and reasoning and is characteristic of scientific and philosophical epistemology. This approach allows for limited knowledge of some 'properties' of those 'objects' that can be observed, and by analysing these properties one can form concepts. However, following Basil,⁵² Lossky argues that,

There will always remain an 'irrational residue' which escapes analysis and which cannot be expressed in concepts; it is the unknowable depth of things, that which constitutes their true, indefinable essence.⁵³

Moreover, when speaking about knowledge of God, *episteme* is totally inadequate due to 'the radical lack of correspondence between our mind and the reality it wishes to attain.'⁵⁴ Hence, any philosophical discourse about God becomes pure speculation.⁵⁵ Theology, therefore, has to follow a different way, described by Lossky as the way of *gnosis*. *Gnosis* is not the result of human endeavour but a divine gift which is received through a revelatory encounter.⁵⁶ This encounter initiated by God takes the form of 'I-Thou', where Thou is 'the living God of the Bible, the Absolute, certainly, but a personal Absolute'.⁵⁷ In this revelatory encounter, God affirms Himself to be at the same time immanent and transcendent, and in the dialectic of transcendence and immanence God is both knowable and unknowable.⁵⁸ What is knowable, however, is not the product of human rational endeavour but a free gift of God which is appropriated by faith, which is man's

⁵²St. Basil, *Adv. Eunomium*, I,i,c; I,ii,c.4 (NPNF, 2nd ed., vol. VIII, pp. 123-124); *Ad Amphiloichium*, Epist. 234 (NPNF, 2nd ed., vol. VIII, p. 274).

⁵³V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 33;

⁵⁴V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 13.

⁵⁵The philosophy which speculates on God starts,...from an idea...The philosopher raises himself to an idea from another idea or from a group of generalizing facts according to an idea. For certain philosophers, the search for God correspond/to an inherent necessity in their thought: God must exist so that their conception of the universe may be coherent. There follows the search for arguments to demonstrate the existence of this necessary God-whence these 'proofs of the existence of God,' 'proofs' which the theologian can well do without.' Further, the inadequacy of philosophical approaches to knowing God is illustrated by the fact that each philosopher rises to his own concept of absolute. 'The God of Descartes is the mathematician's God: to justify the innate ideas of mathematical truth...For Leibnitz, God is necessary to justify the pre-established harmony between our perception and reality...there must be a supreme Monad in which the monads converge and order themselves...[Kant] needs the idea of God in the moral sphere...The God of Bergson is a God of creative evolution...the God of Aristotle is the unmoved mover postulated by the existence of movement...' V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, pp. 18-19.

⁵⁶Authentic *gnosis* is inseparable from charisma, an illumination by grace which transforms our intelligence. And since the object of contemplation is a personal existence and presence, true *gnosis* implies encounter, reciprocity, *faith* as a personal adherence to the personal presence of God who reveals Himself (V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 13).

⁵⁷V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 27.

⁵⁸V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 31.

'participatory adherence to the presence of Him who reveals Himself.'⁵⁹ In addition, whilst all theological knowledge is based upon revelation, it is not an end in itself. Rather, the purpose of revelation (*gnosis*) is deification (*theosis*).⁶⁰ In order to explain the relation between *gnosis* and *theosis*, Lossky introduces two pairs of concepts: *katabasis* and *anabasis*; and *oikonomia* and *theologia*.⁶¹

2.3.2 *Oikonomia* and *Katabasis*: *Oikonomia* describes God's movement man-wards, which is a movement of descent (*katabasis*).⁶² However, Lossky makes a clear distinction between *oikonomia* and *theologia*: 'economy is the work of the will, while Trinitarian being belongs to the transcendent nature of God.'⁶³ Consequently, *katabasis* is not a way of knowledge, but only the means whereby 'essential goodness, natural sanctity, and royal dignity flow from the Father, through the Only-Begotten, to the Spirit.'⁶⁴ Moreover, Lossky argues that in the very immanence of His economy, which leads to the incarnation, God remains unknowable.⁶⁵

2.3.3 *Theologia* and *Anabasis*: In order to know God, one has to follow the way of *theologia*, which is *gnosis* 'of God considered in Himself, outside of His creative and redemptive economy.'⁶⁶ Following Pseudo-Dionysius,⁶⁷ Lossky affirms that *gnosis* is a way of a spiritual ascent (*anabasis*) beyond all perceptive and rational faculties 'in order to be able to attain in perfect

⁵⁹Faith is, according to Lossky, not a psychological attitude, a mere fidelity but 'an ontological relationship between man and God, an internally objective relationship for which the catechumen prepares himself, and through which baptism and chrismation are coffered upon the faithful: gifts which restore and vivify the deepest nature of man' (V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 16). This faculty to respond to divine presence, which exists in a 'mortified' state even when man is separated from God as a result of sin, is 'vivified' by the Holy Spirit through the sacraments of baptism and chrismation. Once vivified, 'Faith as the ontological participation included in a personal meeting is therefore the first condition for theological knowledge' (V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 17).

⁶⁰See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 9; Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, v; Athanasius, *De incarnatione verbi*, 54; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Poema dogmatica*, 10, 5-9; Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio catechetica magna*, 25.

⁶¹See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 15, 97.

⁶²V. Lossky, *In The Likeness*, pp. 15-16. Here Lossky follows the teaching of St. Basil in his *Treatise on the Holy Spirit*.

⁶³V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 15.

⁶⁴V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 16.

⁶⁵V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 15.

⁶⁶V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 15-16. The appropriate methods for *gnosis* are contemplation and silence; contemplation because it is 'an exit to the state of a future age, a vision of what is beyond history, a projection of eschatology into the instant', and silence because it 'constitutes the language of the world which is coming' (V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 14).

⁶⁷See P. Spearritt, *A Philosophical Enquiry into Dionysian Mysticism*, Rotex-Druckdienst, Bödingen, 1975, pp. 173-182; R.F. Hathway, *Hierarchy and Definition of Order in the Letters of Pseudo-Dionysius*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1969.

ignorance to union with Him who transcends all being and all knowledge.⁶⁸ Following the Greek Fathers' exegesis of Moses' ascent to meet God on the mountain,⁶⁹ Lossky affirms that the content of *gnosis* which one acquires when going *beyond* everything that exists and arriving at the extreme height of the knowable, is in fact no knowledge but, rather, a 'mystical union with God',⁷⁰ described by Pseudo-Dionysius as 'knowing nothing'.⁷¹ Moreover, due to the fact that, in contrast with *episteme*, *gnosis* surpasses human intellectual capacities, the purpose of this way is not to develop a positive theological system but to attain union with God (*theosis*). Yet, even if *gnosis* is knowledge beyond words, in order to be communicated it has to be translated into theological language and to be subsequently organized, more or less, into a system. This leads us, in turn, to the distinction between apophatic and cataphatic theologies.

2.4 Apophatic and Cataphatic Theologies

2.4.1 **Cataphasis:** Corresponding to the two movements, of God towards man (*katabasis*) and of man towards God (*anabasis*), Lossky affirms that there are two approaches to theology: cataphatic and apophatic.⁷²

Cataphatic theology, or positive theology, leads us to some knowledge of God, albeit in an imperfect way.⁷³ Affirmative theology begins with the loftier,

⁶⁸V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 27; Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology*, I,1,1000A, in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works (CW)*, (Tr. C. Luibheid), SPCK, London, 1987, p. 135.

⁶⁹Exodus 19 and 20:18-21.

⁷⁰V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 28.

⁷¹'It is not for nothing that the blessed Moses is commanded first to purification and then to depart from those who have not undergone this. When every purification is complete, he hears many-voiced trumpets. He sees the many lights, pure and with the rays streaming abundantly. Then, standing apart from the crowds and accompanied by the chosen priests, he pushes ahead to the summit of the divine ascents. And yet he does not meet God himself, but contemplates, not him who is invisible, but rather where he dwells. This means, I presume, that the holiest and the highest of these things perceived with the eyes of the body or the mind are but the rationale which presupposes all that lies below the Transcendent One. Through them, however, his unimaginable presence is shown, walking the heights of those holy places to which the mind at least can rise. But then he [Moses] breaks free of them, away from what he sees and is seen, and he plunges into the truly mysterious darkness of unknowing. Here renouncing all that the mind may conceive, wrapped entirely in the intangible and the invisible, he belongs completely to him who is beyond everything. Here, being neither oneself nor someone else, one is supremely united by a completely unknowing inactivity of all knowledge, and knows beyond the mind by knowing nothing' (Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology*, I,3, 1000C-1001A in *CW*, pp. 136-167).

⁷²Lossky borrows this distinction from Pseudo-Dionysius and John of Damascus. See Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology*, I,997 A-V,1048 B in *CW*, pp. 135-141; John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, I,4 (NPNF, 2nd. ed., vol. IX, p. 34).

⁷³V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 25. Similarly, John of Damascus asserts that, 'All that we can say cataphatically concerning God does not show forth His nature but the

more congruous comparisons and then proceeds 'down' to the less appropriate ones;⁷⁴ or, as Lossky explains, 'a descent from the superior degrees of being to the inferior.'⁷⁵ However, if cataphatic theology follows a downward path, one may ask how can the human mind ever reach the loftier places?

Pseudo-Dionysius responds by asserting that positive theology originates in the Scriptures which contain the divine truth revealed by God in his man-wards movement of economic descent.⁷⁶ However, the concepts or the words of Scripture do not describe God as He is in Himself since He is always beyond everything that exists. For Pseudo-Dionysius, in the words of Scripture 'the Transcendent is clothed in the terms of beings, with shape and form on things which have neither, and numerous symbols are employed to

things that relate to His nature...God does not belong to the class of existing things; not that He has no existence, but that He is above all existing things, nay even above existence itself. For if all forms of knowledge have to do with what exists, assuredly that which is above knowledge must certainly be also above essence; and, conversely, that which is above essence will also be above knowledge' (John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, I,4).

⁷⁴The imperfection of positive theology resides in both its method and content. Methodologically, argues Dionysius, 'when we made assertions we began with the first things, moved down through intermediate terms until we reached the last things' (Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology*, II, 1025B in CW, pp. 138). Likewise, the cognitive content has a descending character due to the link between concepts and the 'level' of theological reflection. 'In the earlier books my argument travelled downward from the most exalted to the humblest categories, taking in on this downward path an ever-increasing number of ideas which multiplied with every stage of descent' (Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology*, III, 1033C in CW, p. 139).

⁷⁵V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 28. Here Lossky draws heavily from Pseudo-Dionysius who, in his *The Mystical Theology*, claims that he had analyzed this way of theologizing in other writings (some of which were either lost or are fictitious). Thus, Dionysius reminds us that in *The Theological Representations*, positive theology begins with God's oneness and proceeds down into the multiplicity of affirming the Trinity and the Incarnation. See *The Mystical Theology*, III, 1032D-1033A in CW, pp. 138-139. His *The Divine Names* affirms the more numerous designations for God which come from mental concepts such as good, existent, life, wisdom, power, and whatever other things pertain to the conceptual names for God. See *The Mystical Theology*, III, 1033A in CW, p. 138. The *Symbolic Theology* 'descended' into the still more pluralized realm of sense perception and its plethora of symbols for the deity such as 'the images we have of him, of the forms, figures, and instruments proper to him, of the places in which he lives and of the ornaments he wears. I have spoken of his anger, grief, and rage, of how he is said to be drunk and hungover, of his oaths and curses, of his sleeping and waking, and indeed of all those images we have of him, images shaped by the workings of the symbolic representations of God. And I feel sure that you have noticed how these latter come much more abundantly than what went before, since *The Theological Representations* and a discussion of the names appropriate to God are inevitably briefer than what can be said in *The Symbolic Theology*' (*The Mystical Theology*, III, 1033A-1033B in CW, pp. 138-139).

⁷⁶'Let us therefore look as far upward as the light of the sacred scriptures will allow, and, in our reverent awe of what is divine, let us be drawn together toward the divine splendour. For, if we may trust the superlative wisdom and truth of scripture, the things of God are revealed to each mind in proportion to its capacities; and the divine goodness is such that, out of concern for our salvation, it deals out the immeasurable and infinite in limited measure' (Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, I,1, 585B-588A in CW, p. 49).

convey the varied attributes of what is an imageless and supra-natural simplicity.⁷⁷ Similarly, Lossky argues that whilst God reveals Himself (intelligible attributes)⁷⁸ as wisdom, love and goodness, his nature remains unknowable in its depths and therefore our concepts must be always prevented from being enclosed within their limited meaning.⁷⁹ In fact, Lossky, following Gregory of Nyssa, argues that 'the ladder of cataphatic theology' which discloses the divine names drawn primarily from Scripture are not intended to become rational concepts whereby our minds construct 'a positive science of the divine nature', but are rather images or ideas intended to guide us for contemplation of that which transcends all understanding.⁸⁰

2.4.2 Apophasis: Lossky affirms that man's proper response to the economy in which God reveals Himself in creating the world and becoming incarnate, is to confess the transcendent nature of the Trinity in an ascent of thought according to the way of apophatic theology.⁸¹ On the lower steps there are images drawn from the material objects least calculated to lead spirits inexperienced in contemplation into error. It is indeed more difficult, argues Lossky, to identify God with stone or with fire than with intelligence, unity, being or goodness. What seems obvious at the beginning of the ascent, that 'God is not fire, He is not Stone', becomes less and less obvious as one attains to the height of contemplation, when one has to affirm that 'God is not being, He is not good'.⁸² At each step of ascent one has to guard oneself against the danger of making these loftier images or ideas 'an idol of God'. Once the heights have been attained, then speculation gradually gives place to contemplation, knowledge to experience, 'for, in casting of the concepts which shackle the spirit, the apophatic disposition reveals boundless horizons of contemplation at each step of positive theology.'⁸³ Consequently,

⁷⁷Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, I,4, 592B in *CW*, p. 52.

⁷⁸These intelligible attributes of God characteristic to positive theology are analysed by Pseudo-Dionysius in *The Divine Names*, in *CW*, pp. 49-131.

⁷⁹'Certainly God is wise, but not in the banal sense of a merchant or a philosopher. And His limitless wisdom is not an internal necessity of His nature. The highest names, even love, express but do not exhaust the divine essence. They constitute the attributes by which divinity communicates itself without its secret source, its nature, ever becoming exhausted, or becoming objectified beneath our scrutiny. Our purified concepts enable us to approach God; the divine names enable us in some sense even to enter Him. But we can never seize His essence, else He would be determined by His attributes; but He is determined by nothing and that is precisely why he is personal' (V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 33).

⁸⁰See Gregory of Nyssa, *Con. Eunom* (*PG*, XLV, 939-941); V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 40.

⁸¹V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 15. 'The negative way of the knowledge of God is an ascendant undertaking of the mind that progressively eliminates all positive attributes of the object it wishes to attain, in order to culminate finally in a kind of apprehension by supreme ignorance of Him who cannot be an object of knowledge' (V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 13).

⁸²V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 40.

⁸³V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 40. Negative theology, far from being a purely intellectual exercise, involves a mystical experience, an ascent towards God, and Pseudo-Dionysius argues that even though one attains to the highest peaks accessible to created

apophatic theology refuses any attempt to form concepts about God and to organize them in a systematic construct according to human ways of thought. On the contrary, by pointing to mystical union with God, apophatic theology is 'an existential attitude which involves the whole man... a criterion: the sure sign of an attitude of mind conformed to truth.'⁸⁴

However, if negative theology begins by denying the appropriateness of the human mind and language to knowing God, then one may inquire concerning the role of the Scriptures and dogmas, since these are themselves expressed in concepts. To answer this question, Lossky borrows from Gregory Nazianzus' metaphorical interpretation of Moses' ascent on Mount Sinai, and affirms that there are different levels in theology, each appropriate to differing capacities of human understanding which reach up to the mysteries of God.⁸⁵ In this multi-level theological construct the words of Scripture and of dogma serve primarily as starting and guiding points in an ever ascending process of contemplation which has as its final goal deification.⁸⁶ Thus, concludes Lossky, theology will never be abstract, working through concepts, but contemplative: raising the mind to those realities which pass all understanding.⁸⁷ Moreover, in his union with God, man is not dissolved into

beings, the only rational notion which one can have of God is that of His incomprehensibility. V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 38.

⁸⁴V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 39.

⁸⁵V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 40-41. Gregory of Nazianzus writes: 'God commands me to enter within the cloud and hold converse with Him; if any be an Aaron, let him go up with me, and let him stand near, being ready, if it must be so, to remain outside the cloud. But if any be a Nadab or an Abihu, or of the order of the elders, let him go up indeed, but let him stand afar off...But if any be of the multitude, who are unworthy of this height of contemplation, if he be altogether impure let him not approach at all, for it would be dangerous to him; but if he be at least temporarily purified, let him remain below and listen to the voice alone, and the trumpet, the bare words of piety, and let him see the mount smoking and lightening...But if any be an evil and savage beast, and altogether incapable of taking in the matter of contemplation and theology, let him not harmfully and malignantly lurk in this den amongst the woods, to catch hold of some dogma or saying by a sudden spring... but let him stand yet afar off and withdraw from the moment, or he shall be stoned' (Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio XXVIII [theologica II]*, 2 in *NPNF*, 2nd ed., vol. VII, p. 289). Gregory Nazianzus's interpretation of Moses ascent appears to suggest a stratification of the community concerning the accessibility to loftier heights of contemplation, and Lossky attempts to correct it by arguing that the negative way is not 'an esoteric teaching hidden from the profane; nor is it a gnostic separation between those who are spiritual, psychic or carnal, but a school of contemplation wherein each receives his share in the experience of the Christian mystery lived by the Church' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 41).

⁸⁶This contemplation of the hidden treasures of the divine Wisdom can be practised in varying degrees, with greater or lesser intensity; whether it be a lifting up of the spirit towards God and away from creatures, which allows his splendour to become visible; whether it be a meditation on the Holy Scriptures in which God hides Himself, as it were behind a screen, beneath the words which express the revelation...whether it be a dogma of the Church or through her liturgical life; whether, finally it be through ecstasy that we penetrate to the divine mystery, this experience of God will always be the fruit of that apophatic attitude which Dionysius commends to us in his *Mystical Theology*. (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 41-42).

⁸⁷V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 43.

an impersonal re-absorption in the divine nature as in the ecstasy of Plotinus, 'but has access to a face to face encounter with God, a union without confusion according to grace.'⁸⁸

However, the question of union with God, and of mystical experience in general, raises the issue of accessibility and/or inaccessibility of God's nature. What does it actually mean to say that human beings become 'partakers of divine nature'?

In order to explain the nature of mystical union with God, Lossky borrows from Palamas the ineffable distinction between three aspects of God's being: (a) the permanently unnamable and imparticipable divine essence (*ousia*); (b) the three divine persons (*hypostases*) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and (c) the uncreated energies (*energeiai*) or divine operations, forces proper to and inseparable from God's essence, in which He goes forth from Himself, manifests, communicates and gives Himself.⁸⁹ Mystical union with God according to essence is impossible; if the creature *could* participate in the divine essence, the creature would *be* God, *homousios* with God. Only the three Persons are united to each other in the divine essence.⁹⁰ Union with God according to *hypostasis* is proper to the Son alone.⁹¹ Union with God according to energy is a *real* participation of creature in the divine life.⁹²

It is true that by postulating this distinction between essence, person, and energies, Palamas (and Lossky) was attempting to hold together two claims: firstly, that *theosis* is real, and secondly, that God remains totally *other*. However, such a distinction raises both ontological and economic problems. Ontologically, in spite of the Palamites' claims to the contrary, this distinction within the being of God runs the risk of compromising the principle of the 'unity and simplicity' of the divine essence.⁹³ Additionally, it

⁸⁸V. Lossky, *Orthodox Theology*, p. 32.

⁸⁹See Gregory Palamas, *Capita physica, theologica, moralia, et practica*, 79, PG 150, 1173B; 111, PG 150, 1197A; *Triads*, III,1,26 in J. Meyendorff, ed., *Gregory Palamas. The Triads*, (Tr. N. Gendle), Paulist Press, New York, 1983, p. 607.

⁹⁰If we were able at a given moment to be united with the very essence of God and to participate in it even at the very least degree, we should not at the moment be what we are, we should be God by nature. God would then no longer be Trinity, but 'of myriads of hypostases'; for He would have as many hypostases as there would be persons participating in His essence' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 69-70).

⁹¹'Even though we share the same human nature as Christ and receive in Him the name of sons of God, we do not ourselves become the divine hypostasis of the Son by the fact of Incarnation. We are unable, therefore, to participate in either the essence or the hypostases of the Holy Trinity' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 70).

⁹²V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 71.

⁹³To affirm that God's energies interpose between God's essence and the creation leads to the conclusion that there is a duality in God; a 'lower' part in which one can participate, and an 'upper' part that is totally inaccessible. Or, from another perspective, the idea that within God there are two distinct realities can lead (if pressed toward its logical conclusion), to the implication that there are two gods related to each other in some mysterious way. Meyendorff dismisses both charges arguing that for Palamas 'in virtue of the simplicity of His being, God is wholly and entirely present both in His essence and in His energies' and on the other side, 'no multiplicity of divine manifestations could affect the unity of God, for God is beyond the categories of whole and parts and while in His

raises the question of the ontological status as well as that of the intra-Trinitarian role of each category (aspect) of God's being. On the economic level, the main problem is to maintain a trinitarian soteriology, that is, a personal relation with God, whilst affirming that God communicates Himself through non-*hypostatic* beings such as the uncreated energies.

Whilst Palamite theology can be approached from different perspectives, in this section we will concentrate primarily on those aspects which are related to theological epistemology and ecclesiastical practice.

The first aspect concerns the place of the divine *hypostases* in relation to both *ousia* and *energeia*. Whilst Palamas argues that each energy is a personal, self-communication of God to creation, the energy is not itself hypostatic. Since the divine *ousia* is totally incommunicable, and the divine *hypostases* self-communicate only through the energies it follows that the divine persons occupy a kind of intermediary level between essence and energies.⁹⁴

Secondly, from a trinitarian perspective, by arguing that the divine essence is unknowable and imparticipable, Palamas has reified the divine *ousia* altogether beyond the divine persons. Williams argues that the idea of an 'absolutely transcendent divine interiority can be secured only at the cost of orthodox trinitarianism: once *ousia* has been "concretized" into a core of essential life, it will inevitably take on some associations of superiority or ontological priority.'⁹⁵ This represents a significant shift from the ontology set up by the Cappadocians who argued that God's *ousia* exists as Father, Son, and Spirit.⁹⁶

Thirdly, concerning the distinction between *hypostasis* and *energeiai*, Lossky affirms that 'the Son and the Holy Spirit are, so to say, personal processions', whilst 'the energies are natural processions'.⁹⁷ Accordingly, God has two modes of being: in His essence and in His energies.⁹⁸ Further, following the

essence always remaining unknowable, reveals Himself wholly in each energy as the Living God' (J. Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1974, pp. 125-126). See also G. Palamas, *Triads*, III,1,23; C.M. LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*, Harper, San Francisco, 1991, p. 188; C. Lialine, 'The Theological Teaching of Gregory Palamas on Divine Simplicity, Its Experimental Origin and Practical Issues', in *ECQ*, 6 (1945-1946), pp. 266-287.

⁹⁴C.M. LaCugna, *God for Us*, p. 186.

⁹⁵R.D. Williams, 'Philosophical Structures of Palamism', in *ECR*, IX, 1-2 (1977), pp. 27-44 (here p. 34).

⁹⁶See C.M. LaCugna, *God For Us*, pp. 66-68.

⁹⁷The energies as outpourings of the divine nature 'which cannot set bounds to itself, for God is more than essence', represents God's mode of being outside His inaccessible essence. V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 86.

⁹⁸None of these modes of being is determined by His divine economy because even if creatures did not exist, God would none the less manifest Himself beyond His essence; the uncreated energies proceed from and manifest forth the nature from which they are inseparable, just as the rays of the sun would shine out from the solar disk whether or not there were any beings capable of receiving its light. V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 74.

Greek Fathers,⁹⁹ Lossky affirms that God is fully present in each ray of the divine energies but not according to His substance, or His hypostases.¹⁰⁰ From an epistemic perspective the assertion that God manifests Himself wholly in either mode of being (essence and energies), suggests that knowing God in one mode of existence means, by implication, knowing God in the other mode. Alternatively, if God's mode of being in his essence is different from His mode of being outside His essence (His energies), then the concept of God's privacy and God's inaccessibility makes sense, but that would imply that God does not equally reveal Himself in the two modes of being.¹⁰¹

Fifthly, since the divine energies express what the persons are (*enhypostatic*),¹⁰² without being themselves persons, the three divine Persons are removed a step back from the economy of salvation. Thus, Palamas widens the gap between *theologia* and *oikonomia*.¹⁰³ Consequently, whilst God's relation to creation follows a certain trinitarian order (*taxis*), that is, from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit, in fact the office of each Person, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in particular,¹⁰⁴ fades into the

⁹⁹See Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Name*, II, 649 A-652 A in *CW*, pp. 66-67; Maximus the Confessor, Cf. Euthymius Zigabenus, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, III, *PG*, 136, 132 A; Gregory of Nazianzus, *In Theophaniam* (Oratio 38), 7; *PG*, 36 317B; John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, I,4, *PG*, 94, 800 BC; Gregory Palamas, *Capita physica*, 143, *PG*, 150, 1220 D; 96, 1189 B.

¹⁰⁰Lossky asserts: 'While distinguishing in God the three hypostases, the one nature and the natural energies, Orthodox theology does not admit any kind of 'composition' in Him. The energies, like the persons, are not elements of the divine being which can be conceived of apart, in separation from the Trinity of which they are the common manifestation, the eternal splendour. They are not accidents of the nature in their quality as pure energies, and they imply no passivity in God. Neither are they hypostatic beings, comparable to the three Persons. It is not even possible to attribute any particular energy to any one of the divine hypostases exclusively' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 79-80; see also p. 74).

¹⁰¹Meyendorff acknowledges that God does not manifest Himself fully in every energy since His essence remains unknowable: 'The God of Christians, the God of the Scriptures, is a living God, but He is essentially transcendent to every creature. Even when He manifests Himself, He remains unknowable in His essence, for a revelation of the divine essence would bring God down to the level of creatures and make man a "God by nature". All revelation, all participation, all deification is, then, a free act of the living God, a divine energy. But God Himself does not totally identify Himself with that act; He remains above it, even while manifesting Himself wholly in it' (J. Meyendorff, *Palamas*, p. 122).

¹⁰²This, then, is properly an *enhypostaton*: that which is contemplated not in itself, nor in essence, but in a person (*hypostasis*)' (G. Palamas, *Triads*, III,1,9). Leontius of Byzantium established the distinction between *enhypostasis* (personal union) and *anhypostasis* (impersonal union). Human nature is *enhypostasized* by the Logos because it is possessed, used, and manifested by the Logos. See C.M. LaCugna, *God for Us*, p. 203, n. 32.

¹⁰³LaCugna asserts that the symptom of the gap 'is that *ousia* and *energeiai* become subjects of predication apart from the divine persons.' C.M. LaCugna, *God for Us*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁴Lossky considers that God both created and manifests His providence in creation through the divine energies. V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 75-76. See also John of Damascus, *De fide orth.*, I, 13 (*NPNF*, 2nd ed., vol. IX, pp. 15-17). Such an approach runs the risk of confusing the energies with the hypostasis of the Son or the Spirit. As a matter of fact, in patristic writings, the energies and the hypostases are not clearly

background due to the fact that mystical union with God is realised through the energies which are impersonal.¹⁰⁵ In fact some Orthodox theologians became aware of this aspect. As Timiadis argues:

differentiated, and consequently some of the Fathers confused the person of the Logos with the divine energies. Cyril of Alexandria affirms that, 'The operation of the uncreated substance is a kind of common property, while it is the proper possession of each Person, in such a way that it is thanks to the three hypostases that the operation belongs to each as a property of a perfect person. Thus, it is the Father who acts, but by the Son in the Spirit; the Son acts also, but as the power of the Father, inasmuch as He is from Him and in Him according to His own hypostasis. The Spirit also acts, for He is the all-powerful Spirit of the Father and the Son' (*De Sancta Trinitate*, VI; PG, 74, 1056 A) According to Gregory of Nyssa 'the source of Power is the Father; the Power of the Father is the Son, the Spirit of Power is the Holy Spirit' (*De spiritu Sancto, ad. Macedonianos*, 13; PG, 45, 1317 A). Athenagoras called Christ the divine 'idea or energy' manifesting itself in creation (*Presbeia peri christianon*, 10; PG, 6, 908 B). Paul's saying about the invisible things of God, His eternal power and His divinity made visible since the creation of the world, has been interpreted sometimes as meaning the Logos, sometimes as the energies, the common operations of the Holy Trinity. St. Basil interpreted the energies in this way, opposing them to the unknowable essence (St. Basil, *Epistle 234*; PG, 32, 869 AB). Pseudo-Dionysius speaks about the distinction between the 'superessence' as 'the secret mansions which are but seldom thrown open', and the processions beyond Himself, His manifestations, which Dionysius calls virtues or forces (*dunameis*), in which everything that exists partakes, thus making God known in His creatures (Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, 640 D-641 C; 680 A-684 D in *CW*, pp. 61-62, 68-71; V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 71-72). Irenaeus affirms: 'for that which is invisible of the Son is the Father, and that which is visible of the Father is the Son' (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haereses*, IV,vi,6 in *ANCL*, vol. V, pp. 391-392). Similarly, Basil asserts: 'The Son shows forth in Himself the Father in His fullness, shining forth in all His glory and splendour' (St. Basil, *Adv. Eunomium*, II, 17; PG, 39, 605 B). In fact, Lossky realises this danger when he affirms: 'The Son who renders visible the hidden nature of the Father is here almost identified with the manifesting energies' (*The Mystical Theology*, p. 84). However, Lossky does not succeed in drawing a clear distinction between them. He affirms: 'In the energies *He is*, He exists, He eternally manifests Himself. Here we are faced with a mode of divine being to which we accede in receiving grace; which, moreover, in the created and perishable world, is the presence of the uncreated and eternal light, the real omnipresence of God in all things, which is something more than His causal presence - 'the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not'(John i,5)' (*The Mystical Theology*, p. 89). The distinction between the hypostasis of the Son and the divine energies is further undermined by Lossky's argument that the divine energies 'are within everything and outside everything', and as such they penetrate 'the whole created universe, and are the cause of its existence. The light 'was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not' (John i,10)', (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 89). In conclusion, Lossky himself is not sure as to where to place the energies, and consequently ascribes them a 'middle ground' between immanent and economic Trinity. 'The object of theology...is the eternal procession of the Persons; while their manifestation in the work of creation or of providence, the temporal mission of the Son and of the Spirit, pertains to the sphere of "economy". This is what several modern theologians have somewhat inexactly called the "economic Trinity". According to this division of the substance of Christian doctrine, the energies hold a middle place: on the one hand they belong to theology, as eternal and inseparable forces of the Trinity existing independently of the creative act; on the other, they also belong to the domain of "economy", for it is in His energies that God manifests Himself to the creatures' (*The Mystical Theology*, p. 82).

¹⁰⁵Lossky affirms that the act of creation is not determined by the existence of the divine energies, but by a decision of the common will of the three Persons. See *The Mystical*

To a certain extent the dissatisfaction expressed at the use by the early Fathers of Aristotelian terms, and notably the desire to make less use of terms such as 'essence' and 'energies,' is very understandable. Whatever arguments may be advanced in their favour, they still risk being misunderstood on account of their impersonal character. It might be better to use more intimate and personal expressions, such as 'communion with the Holy Spirit,' more in line with those of the OT and more connected with the historical Jesus. All modern anxiety about the absence of personal communion in human life with God, could thus be overcome, reassuring man in his loneliness and anguish that he can be visited and sustained, not by vague, immaterial, heavenly forces, but above all by God's personal intervention. A God who is reluctant to be with us, who sends us alternative powers and energies, contradicts the very sense of Christ's Incarnation.¹⁰⁶

Further, this essentialist theological language adopted by the apophatic theologians, argues Timiadis, undermines the revelatory office of the incarnate Son, in whom the human and the divine are united not in an 'impersonal' energetic encounter, but in a hypostatic union.¹⁰⁷

Sixthly, since the divine energies are, by the will of God,¹⁰⁸ present in every aspect of creation, the view that one has to deny all that pertains to creaturehood in order to encounter God in a mystical union, implies that God is not as fully present in His energies directed towards creation as He is in His energies which are not linked with the created order. Timiadis considers that this Neo-Platonic approach to union with God through His energies suggests that 'in descending to the world, the divine energies suffer a kind of veiling. Only those beings close to the upper sphere of the divine can feel God's presence.'¹⁰⁹

Penultimately, the apophatic view of deification discloses a reductionist approach to anthropology. Thus, due to the fact that the perceptive and

Theology, p. 75. If creation were to be organically linked to the divine energies, that would imply that creation becomes coeternal with God because the natural processions are so. Yet in spite of the fact that the energies are not relational in themselves, Lossky affirms that they do enter into relation with the creation as a result of the will of God. 'The act of creation established a relationship between the divine energies and that which is not God, and constituted a limitation, a determination of the infinite and eternal effulgence of God, who thereby became the cause of finite and contingent being...the divine energies in themselves are not the relationship of God to created being, but they do enter into relationship with that which is not God, and draw the world into existence by the will of God' (*The Mystical Theology*, p. 89).

¹⁰⁶E. Timiadis, 'God's Immutability and Communicability', in T.F. Torrance, *Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, vol. 1, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1985, pp. 45-46.

¹⁰⁷'The analogy of a circle sending out rays is not very sound, for the simple reason that it departs from the doctrine of *personal* hypostatic union so dear to the Cappadocians' (E. Timiadis, 'God's Immutability', p. 46).

¹⁰⁸Lossky establishes neither the ontologic status of the will of God nor the relation between the will and the energies within the being of God. He argues that the will has no intra-Trinitarian, but only economic functions: 'It is the will-which, for the eastern tradition, never intervenes in the interior relationships of the Trinity, but determines the exterior activities of the divine Person in relation to the created order-which constitutes the difference between the two aspects' (*The Mystical Theology*, pp. 73, 85).

¹⁰⁹E. Timiadis, 'God's Immutability', p. 47.

rational faculties are perceived as barriers in the way of deification, they have to be denied. Alternatively, in his attempt to construe a theological anthropology which would do justice to man as a relational being, Walker argues that:

(1) Persons have a culture: a person is always a person for someone or in relation to someone. (2) Persons cannot be said to be an asocial 'I'. (3) Persons cannot be said to be a socialised 'me' without reference to other socialised selves. (4) Persons have a language: communion is related to communication.¹¹⁰

Lastly, being influenced by the Platonic and Neo-Platonic categories, Lossky's theological epistemology finds no space for the manifestation of truth in historical realities and thus runs the risk of being historically 'disincarnated'. Moreover, as Timiadis affirms:

Exaggerated mysticism could lead to the conclusion that God is so far removed from humanity that desperate efforts are required to obtain his intervention. We are then far from the OT promise to make us God's people, the New Israel, the redeemed heirs of his Kingdom, endowed with Pauline *paresia*, brothers of one another by grace and bearers of the Spirit (*pneumatophoroi*) incorporated into Christ's Body and enjoying all the spiritual gifts that membership of the Church provides.¹¹¹

2.5 Staniloae: Apophatic-Cataphatic Epistemology

2.5.1 Apophatic-Cataphatic Synthesis: For Staniloae the apophatic way of knowing, although the highest form of knowledge, is not enough in itself since it runs the risk, on the one hand, of neglecting supernatural revelation and thus collapsing into a form of impersonal experience, whilst, on the other hand, it cannot be communicated to others and thus can degenerate into individualistic experimentalism.¹¹² The solution to such problems, however, lies not in the cataphatic approach itself since God is beyond our intellectual capacities, beyond affirmation and negation and thus cannot be communicated in words without running the risk of identifying God

¹¹⁰A. Walker, 'The Concept of the Person in Social Science: Possibilities for a Theological Anthropology', in A.I.C. Heron, ed., *The Forgotten Trinity*, BCC/CCBI, Inter-Church House, London, 1991, pp. 137-154. (here p. 152). For a similar view concerning a holistic approach to *imago dei*, that is, which includes 'our embodiedness as much as our intellect and "spirituality"', see C.E. Gunton, 'Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of *Imago Dei*', in C. Schwöbel and C.E. Gunton, eds., *Persons, Divine and Human*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1991, pp. 47-61; G. McFarlane, 'Strange News from Another Star: An Anthropological Insight from Edward Irving', in C. Schwöbel and C.E. Gunton, eds., *Persons*, pp. 98-119.

¹¹¹E. Timiadis, 'God's Immutability', p. 47.

¹¹²D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, vol. 1, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1978, pp. 114-116.

with fixed, rigid meanings and thus transforming Him into an idol.¹¹³ Being aware of this risk, Staniloae is concerned to present the truth in its transcendent and historical, mystical and logical aspects. Therefore he suggests that the best way to this end is to realize a synthesis¹¹⁴ between apophatic and cataphatic approaches.¹¹⁵ Thus the cataphatic or rational way of knowing presents God as the creative cause and sustainer of the world whilst the apophatic way gives a direct experience of God's mystical presence, knowledge that cannot be communicated in words. Yet apophatic knowledge cannot and should not remain uncommunicated and therefore needs to adopt the concepts of rational knowledge.¹¹⁶ However, Staniloae asserts that apophatic knowledge remains superior to cataphatic knowledge exactly in its capacity to transcend rational categories and experience the indescribable, mystical presence of God.¹¹⁷

In order to explain both mystical union with God and the *otherness* of God, Staniloae introduces the concept of two apophases: the apophasis of that which can be experienced but cannot be defined and the apophasis of that which cannot be even experienced.¹¹⁸ To make the distinction between the two, he borrows from Palamas the categories of *essence*, *hypostasis*, and *energies*. Thus, man can participate in the energies of God but not in His essence.¹¹⁹ Even when he participates in God's energies man comes to that point where he experiences infinite realities which cannot be described, for God is always beyond what is experienced; consequently, the human mind and words are always incapable of communicating these realities.¹²⁰ The question that arises, then, is the extent to which God can be known at all if He is unknowable. Staniloae responds that both ways of knowing, apophatic and cataphatic, are possible only when mediated through 'Supernatural Revelation'.¹²¹

¹¹³J. Chrysostom, *De Incomprehensibili Dei natura*, I; PG, 48, 704; Pseudo-Dionysius, *Epistola IX*, in CW, pp. 280-288; *The Divine Name*, 645 C-645 D, in CW, p. 64.

¹¹⁴At this point Staniloae distances himself from the view of an exclusive apophatic approach to theology as represented by Lossky and Yannaras. V. Lossky in *The Mystical Theology; In the Image; Essay sur la théologie mystique de l'Eglise orientale*, Aubier, Paris, 1944; H. Yannaras in *De l'absence et de l'inconnaisance de Dieu*, Ed. du Cerf, Paris, 1971.

¹¹⁵D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 113.

¹¹⁶D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 114.

¹¹⁷Staniloae argues that Pseudo-Dionysius was also in favour of using both ways of knowing (cataphatic and apophatic), although the apophatic way is more perfect and held true even in the Incarnation of the Word: 'As for the love of Christ for humanity, the Word of God, I believe, uses this term to hint that the transcendent has put aside its own hiddenness and has revealed itself to us by becoming human being. But he is hidden even after his revelation, or, if I may speak in a more divine fashion, is hidden even amid the revelation' (Pseudo-Dionysius, *Letter III (To the same Gaius)*, in CW, p.2640.

¹¹⁸D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 123.

¹¹⁹D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 122-123.

¹²⁰D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 122-123.

¹²¹D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 116. In his approach Staniloae follows Maximus the Confessor and consequently does not make a radical distinction between natural and supernatural revelation. In fact Staniloae considers that the act of creation is in itself a supernatural act of revelation, and the subsequent events in and through

2.5.2 Revelation: Divine-Human Dialogue: Staniloae develops his theology of revelation in the context of a progressive and dynamic dialogue between God and creation, in general, and between God and human beings, in particular.¹²² Within the context of divine-human dialogue, Staniloae rejects the views of biblical criticism that affirm the need to change the traditional theological language on the grounds that the Scriptures are 'mythological objectification of certain existential references man makes to God whom he conceives as that which transcends man.'¹²³ On the contrary, theological language based upon revelation has both relevance and a cognitive content.¹²⁴ Also, Staniloae rejects the *heilsgeschichtliche Schule's* attempt to identify God's self-disclosure only in His 'acts' at the expense of God's 'words'.¹²⁵ It is true that God reveals Himself through a series of acts, but these acts 'were expressed without alteration by a number of particular words and images. Even were we to use other words and images they would have to express the same essential core of acts which the original words and images set forth without any deception.'¹²⁶

Further, Staniloae also rejects the views that the existence of a God who acts in history impinges upon the freedom of men.¹²⁷ On the contrary, freedom of man and creation can be conceived only if God exists as an absolute, free, and transcendent being.¹²⁸ In order to build up his argument for freedom,

which God continues to reveal Himself are not separated from natural revelation. The difference between natural and supernatural revelation is a difference only in degree not in kind; between them there is a dynamic and dialectic relationship. Natural revelation is the context in which the supernatural takes place and the latter explains and unfolds the real meaning of the former. See D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 9-52.

¹²²D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 113-114.

¹²³D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 109.

¹²⁴Particularly, Staniloae refers here to Bultmann, Tillich, and Robinson. See R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 vols. (Tr. K. Grobel), Scribner, New York, 1955; *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, (Tr. J. Marsh), Harper and Row, New York, 1963; P.J. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963; *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1963; J.A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1976.

¹²⁵For a presentation of this view see G.E. Wright, *God who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital*, vol. 8, *Studies in Biblical Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1952. Biblical theology 'is a theology of recital or proclamation of the acts of God, together with the inferences drawn therefrom. These acts are themselves interpretations of historical events, or projections from known events to past or future, all described within the conceptual frame of one people in a certain historical continuum' (G.E. Wright, *God who Acts*, vol. 8, p. 11). See also O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History*, (Tr. F.V. Filson), SCM Press, London, 1951; L.W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*, SCM Press, London, 1988.

¹²⁶D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 112.

¹²⁷D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 113.

¹²⁸Staniloae distinguishes between God and the gods of mythology who are, ultimately, personifications of the forces of nature and of human passions. Their mode of acting upon the world had a certain routine and was closely bound up with the same phenomena of nature and the same human passions. Moreover, these personified forces of nature had an impersonal character in their actions. See D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 112-113. Further, Staniloae argues that neither men nor the world could experience an

Staniloae introduces the concept of space between God and creation; space which makes otherness and relatedness possible. God's otherness is the ground for human freedom due to the fact that He is not only free in Himself, but also can give to man that strength to liberate himself from the automatism of this world¹²⁹ whilst maintaining the freedom of the world.¹³⁰ By freedom, Staniloae does not understand that creation has the source of existence in itself. Being created *ex nihilo* creation depends on God's energies for its very existence.¹³¹ Moreover, in and through the divine revelation the entire creation is directed toward *theosis*.¹³² In other words, Staniloae's concept of freedom, although realised in history, has an eschatological character; freedom to self-realization, which is union with God. The paradigm of this eschatological self-realization of the entire creation by participating in God's energies is to be found in God's revelatory dialogue with mankind as it is illustrated in the history of Israel and of the Church.¹³³ The guiding principle in this dialogue is the purpose of God to lead his people (and the entire creation) into complete, eschatological self-realization, but only with their free consent in any particular historical circumstance. Accordingly, within this dialogue divine revelation is not simply a disclosure of teachings from God, but rather a 'series of acts accomplished by God or promised by him in relation to the world and human history.'¹³⁴

authentic realisation if they are conceived as closed being. Man and the world are open to each other, and both are open to God. Liberty is no abstract quality, continually unverified and uncreative; 'it grows stronger and proves itself in dialogue with the world and in the affirmation of those creative acts which introduce beneficial changes into the world, society and human relations. Moreover, man cannot grow in freedom if he is not in dialogue with a personal God' (*Theology and the Church*, p. 114).

¹²⁹Staniloae asserts that God is a subject of free spiritual energy and His acts are spiritual. They produce effects upon man only in conjunction with man's own will, and in general we can say that God's influence acts in much the same way that spirit, ideas and beliefs exert an influence upon the body, upon human relations or even upon the material world as a whole' (*Theology and the Church*, p. 113).

¹³⁰'God is a personal source and, as creator of both world and man, he has by this very fact established them as their own realities, confirming nature with its laws and man with his freedom (within, that is, the framework of this world)' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 113). Gunton analyses the concept of human freedom within the framework of creaturehood and 'the given' of other beings. See C.E. Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, The Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 1992, pp. 35-68.

¹³¹'Creation does not have to be understood as an act by which God creates a reality separate from himself, like some object exterior to himself who is the primal object. God creates the world in himself, through the manifestation of his energy and his Spirit. Clearly God must in no way be confused with some part or power of the world.' D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 116.

¹³²D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 114.

¹³³What is true about Israel and the Church is also true for the entire creation, due to the fact that for Staniloae, as well as for Zizioulas, man is the 'Priest of Creation'. Further, the history of Israel and of the Church is not to be interpreted in an exclusive way, but as representative for the entire human race. The two examples have, for Staniloae, universal connotation. See D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 9-23.

¹³⁴D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 112.

2.5.3 Acts and Words: Beginning with creation as God's first act toward the world, all his other acts, and especially the history of Israel,¹³⁵ the incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, have as their main purpose the realization of communion between God and man.¹³⁶ However, not all God's actions can be called revelation: revelation in the true sense of the word implies a link between God's words and acts directed towards history.¹³⁷ However, in this revelatory dialogue, God's acts and words are not necessarily simultaneously disclosed. The words could come after or before the action, but in what Staniloae calls 'revelatory events', words and acts always have to be related in order for the former to make known the meaning of the latter. In addition, the words make known God's expectation of people's response to His acts.¹³⁸

One important aspect of Staniloae's theology of revelation is the space between words and acts in God's self-disclosure. This space allows Staniloae to introduce two concepts: prophetic words and prophetic actions. He explains the role of the prophetic words and actions within the framework of the historical stages of God's revelation; stages that describe the rapprochement between God and creation and the 'spiritualization of creation'.¹³⁹

The first period, which lasted from the Fall to John the Baptist, is 'a period of messianic expectations, a period of shadowy knowledge and anticipation, of riddles and symbols of the God who was sending his aid from afar.'¹⁴⁰ During this period, in addition to the divine acts which were manifested within the context of legal and theocratic, earthly and political premises, intended to guide the people (Israel) to a greater intimacy with God, He also disclosed Himself by means of prophetic words which promised future acts.¹⁴¹ The prophetic words are, for Staniloae, an 'apocalypse', that is, a disclosure of the hidden meaning of history and of divine energy intended to

¹³⁵Analysing the relation between God and Israel, Staniloae particularly emphasizes the space allowed by God for a free response of the people, and the universal implication of God's acts in the life of the Jewish nation, in contrast with the view of a tribal god. See D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 116-119.

¹³⁶D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 118-122.

¹³⁷'We have revelation in the true sense when the Word of God discloses actions which are directed towards history. Revelation presupposes this action and action is a component act of revelation, for God is not just a teacher of men allowing them to work exclusively with their own powers. But the action of God is only one component of revelation. A second component is the word whereby man's attention is brought to the action...The Word urges men to give themselves to the energy communicated and promised by God in order to fulfil certain more important historical acts, and to make use of this energy with all their power in order to fulfil these acts or to respond with gratitude and trust to the help given by God, and so raise themselves up to a life in which the will of God is ever more perfectly accomplished' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 119).

¹³⁸D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 118-119.

¹³⁹D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 122.

¹⁴⁰D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 123.

¹⁴¹D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 120.

move history towards new moments of decision.¹⁴² Further, the prophetic words have the role of freeing the people from historical bondage¹⁴³ by pointing towards the higher levels of communication between God and man, and finally pointing towards the *telos* of history. These words, by promising description of the conditions which God would bring about in the future, create a certain anticipation, a certain foretaste of these future conditions.¹⁴⁴ In this sense, the prophetic words become prophetic acts because they raise the people's spiritual level of expectation, and thus make them ready for a new step in the divine-human dialogue.¹⁴⁵

The second period covers the time from the incarnation until the end of time. This is the period when 'complete union of God with man and complete spiritualization of humanity are achieved in one person, Jesus Christ.'¹⁴⁶ Thus in Christ/acts and words, history¹⁴⁷ and eschatology¹⁴⁸ are brought together and thus open the way for human beings to continue their ascent in dialogue with God. What happened to Christ, as the *arche* of creation, will happen with the entire creation,¹⁴⁹ although this second period in God's self-

¹⁴²Staniloae believes that, in the absence of prophetic disclosure, the divine acts might remain unobserved. See *Theology and the Church*, p. 120.

¹⁴³Staniloae illustrates this point by referring to the transformation of the prophetic meaning of the Law into a fixed historical norm. Consequently it brought about stagnation in the spiritual and moral progress of the nation in its dialogue with God. Or in other words, the nation lost its eschatological dimension in favour of a 'suffocating' historicism. See *Theology and the Church*, p. 120.

¹⁴⁴If sometimes this is not true for the entire nation, it is certainly true for 'the obedient remnant of Israel'. See *Theology and the Church*, p. 120.

¹⁴⁵The preparatory role of the prophetic words are necessary in order to respect man's freedom of decision. The moments of revelation are adapted to the moments through which the human spirit passes in its ascent, 'inasmuch as, besides its divine origin, prophecy also corresponds to a certain level of man's ability to see' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 121). In this context Staniloae considers that neither Moses nor his generation had the knowledge or state of soul attained by the pious Jews at the end of the Old Testament era as a preparation to receive Christ (See *Theology and the Church*, p. 121).

¹⁴⁶D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 123. Staniloae considers that the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Christ, the sending of the Holy Spirit together with the founding of the Church to be 'acts of divine revelation and are accompanied by words that draw attention to them and elucidate their meaning.' After the founding of the Church, the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church throughout the centuries is no longer revelation *stricto sensu*, because it is no longer accompanied by new divine words interpreting the Spirit's adaptation to every new human circumstance or problem. In this respect, Staniloae affirms that 'in Christ revelation is closed' (*Theology and the Church*, p. 121).

¹⁴⁷From a historical perspective, 'the incarnation of the Son of God as man, his other saving acts and the descent of the Holy Spirit contain in themselves on a broad scale all that will be realized until the end of time in the way of spiritual progress and union of the human with God' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 121).

¹⁴⁸From an eschatological point of view, 'in Christ it is revealed all that we will become, not just until the end of time but to all eternity, for he is that eternal goal towards which our yearning must be directed' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 121).

¹⁴⁹From the fact that Christ is not only the future goal towards which we gaze in our progress towards perfection, but also the one who perfects us (Heb.12:2), and from the

disclosure is only a time of eschatological expectations. However, such eschatological expectations are not lived in a historical and experiential vacuum. Staniloae argues that the teaching of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit function as prophetic words and acts. In that sense the 'not yet' is 'already' present in history.

For Christ always explained in words not only the meaning of his final and eternal state which he has achieved by his acts, but also the necessity we are under to strive towards making this state our own, the way in which we can make it our own, and how he will help us through the Holy Spirit to do so. The teaching of Jesus is prophecy for all time until the end of the world, just as his incarnation, sacrifice, resurrection and ascension have created in the Christ-Man, and the descent of the Holy Spirit in the first Christians, that state which is to become proper to all those who believe.¹⁵⁰

The third stage is the life which follows after the end of time for all eternity. The revelation of the end of time will represent, in a certain sense, both continuity and discontinuity with the present revelation: discontinuity because there will be an 'explosive extension of the state of Christ...in all men...not just the simple completion of some teaching. It will lead to a deeper and increased knowledge only because by a new act it will bring about a new state';¹⁵¹ and continuity, since it will be the same as the revelation in Christ: 'it will in fact be, in the persons of the faithful, the experience of what has already been realised in Christ, and what the faithful themselves have received as first fruits here in their life on earth.'¹⁵² Thus, for Staniloae revelation is neither a simple communication of teaching in a linear historical succession, nor 'naked' eschatological acts, but God's self-disclosure through acts and words. In this dialectic there is freedom for words to exist and to have cognitive content due to the fact that they are neither separated nor swallowed up by acts. Similarly, there is freedom for the divine acts to exist without being fixed in rigid concepts, and yet due to the fact that they are related to words, the former's meaning and purpose are understandable and communicable. Moreover, in the dialectic between God's acts and words, Staniloae perceives the possibility of speaking about both God's knowability and unknowability in an apophatic-cataphatic synthesis.

2.5.4 Language and Hermeneutic: Rational knowledge and language are subjected to historical limitation, and therefore the question of their adequacy for knowing and communicating transcendental realities cannot be avoided. Staniloae acknowledges that the biblical authors 'made use of the

fact that we have him both as "forerunner" in "the inner shrine behind the curtain" (Heb.6:19-20), and as the one who works our salvation within us (Phil.2:12-13; Gal.2:20), although not without cooperation, two conclusions result: a) we know what it is that we are moving towards at every moment; and b) our hope is active and at work in us through our own efforts aided by Christ who is present within us, and we do not need to await the final fulfilment passively, as though it were a purely eschatological fulfilment requiring no preparation on our part, something which Christ will bring with him when he comes' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 169).

¹⁵⁰D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 122.

¹⁵¹D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 123-124.

¹⁵²D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 123.

language, ideas and literary forms of their own age in order to express the divine revelation.¹⁵³ However, the use of language to communicate divine truth demonstrates that although God is totally *other* there is a possibility of meaningful dialogue between God and man. Moreover, Staniloae argues that the 'apostolic typology'¹⁵⁴ demonstrates that man's ascent to God does not imply an increasing inadequacy of expression, after Lossky's model, but a corresponding raising of human means of expression. Thus, history is not being destroyed, suffocated, or eliminated by the divine element, but transfigured according to God's plan of deification of the entire creation.

...These words, ideas and literary forms [used by the Apostles] have been transfigured in the very way in which they were combined in order to express a content which transcends their normal content.¹⁵⁵

Consequently, the hermeneutical task is not to 'demythologize' the language in which the revelation has been expressed and preserved, but to find adequate, contemporary means of expressing the same content in a relevant way for the present times. Thus Staniloae asserts:

...We can say that revelation received essential and authentic expression through words and images that always convey a spiritual core which they allow to be glimpsed and which must be preserved even if other words and images are used apart from the ones first used to express the revelation.¹⁵⁶

2.6 Observations

2.6.1 Methodological: Lossky's emphasis upon the otherness of God occurs at the expense of the historical dimension of the 'ultimate truth'. Influenced by Neo-Platonic categories,¹⁵⁷ Lossky has significant difficulties in acknowledging that truth can be known and experienced in its fullness within the flow of history with all its changes and limitations. Consequently, the rational way of knowing (*episteme*) which operates at a historical level is totally separated from mystical knowledge (*gnosis*).¹⁵⁸ Alternatively,

¹⁵³D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 110-112.

¹⁵⁴'...there exists an apostolic typology which has proven that it occupies a privileged position over against all later typologies, and has in fact partly determined the shape of these later typologies because the Apostles were under the immediate influence of Christ, that is, of the God incarnate. Their human capacity for understanding the divine was raised to a supreme degree and so, consequently was their capacity to express the divine element which they have understood. Hence the means by which they expressed the divine revelation have to be preserved' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 111).

¹⁵⁵D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 111.

¹⁵⁶D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 111.

¹⁵⁷Lossky acknowledges that the apophatic way borrowed Platonic and Neo-Platonic categories, but rejects the allegation that apophatic theology resulted in being Hellenized. See V. Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, pp. 28-43; *Orthodox Theology*, pp. 27-35; *In the Image*, pp. 13-29.

¹⁵⁸Lossky follows Pseudo-Dionysius in affirming the irreconcilable character of the apophatic and cataphatic ways of knowing. In this respect, Lossky also, rejects Aquinas'

Staniloae's synthesis between apophasis and cataphasis creates space for both history and eschatology to exist in a dialectic relation. The rational and mystical ways of knowing do not exclude but presuppose each other in order to avoid both impersonal apophaticism and cataphatic 'logolatria'.

2.6.2 Theological: Both theologians affirm that revelation is the only source of theological knowledge. However, for Lossky revelation implies an eschatological encounter which denies the revelatory role of words, suggesting thus an almost 'naked event'. Hence the radical distinction (and separation) between *oikonomia* and *theologia*.¹⁵⁹ Staniloae's approach to revelation as God's self-disclosure in words and acts offer a synthesis between *oikonomia* and *theologia*. Consequently, the Tri-une God as 'ultimate truth' manifests Himself simultaneously both in the 'beyond', and in the 'here and now'. Despite the fact that both theologians operate with Palamas' categories of 'essence' and 'energies', Lossky's theology of mystical union diminishes the space between man and energies to the point where the encounter between God and man has an impersonal ring, whilst Staniloae gives far more space to the personal dialogue between God and man.

Both Lossky and Staniloae believe in the deification of the entire creation by participation in God's uncreated energies. However, for Lossky this process presupposes a constant denial of the created order due to the fact that it represents a barrier in the way of ascension, whilst for Staniloae the whole creation is being raised to a higher level of transfiguration, and therefore is capable of receiving and expressing the divine revelation.

Lossky's belief that the intellectual faculties and conceptual reason cannot participate in the process of knowing God, not only gives a death blow to language as an epistemic tool and as a valid means of communicating the divine revelation, but actually upholds a reductionist view of anthropology and soteriology. On the other hand, Staniloae considers that language is constitutive of both the revelatory event and of human beings, and consequently participates in the process of deification. Further, as we will see in the next chapter, both theologians' views on the role of language in revelation have significant implications for their understanding of the relation between revelation, Scripture and Tradition.

2.6.3 Sociological: Both theologians believe that the Church is the body of Christ which exists in and as communion. However, Lossky's view of revelation as mystical union does not constitute a solid foundation for communion. The Church's dogma¹⁶⁰ and sacraments are only the starting

attempt to reconcile the two ways by distinguishing between *modus significandi* (the always inaccurate means of expression) and *res significata* (the perfection we wish to express, which is in God after another fashion than it is in creatures). T. Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae*, VII, 5. Cf. V. Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, p. 26;

¹⁵⁹By locating the divine Persons in the inaccessible, imparticipable divine essence, the Palamite model adopted by Lossky allows only for an impersonal mediation of God through the energies. See C.M. LaCugna, *God for Us*, p. 198.

¹⁶⁰Lossky affirms that the Eastern tradition has never made a clear distinction between mysticism and theology, between personal experience of divine mysteries and the Church's dogma. See *The Mystical Theology*, p. 8.

points of the mystical journey.¹⁶¹ The higher the ascent of the mystic, the more isolated he becomes, until eventually, in total separation from other human beings, he reaches that point of 'total ignorance' when he knows only that he knows nothing.¹⁶² Upon their return, the mystics carefully guard their secrets from others: the only people who may eventually hear such secrets are a small number of fellow mystics.¹⁶³

For Staniloae, however, the Church as the 'body of Christ' is a pneumatological communion where every member shares (gives and receives) with the others the 'gifts of the Spirit', and the unity in community grows as the members of the Church reach higher levels in their spiritual ascent.¹⁶⁴ The implications of the two approaches on the relation between theological epistemology and practice become clearer as we turn to revelation and community.

¹⁶¹'...we must live the dogma expressing a revealed truth, which appears to us as unfathomable mystery, in such a fashion that instead of assimilating the mystery to our mode of understanding, we should on the contrary, look for a profound change, an inner transformation of spirit, enabling us to experience it mystically' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 8).

¹⁶²One implication of this approach is that it leaves the relation between personal mystical experience and the common faith of the Church in unclear terms. Thus, on the one hand, Lossky affirms that whilst 'mystical experience is a personal working out of the content of the common faith, theology is an expression, for the profit of all, of that which can be experienced by everyone' and, on the other, 'The individual experiences of the great mystics of the Orthodox Church more often than not remain unknown to us...The way of mystical union is nearly always a secret between God and the soul concerned...As to the inward and personal aspect of the mystical experience, it remains hidden from the eyes of all' (*The Mystical Theology*, pp. 8-9; 20-21).

¹⁶³Lossky's apophatism faces the difficulty of reconciling the mystical experience with both the Church's dogma and the community. First, how can one know if what is experienced is true or false when one's rational capacities are totally 'disconnected'? And second, how can one share with the believing community one's experience if the very faculties necessary to communicate intelligently and verbally were absent during the 'experience'? In the context of such disconnection between 'reason' and 'mystical union' one cannot affirm or deny one's faithfulness to the dogma of the Church. Lossky acknowledges that a split occurs 'between personal experience and the common faith, between spirituality and dogma' (*Mystical Theology*, p. 27) in so far as 'souls unable to find adequate nourishment in the theological *summa* should turn to search greedily in the accounts of individual mystical experience in order to reinvigorate themselves in the atmosphere of spirituality' (*Mystical Theology*, p. 21). However, Lossky admits that occasionally the 'secret' is confided to a confessor or few disciples, but what 'is published abroad is the fruit of this union: wisdom, understanding of the divine mysteries, expressing itself in theological or moral teaching or in advice for the edification of one's brethren' (*Mystical Theology*, pp. 20-21). Further Lossky asserts that 'Outside the truth kept by the whole Church personal experience would be deprived of all certainty, of all objectivity', or even worse, 'it would be a mingling of truth and falsehood, of reality and illusion.' (*Mystical Theology*, p. 9)

¹⁶⁴For it is the same Spirit nevertheless who binds together all those endowed with the different gifts. One who receives a particular gift has need of another's gift in order to turn his own gift to good account and to complete what his own gift lacks. Similarly, the same man contributes with his own gift to the full use of another's gift, thereby helping his own brother towards his own particular fulfilment' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 53).

Chapter 3

Revelation, Communion, Scripture and Tradition

3.1 Revelation and Communion

The purpose of revelation is deification. However, deification is not to be understood only in terms of God's imposed plan on creation, but both as the will of God and the genuine desire of creation.¹⁶⁵ To God's movement towards creation there corresponds creation's movement towards God.¹⁶⁶ These two movements constitute the grounds for dialogue between God and creation, dialogue in which the progress towards the eschatological self-realization of creation may take place without sacrificing the freedom of either party.¹⁶⁷ However, in this movement towards its eschatological fulfillment, creation does not remain fragmented and torn apart but undergoes, rather, an ever increasing process of healing and unity brought about by its 'progressive spiritualization'.¹⁶⁸ Consequently, Orthodox theologians believe that the unity of the Church is an *eikon* of the unity of the entire creation as it moves towards its *telos*.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵This belief is not to be understood in an Aristotelian frame of thought concerning the natural *en-tel-echeia* of beings (See Aristotle, *De anima*, 402a-b, 434b), but in the context of a Christian ontological dualism of Creator-creation. See J. Brech, 'Divine Initiative: Salvation in Orthodox Theology', in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias, eds., *Salvation in Christ*, Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, 1992, p. 108.

¹⁶⁶This view was expanded by Maximus the Confessor in response to the Origenist crisis brought about by the Greek influences upon the latter's understanding of ontology and creation. Thus Maximus replaced Origen's triad *genesis, stasis and kinesis*, with *genesis, kinesis and stasis*. See Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 1, 23; *PG*, 91, 1036; 91, 1260; *Centuries of Charity*, IV,6; *PG*, 90, 1048-1068; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 95; J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Thought*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood NY., 1975, pp. 131-132; *Byzantine Theology*, pp. 129-136.

¹⁶⁷This idea is more clearly developed in Orthodox anthropology, where the *Imago Dei* in man is closely linked to the idea of freedom and relatedness. See Maximus the Confessor, *Dialogue with Pyrrhus*; *PG*, 324 d; J. Meyendorff, *Christ*, p. 148.

¹⁶⁸D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 13-23.

¹⁶⁹Staniloae asserts: 'Christ did not bring us salvation so that we might continue to live in isolation, but that we might strive towards a greater and ever more profound unity which has its culmination the eternal Kingdom of God...We see this reflected in the fact that we cannot gain salvation if we remain in isolation, carrying only for ourselves. There is no doubt that each man must personally accept salvation and make it his own, but he cannot do so nor can he persevere and progress in the way of salvation unless he is helped by others and helps them himself in return, that is, unless the manner of our salvation is communal' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 204). Further, he argues that even when God chose a person as the agent of a particular revelatory event (acts and words), subsequently that person was sent to a community because God's desire is to save not 'isolated individuals' but human beings in communion. D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 34-35.

Florovsky argues that revelation is constitutive for the community of both the people of Israel¹⁷⁰ and the Church.¹⁷¹ Moreover, since the 'old Israel' was a type of the 'new Israel', that is the Church,¹⁷² the latter incorporates the revelation which was given to the former as well.¹⁷³ Consequently, within Orthodox tradition, the question of the authority of Scripture is related to the issue of the relation between revelation, Scripture and the ecclesial community. However, whilst both apophatic and cataphatic-apophatic trends acknowledge that all theological knowledge is based upon revelation, nevertheless there are significant disagreements between them concerning the mediation of the divine revelation, as we shall see below.

3.2 Lossky: Scripture, Tradition and the Church

3.2.1 Christology and Pneumatology: The problem Lossky faces when addressing the issue of the relation between revelation and the Church goes back to his distinction between *oikonomia* and *theologia*. Thus, if the true way of knowing is that which goes beyond intellectual faculties, the root question concerns whether there is any room left for the communication of revelation within the ecclesial community in a way that may overcome 'individualistic experimentalism'. In response, Lossky develops his view of the relation between revelation, Scripture and Tradition by analogy with the 'double reciprocity' between Christ and the Spirit, who both constitute the

¹⁷⁰In Old Testament times revelation constituted the community of the people of Israel as 'a sacred oasis in the midst of human disorder'. Although Israel as a nation was set aside as 'the chosen people of God', all 'privileges granted to Israel of old were subordinated to the ultimate purpose, that of universal salvation.' In this sense Florovsky considers that 'Israel was a divinely constituted community of believers, united by the Law of God, the true faith, sacred rites and hierarchy—we find here all elements of the traditional definition of the Church' (G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 22-33).

¹⁷¹The Church is... an oasis...set apart, though not taken out of the world. For again this oasis is not a refuge or a shelter only, but rather a citadel, a vanguard of God.' This new community, the Church, transcends every natural or historical barrier such as sex, race, social class, language or culture and thus reflects more fully the universal aspect of redemption. Florovsky argues that the reason for this distinction (although there is continuity) between the Old Israel and the New Israel (the Church) is the fact that the latter was constituted by the revelation in Christ who is both the *arche* and *telos* of creation. As such, there is no further possible progress beyond *theosis* of creation realized in Christ. See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 184; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 22-24.

¹⁷²Florovsky considers that the 'old Israel was the "type" of the new, i.e. of the Church Universal, not of any particular or occasional nation...There is after Christ, but one 'nation', the Christian nation, *genus Christianum*' (G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 35).

¹⁷³Florovsky argues: 'It was the People of the Covenant to whom the Word of God had been entrusted under the old dispensation (Rom. 3:2), and it is the Church of the Word Incarnate that keeps the message of the Kingdom' (G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 18).

Church and represent the fullness of revelation within it.¹⁷⁴ This 'double reciprocity in the economy of the two divine Persons sent by the Father' is given by the fact that, on the one hand, the incarnation of the Word is pneumatologically realised, whilst on the other, 'it is by the Word, following His incarnation and work of redemption, that the Holy Spirit descends on the members of the Church at Pentecost.'¹⁷⁵ However, concerning the relation of the two divine Persons to the Church, Lossky affirms that,

...it is the Holy Spirit who plays the principal role: It is He who is the aim, for He is communicated to the members of the Body of Christ in order to deify them by grace.¹⁷⁶

This prominence of the Spirit in the life of the Church as the agent of deification reduces the role of the Son to that of being 'the "canon" of sanctification, a formal condition of the reception of the Holy Spirit.'¹⁷⁷ Transferred into the sphere of the relation between revelation and the Church the twofold 'economy' of the Son and the Spirit takes the form of the relation between Scripture and Tradition.¹⁷⁸

From a theological perspective, Lossky considers that in the life of the Church some have lost the dimension of the 'economy' of the Spirit by reducing the whole issue of revelation to the 'economy' of the Son understood only from a historical perspective. In this way the eschatological office of the Spirit is swallowed up by the historical work of the Son, and consequently the distinction between Scripture and Tradition is worked out only in historical terms. Amongst such approaches, Lossky mentions the 'two sources' approach,¹⁷⁹ the 'two modes of transmission' approach¹⁸⁰ and the 'dogma and kerygma' approach.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁴V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 153.

¹⁷⁵In both cases, Lossky perceives the relation between Christ and the Spirit as being functional. In the first instance the Spirit is 'the power of incarnation, the virtual condition of the reception of the Word', whilst in the second, it is the Son who comes first, for He sends the Spirit who comes from the Father. V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 153.

¹⁷⁶V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 153.

¹⁷⁷V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 153.

¹⁷⁸The relation between Christ and the Spirit shapes Lossky's view on the 'indissoluble and distinct character of Scripture and of Tradition'. V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 153.

¹⁷⁹For Lossky the main problem raised by this approach is that Tradition is endowed with qualities which belong to Scripture, namely conceptual communication (other writings) of revelation on the horizontal or historical plan, to the expense of revelation 'beyond words'. Moreover, the different components of Tradition such as the acts of the councils (ecumenical and local), the writings of the Fathers, canonical prescriptions, the liturgy, iconography and devotional practices were considered to have unequal revelatory value. See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 142-143. For an account of the relation between Scripture and Tradition in the Early Church see E.F.-Van Leer, *Tradition and Scripture in the Early Church*, Van Gorcum & Comp, Assen, 1954; L Bouyer, 'The Fathers of the Church on Tradition and Scripture', in *ECQ*, 7 (1947), (special issue on Scripture and Tradition); J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, , Adam & Charles Black, 5th ed., London, 1977, pp. 29-78.

¹⁸⁰This approach attempts to overcome the problem of the 'two sources' of revelation by replacing it with the 'two modes' of transmission: oral preaching of the apostles and of their successors, and writings such as Scriptures and all other written expressions of the

3.2.2 'Two Levels' Model: Lossky attempts to overcome the shortcomings of these approaches by proposing the model of 'two levels', which introduces the vertical dimension in the relation between Scripture and Tradition. However, before Lossky presents his synthesis of the horizontal and vertical planes, he attempts to identify the content of each plane taken separately and to point out some implications for ecclesiology, particularly in the area of the authority of Scripture and Tradition.

3.2.2.1 Scripture: The Horizontal Level. The horizontal level of mediation,

...always implies a verbal expression, whether it is a question of words properly so-called, pronounced or written, or whether of the dumb language which is addressed to the understanding by visual manifestation

revealed truth of a lesser degree of authority than the Scriptures. This approach affirms the primacy of Tradition over Scripture, since the oral transmission of the apostolic teachings preceded the writing of the New Testament books. Further, the adherents of this view affirmed that 'the Church could dispense with the Scriptures, but she could not exist without Tradition' (V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 144; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.*, III,4,1 in *ANCL*, vol. V, pp. 362). Although Lossky is inclined to accept the view that revelation could have remained oral and passed from mouth to mouth without ever having been fixed by writing, nevertheless he criticises this view on the grounds that the distinction between Scripture and Tradition is still on the surface 'opposing books written with ink to discourses uttered with the living voice'. In both cases it is a question of the word that is preached, and the whole issue of revelation is still dealt with at the historical level at the expense of the 'beyond' history. See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 144; C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions within Christendom', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1978, pp. 220-230.

¹⁸¹This view was initially developed by St. Basil, who made a distinction between dogma and kerygma. Kerygma represents the open teaching of the Church together with its doctrinal definitions, the official prescription of an observance, a canonical act, or public prayers of the Church, whilst dogma contains the unpublished and secret teachings 'that our fathers kept in silence, free from disquiet and curiosity, well knowing that in being silent one safeguards the sacred character of the mysteries' (V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 145). Although in this sense dogma calls to mind the *doctrina arcana* of the Gnostics (Ptolemy, *Letter to Flora*, 7,9), Basil's secrets do not refer to esoteric teaching set aside for the 'few perfect', but to secrets of the sacramental life of the Church. Moreover, dogma can be declared publicly and thus become 'preaching' when necessity obliges the Church to make its pronouncements in, for example, refuting a heresy. Thus, the distinction between dogma and kerygma has to do primarily with the 'economy' of the Church and not with mysteries that cannot be communicated in words. See St. Basil, *De spiritu sancto*, 10, 27; *PG*, 32, 113B, 188A-193A, 188C-189A, 189C-193A; *Ep.* 51; *PG*, 32, 392C; *Ep.* 125; *PG*, 32, 548B; *Ep.* 155; *PG*, 32, 612C; *Ep.* 251; *PG*, 32, 933B; *Homilia de ieiunio*, *PG*, 185C. However, since these mysteries refer to the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church and are necessary for understanding the truth of Scripture, Lossky considers that Basil points to 'a new knowledge, a 'gnosis of God' that one receives as grace' through the fact of sacramental initiation. If that is so, then the horizontal line of the 'traditions' received from the mouth of the Lord and transmitted by the apostles and their successors crosses with the vertical, with *Tradition* as the communication of the Holy Spirit which opens to the members of the Church the apophatic way of the infinite perspective of truth. Only when Scripture and Tradition are distinguished at this level, when knowledge of truth goes beyond sensible and intelligible realities, does the Church possess the *pleroma* of revelation. See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 145-148.

(iconography, ritual, gesture, etc.). Taken in this general sense, the word is not uniquely an external sign used to designate a concept, but above all a content which is defined intelligibly and declared in assuming a body, in being incorporated in articulate discourse or in any other form of external expression.¹⁸²

In this all-inclusive sense, nothing of what is revealed and makes itself known can remain foreign to the 'word' (*logos*, or, *logia*), and therefore it can be equally applied to the Scriptures, public teachings, traditions guarded in silence, and to all that constitutes expressions of the revealed truth.¹⁸³ However, at this historical level, the Scriptures as records of the history of the divine economy, written over a period of centuries by different authors from different backgrounds, have only an accidental and mechanical unity.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, when confronted with discordance between old manuscripts and alterations of the sacred texts, the adherents of the horizontal level, or the 'traditionalists' as Lossky calls them, attribute 'mystical meaning to stupid mistakes of copyists'.¹⁸⁵ The same attitude prevails when the 'traditionalists' defend the 'tradition received from the Fathers' only by 'force of habit'.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, Lossky argues that a natural outcome of this approach is to consider the Scriptures not a collection of words about God but 'the Word of God'.¹⁸⁷ Such an approach runs the risk of 'historical inertia', where the Church has only the task of conserving a dead text and being a witness to an epoch which has ended.¹⁸⁸

3.2.2.2 Tradition: The Vertical Level. The vertical level implies 'freedom from every condition of nature' and from 'every contingency of history' as the first step towards 'Christian gnosis'.¹⁸⁹ This freedom from historical limitations points toward the 'economy' of the Spirit. Thus Lossky makes a distinction between what is transmitted (the content of revelation) and the mode of transmission (the principle of Christian knowledge). Tradition, then, is not the content of revelation but rather the *unique mode* of receiving it.

182V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 148.

183³In patristic writings this approach can be found in John Cassian comments on the subject of the symbol of Antioch: 'It is the abridged word (*breviatum verbum*) that the Lord has given...contracting into a few words the faith of His two Testaments, in order for it to contain in a brief way the meaning of all the Scriptures' (*De incarnatione*, VI,3; *PL*, 50, 149A). See also Augustine *De symbolo*, 1; *PL*, 40, 628; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis*, V, 12; *PG*, 33, 521AB.

184V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 155.

185V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 156. Ware affirms that the Orthodox Church uses the Septuagint translation of the Old testament. 'When this differs from the Original Hebrew (which happens quite often), the Orthodox believe that the changes were made under the inspiration of the Holy spirit, and are to be accepted as part of God's continuing revelation' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 208).

186V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 156.

187⁷Lossky affirms that this approach was significantly influenced by Origen. V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 149.

188V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 156.

189V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 152.

We say specifically *unique mode* and not *uniform mode*, for to Tradition in its pure notion there belongs nothing formal. It does not impose on human consciousness formal guarantees of the truth of faith, but gives access to the discovery of their inner evidence. It is not the content of Revelation, but the light that reveals it; it is not the word but the living breath which makes the words heard at the same time as the silence from which it came.¹⁹⁰

This breath is, according to Lossky, 'not the Truth, but the communication of the Spirit of Truth, outside which the Truth cannot be received.'¹⁹¹

Accordingly, Tradition can be defined as the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church, 'communicating to each member of the Body of Christ the faculty of hearing, of receiving, of knowing the Truth in the Light which belongs to it, and not according to the natural light of human reason.'¹⁹² Only in the light of this faculty (Tradition), due the Holy Spirit does the Church become capable of knowing the non-economic Trinity (*theologia stricto sensu*) as well as the mysteries of the divine economy 'from the creation of heaven and earth of Genesis to the new heaven and new earth of the Apocalypse.'¹⁹³

3.2.2.3 Tradition and Scripture: A Synthesis. Only when possessing the Spirit as the principle of infallible knowledge is the Church qualified to identify the content of revelation. Accordingly, in line with his view of the functional role of the Spirit in incarnation,¹⁹⁴ Lossky considers that the Spirit has the same role in the Church, namely to express (incarnate) the Truth (the Word) in intelligible historical forms such as Scripture, icons, dogmatic definitions, exegesis and liturgy.¹⁹⁵ Yet these forms should not be understood as an inert 'deposit' of truth¹⁹⁶ but as the fullness of revelation in the Spirit which can be fully manifested in a variety of forms whilst always maintaining its dynamic and transcendental character. The truth of Scripture, as well as the truth expressed in any other form is warranted not by its historical authenticity but by its vertical (transcendental) dimension. Consequently, all problems related to the biblical canon, the internal unity of Scripture as well as any other aspect raised by biblical criticism which operates at the historical level, are not relevant at the vertical level where

¹⁹⁰V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 151. See also Ignatius, *Magnesians*, 8:2 in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 179.

¹⁹¹V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 151-152.

¹⁹²The Spirit of Truth actualizes the supreme faculty of the Church, namely 'the consciousness of revealed Truth, the possibility of judging and discerning between true and false in the Light of the Holy Spirit.' V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 152-154.

¹⁹³V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 155.

¹⁹⁴The Spirit, here, is the principle of incarnation.

¹⁹⁵V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 150.

¹⁹⁶'For me, my archives are Jesus Christ; my inviolable archives are His Cross and His Death and His Resurrection, and the Faith which comes from Him... He is the Door of the Father, by which enter in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the prophets, and the apostles, and the Church' (Ignatius, *Philadelphians*, 8:2, 9:1). Following Ignatius, who refused to consider the Scriptures merely as historical documents or 'archives' to justify the Gospel by the texts of the Old Testament, Lossky affirms that 'by the fact of the incarnation of the Word the Scriptures are not archives of the Truth but its living body, the Scriptures can be possessed only within the Church, which is the unique body of Christ' (*In the Likeness*, p. 149).

only the Church through the Spirit knows the truth that transcends history.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, in addition to Scripture, the oral traditions, the writings of the Fathers, dogma, the symbols of faith, the liturgy, icons and rituals, the Church has the faculty to identify the Truth even in corrupted apostolic traditions and apocrypha.¹⁹⁸

In conclusion, the 'two levels' model attempts to avoid the traditionalism of the pure horizontal approach to revelation by opening a vertical dimension in order to establish a dynamic link between revelation and deification. However, in the twofold 'economy' of the Son and the Spirit, Lossky's pneumatology overshadows the office of Christ to the point of describing Him as 'a formal condition of the reception of the Spirit', whilst the Spirit is 'the aim, for He is communicated to the members of the Body of Christ in order to deify them by grace.'¹⁹⁹ The key agents in the process of deification are the Spirit as the giver of deifying grace and the Church which imparts this grace to its members through the sacraments.²⁰⁰ In this sense Lossky shares the view that the incarnated Christ is replaced by the sacraments according to the teaching of Leo the Great: 'That which was visible in our Redeemer now has passed into the Sacraments.'²⁰¹ In addition, the circle of the Church's dogma represents the 'narrow door which leads to knowledge of Truth in the Tradition.'²⁰² However, Lossky attempts to avoid the criticism of 'sacramental determinism' by pointing out that once one is within the Church, having thus received the sacramental grace and proceeded through the dogmatic gate, then one has unlimited space of personal freedom to increase in sanctification according to one's level of spiritual maturity.²⁰³

¹⁹⁷The Orthodox Church believes that some later interpolations in the texts, such as the *comma* of the 'three that bear record in heaven' in 1 John, for example, represent an authentic expression of the revealed Truth. Similarly, the Orthodox Church prefers the Septuagint version of the Old Testament to the Hebrew texts. When the Septuagint text differs from the Hebrew texts, the Orthodox believe that the changes in the Septuagint were made under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and are to be accepted as true (for example, Isaiah 7:14 in the Hebrew text speaks about a *young woman*, while the Greek text speaks about a *virgin*). Similarly, the canon of the Bible is considered to reflect the infallible consciousness of the Church which always knows the Truth in the Spirit. See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 155-156; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, (1963), rep. 1985, p. 208.

¹⁹⁸Further, amplifications having an apocryphal source serve to colour the liturgical texts and the iconography of some feasts. Thus one uses the apocryphal source, with judgement and moderation, to the extent to which they may represent corrupted apostolic traditions. Recreated by Tradition, these elements, purified and made legitimate, return to the Church as its own property' (V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 158).

¹⁹⁹V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 153.

²⁰⁰V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 174-216; *In the Image*, pp. 104-110.

²⁰¹Leo the Great, *Sermon* 74,2; *PL*, 54, 398. See also V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 104.

²⁰²V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 162.

²⁰³Lossky borrows from Eastern ascetic tradition the belief in the role of prayer, fasting, vigils, good works, etc., as means of spiritual growth. See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 196-216.

3.3 Staniloae: Scripture, Tradition and the Church

3.3.1 *Perichoretic* Trinity: Staniloae explains the mode in which the dialogue between God and man take place by analogy to the *perichoretic* Trinity.²⁰⁴ No divine Person, then, is ever either in the Church as a whole or in the individual believer without the other divine Persons or without the particular characteristics of the other.²⁰⁵ Similarly, Staniloae introduces the model of *perichoretic* relationships between Scripture, Tradition and the Church as the means whereby Christ brings our humanity to deification.

3.3.2 Scripture: Although in Christ revelation is closed, nevertheless God's dialogue with men continues through Scripture and Tradition within the Church.²⁰⁶ The Holy Scriptures are, for Staniloae, one form in which revelation in all its efficacy is preserved. Scripture presents Christ in the form of His dynamic word,²⁰⁷ that is, 'Scripture is the Son and the Word of God who translated Himself in words' as He approaches human beings in order to raise them to His deified position.²⁰⁸

The Christ of the Church is eternally alive and present in His Church and therefore He is able to express Himself in words. Moreover, Staniloae argues

²⁰⁴The three divine Persons indwell each other, or in other words, there is a reciprocal interiority between them. Thus with respect to the Holy Trinity, *perichoresis* must mean *a fortiori* a passage of the Spirit through the Son and of the Son through the Spirit. The Father is also included in *perichoresis* inasmuch as the Spirit passes through the Son as one who is proceeding from the Father and returning to him. Similarly the Son passes through the Spirit as one begotten by the Father and returning to him' (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 39).

²⁰⁵This aspect of the relationship between the three divine Persons is constantly emphasised in the Patristic writings. Origen, for example, asserts that 'The Church is filled with the Trinity' (*Selecta in Psalmos* 23,1; PG, 12, 1265B), and Maximus argues that the Church is an *eikon* of the unity of the Trinity (*Ambigua*; PG, 91, 1193C-1196B). In continuity with this tradition, Staniloae emphasizes the work and the Person of Christ, not in contrast with the work of the Spirit but in an inextricable unity and cooperation. Christ works in and through the Spirit and the Spirit shines forth and imparts life in and through Christ. D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 40-41. Moreover, the divine revelation which constitutes the Church is realized by Christ in the Spirit, or by the Spirit of Christ; in other words, both Christ and the Spirit are the agents of revelation, and therefore both constitute the Church. Here Staniloae rejects the attempts to present the offices of Christ and of the Spirit as describing the relation between the Spirit and the Institution, or by affirming either that Christ unifies whilst the Spirit diversifies, or that Christ institutes and the Spirit constitutes the Church. See D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 39; *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 40-49. Further, Staniloae argues that both the Son and the Spirit reveal the Father, offering thus a perfect example of unity and community (*Theology and the Church*, pp. 164-169). For a more extensive account of Staniloae's view of *perichoretic* Trinity and his interpretation of the patristic texts touching on this issue see D. Staniloae, 'Trinitarian Relations and the Life of the Church', in *Theology and the Church*, pp. 11-44.

²⁰⁶D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 110.

²⁰⁷The Scriptures do not contain any kind of revelation, but only that revelation which is fulfilled in Christ. D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 53.

²⁰⁸D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 53.

that Christ does not only speak; He is the Word. He is at the same time the Word of God and the word of man, precisely because He is at the same time God and man.²⁰⁹ Consequently the Scriptures are not simply documents from the past, or sacred 'archives', but the living Word that communicates to man all that he needs to know in order to achieve deification. Furthermore, emphasizing the relation between God's words and acts, Staniloae affirms that when people understand Scripture and accept its truth (belief or faith), they enter into a real relationship with Christ and thus receive 'life eternal'.²¹⁰ However, Staniloae points out that this 'transformation' in the life of the people does not take place in a mechanical way or in isolation or by a mere reading of the Scriptures. Rather, to impart 'new life' is the work of the Spirit who indwells the Church, and consequently it is only within the Church that one experiences the living presence of Christ, this being the way in which the Spirit worked in the early church and thus, normative. The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles as a group (community) and subsequently revealed to them the true meaning of Scripture. Only after the Spirit constituted the apostolic church did the crowds in Jerusalem meet Christ in their words, which were His Word.²¹¹

Furthermore, Staniloae argues that understanding Scripture as Christ 'translated' into human language should not lead to the conclusion that its meaning can be taken literally. The words of Scripture, rather, have a dynamic and inexhaustible meaning, and in order to be correctly understood these words have to be authentically interpreted. The authentic hermeneutical approach to Scripture is the one that identifies the 'spiritual meaning' of Scripture.²¹² Such a meaning does not mean 'allegorical interpretation' in the Neo-Platonic sense adopted by Origen and the Alexandrian school,²¹³ but rather the apostolic interpretation as it was entrusted to them by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit operates so only within the Church and in continuity with 'the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.'²¹⁴ Consequently, although the Scriptures contain the fullness of revelation, one has access to them only within the Church which, through its tradition safeguarded the content, the authentic interpretation and the means whereby the truth of faith is appropriated by the believer.²¹⁵

²⁰⁹It would be of little help for the Church in its journey towards *eschata* to have a Christ incapable of expressing Himself. However, since this is not the case, Staniloae asserts that when the Scriptures are interpreted by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit believers enter into a real relationship with Christ. D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, pp. 52-57; *Isus Hristos sau Restaurarea Omului*, Ed. Omniscop, Craiova, 1993, p. 51. See also M. Edwards, *Towards Christian Poetics*, Macmillan, 1986, pp. 217-237.

²¹⁰Staniloae uses the following proof texts in order to support his assertion: Acts 4:29; 6:2,7; 8:14; 13:5,7,46; 16:32; 17:13; John 6:63,68; 8:47. *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol.1, pp. 54-55.

²¹¹D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 54-55, 68-69.

²¹²D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 56.

²¹³See J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, pp. 126-136.

²¹⁴Jude, 3.

²¹⁵D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, Vol. 1, pp. 57-58.

3.3.3 Tradition: If Scripture is Christ translated into words, Tradition²¹⁶ is the permanent communication of Christ to human beings.²¹⁷ In other words, Scripture is the content of revelation, whilst Tradition is the mode by which this content is communicated to human beings throughout the centuries. The key to understanding Staniloae's view of Tradition is his explanation of what happened at Pentecost when the interpretation of Scripture and its communication to human beings were actually coinciding realities, that is, at Pentecost *episteme* and *praxis* were in total agreement. Christ (the divine revelation) interpreted and communicated by the Holy Spirit to the people constituted the Church with all its form and structure in full agreement with the content of revelation.²¹⁸ Moreover, the fact that the Holy Spirit constituted the Church with its *hierarchical-sacramental* structure underlines the fact that Christ's deifying grace cannot be communicated in the absence of these structures.²¹⁹ Thus Tradition embodies all the means whereby Christ and his deifying grace is communicated to people through the hierarchical-sacramental structure of the Church, as well as the undistorted transmission of these means from generation to generation.²²⁰ Consequently, Staniloae argues that there is no other possibility for a divine-human dialogue or for deification outside Tradition. In conclusion, when he defines Tradition as the permanent communication of Christ to human beings, Staniloae has in mind the normative character of the apostolic teachings and of the hierarchical-sacramental structure of the Church.²²¹

3.3.4 The Church: Scripture is Christ translated into words, Tradition is Christ communicated to people and the Church is the community in which Christ lives through the Holy Spirit. In this sense Tradition cannot exist

²¹⁶The subject of tradition forms the content of the second section of the thesis and therefore here I will only outline its main features in order to understand Staniloae's view on the *perichoretic* relationship between Scripture, Tradition, and the Church.

²¹⁷D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol.1, p. 60.

²¹⁸D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 60.

²¹⁹D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 60-61.

²²⁰D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 61. The first part of Tradition which refers to all the means whereby Christ can be communicated to people, as these means were disclosed by the Holy Spirit when He constituted the Church, belongs *stricto sensu* to the divine revelation and consequently has a normative character. It is in the act of founding the Church that we see the mode in which the Spirit imparted Christ to human beings in the form of His words authentically interpreted, and in the form of the hierarchical-sacramental structure of the ecclesial community. The second part of Tradition that refers to the undistorted transmission of the mode in which Christ is communicated to human beings in every age is the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church, or, a continuous *epiclesis*. The invoking and the receiving of the Holy Spirit in the Church is the way whereby the Church continually abides in Christ and effectively communicates Christ to its own members and to the world in view of deification. See D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 58-65.

²²¹'Permanent' does not mean 'static' because Tradition has a very dynamic role, due to the fact that it has to unveil the 'inexpressible' mysteries of Christ to every generation in different times and circumstances, and thus it has to bring into light new dimensions of the same fullness of revelation, which is Christ. D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 58-64.

without a community which receives Christ, since Christ and the Spirit do not communicate themselves to individuals.²²² In order to exclude any possibility of an individualistic approach to divine revelation, Staniloae argues that Tradition and the Church were constituted at the same time. Accordingly, to have Christ communicated to people there must be a particular mode of communication, whilst in order to have a mode of communication there must be a community which receives Christ. Thus the Church starts with Tradition and Tradition starts with the Church.²²³ The Church, then, is the community which receives Christ (revelation) in the Tradition.²²⁴

3.3.5 Perichoretic Model: The Church, Tradition and Scripture are inextricably intertwined in a coherent whole whose soul is the Holy Spirit.²²⁵ Thus, without the Church as its subject Tradition could not commence, and further, without the Church as its means of transmission Tradition would cease to exist. Similarly, without Tradition, the Church could not have been founded, or once having been founded it would have lost the Apostolic Tradition, and so the Church would cease to exist. Furthermore, Scripture as the content of revelation continually communicated through Tradition to the Church maintains the latter in the fullness of Christ. Yet without a faithful practice of Tradition Scripture would lose its vivifying 'spiritual' meaning. However, the authentic practice of Tradition can exist only within the Church. The Church is the milieu where the content of Scripture is being engraved through Tradition.²²⁶ Thus Scripture needs both Tradition as the means of activating its content and the Church as a milieu wherein to engrave this activated content. Similarly, the Church needs Scripture in order to 'refresh' itself, to increase in the knowledge and obedience of Christ, through Tradition. In other words, Scripture is assimilated in the life of the Church through Tradition. Yet Scripture is made alive in the Church due to the fact that the Church has, in and through the Spirit, a continual prompting to apply the Scriptures through Tradition. At the same time the living Word challenges the Church due to the fact that the Spirit is active within Tradition and so active in the Church where Tradition is being faithfully observed. Through the activity of the Spirit in the Church which observes Tradition Scripture comes alive and consequently challenges the Church.²²⁷

From another perspective, the Church explains and applies the authentic content of Scripture through the Apostolic Tradition which is observed within the Church due to the fact that only Tradition can give the true

²²²D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 65.

²²³D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 65.

²²⁴The aspects concerning the nature, the function and the authority of the Church will be expanded in the third section of the thesis. For an outline of Staniloae's view on the Church in the context of its relationship to Scripture and Tradition, see *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 64-71.

²²⁵D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 66.

²²⁶D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 66.

²²⁷D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 66.

interpretation and application of Scripture. This Tradition constituted and maintains the Church, and the Church is obliged to observe the authentic content of Scripture as interpreted and transmitted by the Apostolic Tradition which cannot be altered. Scripture exists and is applied in the Church through Tradition. Without the Church, Scripture would not exist. Scripture's canon is the witness of the Church to Scripture. Moreover, the Scriptures have been written in the Church, and the latter bear witness about the former's apostolic origin. The Church was founded before Scripture had been written, and as such the Church was not constituted by Scripture but by the communication of the apostolic revelation to people by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Scripture was born within the Church as the written part of the Apostolic Tradition. Once written, Scripture nourishes and maintains the Church in the authentic Christ as communicated through the entire Tradition.²²⁸

In conclusion, then, the Church moves within the circle of revelation, or of Scripture and Tradition; Scripture unveils its content within the Church and Tradition; and Tradition is alive within the Church. Moreover, revelation itself is effective within the Church and the Church is alive within the revelation. However, this intertwining of the Church, Tradition and Scripture depends on the same Spirit who accompanied Christ during the process of revelation (or during His saving works), and who subsequently constituted the Church and inspired the writing of a part of revelation in the Scriptures, and who continues to bring about the union between Christ and believers, maintaining the Church as the body of Christ in observing the unaltered content of Scripture and Tradition.²²⁹

3.4 Observations

3.4.1 Methodological: Lossky's model of 'two planes' makes a distinction between Scripture and Tradition in a way that avoids the difficulty of harmonizing two distinct bodies of documents (or 'traditions') which claim to contain divine revelation, but his approach fails to offer a clear distinction between Scripture and other normative writings and practices of the Church.²³⁰ Thus he considers that since all the expressions of the truth on the historical level belong to the realm of the *word*²³¹ they all share the same

²²⁸D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 67.

²²⁹D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 69-70.

²³⁰The Spirit 'acts as a function of the Word as a power for expressing the Truth in intelligible definitions or sensible images and symbols-documents of faith' whenever the Church needs it. Thus, Scripture, dogma, symbols, icons, exegesis, liturgy and rites are expressions or 'incarnations' of the Word in historical realities. See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 148-154.

²³¹Lossky calls these expressions either 'scriptures' or 'traditions'. See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 148, 150.

basis in the economy of the Church.²³² However, there are disagreements among Orthodox theologians concerning the locus of Scripture amongst the other 'traditions' of the Church. Thus, for example, Lossky and Ware²³³ place Scripture on the same footing with other 'traditions', whilst Bulgakov²³⁴ and Clapsis²³⁵ affirm that Scripture has the first place among all the other traditions of the Church.

In Staniloae's *perichoretic* model of the relations between Scripture, Tradition and the Church, each part exists and has its unique role only in relation to the others. However, in this *perichoretic* whole, Staniloae

²³²It is for this reason that the Pope St. Gregory the Great brought together in the same veneration the dogmas of the first four Councils and the four Gospels. All that we have said of the 'dogmatic tradition, can be applied to other expressions of Christian mystery that the Church produces in the Tradition... Just like the 'divinely inspired didascalia' of the Church, the iconographic tradition also receives its full meaning and its intimate coherence with other documents of faith (Scripture, dogmas, liturgy) in the Tradition of the Holy Spirit. Just as much as dogmatic definitions, it has been possible for the icons of Christ to be compared to Holy Scriptures, to receive the same veneration, since iconography sets forth in colours what the word announces in written letters' (V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 166-167). See also Gregory the Great, *Epistolarum liber*, I, ep. 25; PL, 77, 613. The only difference that Lossky perceives between Scripture and other 'scriptures' is that 'the scriptural canon forms a determinate body which excludes all possibility of further increase, while the 'dogmatic tradition,'... can be increased by receiving, to the extent that may be necessary, new expressions of revealed Truth, formulated by the Church' (V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 166). However, this distinction is not consistent with Lossky's reasoning because if there are no differences in quality between the two bodies of 'traditions' there is no ground to affirm that one is definitely closed whilst the other is open.

²³³See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 209-210.

²³⁴Tradition adapts itself to the different needs of different epochs; Holy Scripture, that is the voice of God addressed to man has absolute value, though revealed under a conditioned historic form...it must be said that Holy Scripture and tradition are unequal in value. First place belongs to the Word of God; the criterion of the truth of Scripture is not tradition (although tradition testifies to Scripture), but on the contrary, tradition is recognized when founded on Scripture. Statements are sometimes encountered which put the decision of the first four ecumenical councils on the same level as the four Gospels (e.g., Pope Gregory the Great), but these are only an exaggerated and oratorical eulogy of the value of conciliar decisions, eulogy which certainly should not be taken literally' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, St. Vladimir's Press, Crestwood, New York, 1988, p. 18).

²³⁵All Christian doctrines are (explicitly or implicitly) contained in the Scripture, and the living tradition of the Church is nothing less than the interpretation and elucidation of the Scripture in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is the very heart of the Church's life, the very source of her faith and its knowledge of God.' E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority: Conceptions of Orthodoxy.' Paper presented at the Second Annual Meeting of The Society for the Study of Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism: *Scripture, Tradition and Authority: Conceptions of 'Orthodoxy' in the Eastern Orthodox and Evangelical Traditions*, September 26, 1992, The Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill. pp. 1-29 (here 7). For a similar view see also A.M. Coniaris, *Introducing the Orthodox Church*, Light and Life Publishing Company, Minneapolis, 1982, p. 155.

considers that the Church has a preeminent role.²³⁶ This is due to the fact that, on the one hand, the Church and Tradition antedate Scripture, and, on the other, the Church gave us the Scriptures.²³⁷ However, methodologically, the chronological distinction between the Church, Tradition and Scripture makes sense only if there is a qualitative difference between oral revelation and written revelation. Otherwise, if the transposition of revelation from oral to written form does not affect its content the assertion that the Church gave us the Scriptures has only a technical and not material connotation. Moreover, Staniloae ignores the fact that from its beginning the Church did not function in a 'scriptural vacuum' but made extensive use of the Old Testament scriptures, which were considered to be authoritative.²³⁸

Furthermore, the New Testament writings do not derive their authority simply from the fact that they were written within Christian community; there were many other writings produced within the Church that do not have normative character. Distinguishing between the Scriptures and other Christian writings, the Romanian Orthodox Catechism (*Invățătură de Credință Creștină Ortodoxă*) affirms that the authority of the biblical writings derives from their divine inspiration and the recognition of their inspired content by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.²³⁹

Another methodological aspect concerning the preeminence of the Church in its relation to Scripture and Tradition refers to the relation between *episteme* and *praxis*. Ascribing to the Church the faculty of infallible interpretation of revelation,²⁴⁰ Staniloae confers normative status to a particular type of relation between *episteme* and *praxis* within the history of the Church,²⁴¹ and thus removes the possibility,

...to distinguish carefully in this heritage between that which forms part of the Church's Holy Tradition, unalterable and universally binding, received from the past, and that which is mere relic of former times, venerable no doubt in

²³⁶D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 51. In this whole, affirms Staniloae, 'the Spirit gives initiative first and foremost to the Church' (D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 66).

²³⁷D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 67.

²³⁸In this sense, one can affirm that the scriptures of the Old Testament antedate the Church, and that the Apostolic Tradition initially included both the teaching of Christ and of his Apostles and a new exegesis of the Old Testament. The assertion that the Church antedates Scripture is thus only partially true, in the sense that the New Testament writings did not exist when the Church was founded. See J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 29-52; M. Santer, 'Scripture and the Councils', in *Sobornost*, 7:2 (1975), pp. 99-110; Justin, *1 Apologia*, 32,2 in *ANCL*, vol. II, p. 34; *Dialogus*, 29,2 in *ANCL*, vol. II, pp. 122-123; *Ep. of Barnabas*, 6,9; 9,8; 10,10 in *ANCL*, I, pp. 109-126; 13,7; E.F.-van Leer, *Tradition and Scripture*; J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 32.

²³⁹Patriarch Teoctist, ed., *Invățătură de Credință Creștină Ortodoxă*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1992, pp. 22-27.

²⁴⁰D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 70.

²⁴¹This aspect will be explored in the third section ('Church and Authority') of the thesis.

many respects, but sometimes also sadly out of date and even harmful to the mission of the Church.²⁴²

Further both Lossky and Staniloae attempt to overcome the dualist view of Scripture and Tradition by describing Tradition as *the mode* in which the divine revelation is transmitted or appropriated by the Church.²⁴³ Thus both theologians distance themselves from the traditional Orthodox view which affirms that Scripture and Tradition are either 'two source' or 'two modes of transmission' of the divine revelation.²⁴⁴

Furthermore, although both theologians mention the canon of the sacred writings (Scripture), neither addresses critically the canonization of the books of the Old or New Testaments, not even the disagreements between the Greek and the Russian churches concerning the place of the Deutero-Canonical Books.²⁴⁵ It is true, however, that for Lossky this issue is not

²⁴²J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 190.

²⁴³Following the influence of Geiselman in Catholic and Protestant circles the 'two ways' theory lost ground in favour of 'the single source' theory.

²⁴⁴In the Catechism of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Cosma does not make a clear distinction between 'two sources' of divine revelation or 'two modes' of transmission, but affirms that Scripture and Tradition differ materially. See S. Cosma, *Cuvinte ale Dreptei Credințe (Cateheze)*, Ed. Episcopiei Aradului, Arad, 1992, pp. 29-47. A similar view is advocated by Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală in *Tradiție și Libertate în Spiritualitatea Ortodoxă*, Ed. Mitropoliei Ardealului, Sibiu, 1983, pp. 156-157. Konstantinidis affirms that Scripture and Tradition are two transmissions of the same revelation. See C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions within Christendom', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 220-230. Similarly, Clapsis adopts the 'two ways' of transmission model. See E. Clapsis, 'Prolegomena to Orthodox Tradition: Bible and Tradition', in *Diakonia*, 16 (1981), pp. 16-26; 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', pp. 1-29. In the same vein Andrușos considers that the distinction between Scripture and Tradition is to be found primarily in their mode of transmission, and secondarily in their content. See H. Andrușos, *Simbolica* (Tr. from Greek by I. Moisescu), Ed. Centrului Mitropolitan al Olteniei, 1955, pp. 97-123. See also S. Zankov, *The Eastern Orthodox Church*, (Tr. and ed., D.A. Lowrie), Student Christian Movement, James Clark and Co., London, 1929. Other Orthodox scholars affirm that Tradition has an all-inclusive sense, and as such also include the Scriptures and all the teachings, dogmas, rites and practices in the Church. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 203-215; C. Scouteris, 'Paradosis: the Orthodox understanding of Tradition', in *Sobornost*, 4:1 (1982), pp. 30-37.

²⁴⁵The Greek Church follows the Septuagint texts which, in addition to the thirty eight books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the four books of Kings, the two of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Daniel and the twelve minor prophets, Lamentations being considered part of Jeremiah), also include the books of Tobias, Judith, the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Sirach, and the three books of Maccabaeus. These latter are called *Anaginoscomena* (good for reading) and are considered to occupy a secondary place in the canon due to the fact that they do not have the same authority as the others. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament have full canonical authority. See C.N. Callinicos, *The Greek-Orthodox Catechism*, Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, New York, 1960, p. 8. Alternatively the older *Longer Catechism of the Orthodox, Catholic, Eastern Church* follows the Hebrew list of the books of the Old Testament on the grounds that this was the practice of the Fathers (Cyril and Athanasius) and the belief that the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God (Romans 3:2). Since the Jews did not accept the

relevant because he does not believe in 'degrees' of inspiration,²⁴⁶ and consequently, on a historical level, all the different forms of expression of the Truth in the Church stand on the same basis.

Staniloae also avoids the issues related to the biblical canon,²⁴⁷ although he does interact with biblical criticism, particularly with form criticism. However, his response to the issues raised by biblical criticism does not offer a scholarly critique, but primarily refutes these views from an Orthodox dogmatic perspective.²⁴⁸

Apocrypha, those books are not considered canonical according to the Catechism. See P. Schaff, eds., *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. II, Baker Book House, n.d., Grand Rapids, p. 451. The Romanian Catechism however follows the Hebrew numbering of the list of the Old Testament books, and acknowledges the value of the Deutero-Canonical Books and recommends them for reading. See S. Cosma, *Cuvinte*, pp. 36-37. Although the Councils of Iassy (1642) and Jerusalem (1672) declared the Deutero-Canonical Books as 'genuine parts of Scripture', most contemporary Orthodox scholars follow the opinion of Athanasius and Jerome, and consider these books to be on a lower level than the rest of the Old Testament. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 208-209. However, the Orthodox debates over the issue of the Deutero-Canonical Books is a vivid example of the role and the extent of the Jewish and Greek influences upon Christian tradition.

²⁴⁶For an account of the theory of degrees of inspiration, see P. Bratsiotis, 'An Orthodox Contribution', in *Biblical Authority for Today*, p. 23. Cf. F. Gavin, *Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought*, Morehouse Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1923, p. 21.

²⁴⁷Bulgakov attempts, however, without too much success, to resolve the tension over the status of the Deutero-Canonical Books. Thus he proposes the theory of degrees of divine inspiration which distinguishes not only between canonical and Deutero-Canonical books, but also between different books within the canon. Bulgakov argues that, 'The content of the Word of God differs in its different parts, both as to the general purpose of the books (law, historical books, books of instruction, prophetic books, Gospels, Epistles, Apocalypse), and as to their own substance. Although all the Bible is the Word of God, 'All Scripture is inspired by God' (2 Tim.3:16), we distinguish among its parts those more or less important for us. The Gospels are for us different from the books of Ruth or Joshua; the Epistles are not the same as Ecclesiastes or Proverbs. The same distinction obtains between canonical and Deutero-Canonical books...This simply means that divine inspiration is concrete and that it adapts itself to human weakness and consequently can be greater or less. This is why the non-canonical books have a certain authority as the word of God, but less authority than that of the canonical books' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 20). Bulgakov's view is not only in disagreement with both Lossky's theory of equal fullness of every 'incarnation' of the Truth in historical expressions and Staniloae's belief that the Scriptures are the authentic record of the divine revelation, but also opens the door for arbitrary decisions of Church's teaching authorities in different circumstances such as occurred at the Councils of Jassy (1642) and Jerusalem (1672), for example, which declared the non-canonical books to be 'genuine parts of Scripture'. Further, Bulgakov's belief in a canon within the canon of scripture suggests that the New Testament books have a certain priority over against the Old Testament ones; yet in reality his assertion contradicts the liturgical structure where the Old Testament outnumbers the New Testament's quotations. D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 57; See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 208; D.J. Constantelos, 'The Holy Scriptures in Greek Orthodox Worship: A Comparative and Statistical Study', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 12 (1966), pp. 7-83, (here p. 80).

²⁴⁸See D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 109-116.

In spite of the differences between Lossky and Staniloae concerning the locus of Scripture and the function of Tradition within the Church, both theologians ascribe a preeminent role to the Church in its relation to Scripture. Since both theologians agree that the Church is the agency whereby the Holy Spirit imparts the deifying grace to believers through its hierarchical-sacramental structures, all other disagreements concerning *modus operandi* are considered 'theologumena'.

3.4.2 Theological: Both theologians believe that revelation is the source of all theological knowledge and that this revelation was entrusted to the Church. However, since Lossky emphasizes mystical encounter with God as the apex of *theologia*, Scripture does not represent the main source of theological knowledge, and so it shares the same place of authority with other embodiments of the truth produced by the Church. This approach, whilst appearing to free the Church from the bondage of 'traditionalism', in reality diminishes the normative character of the apostolic teachings,²⁴⁹ and reduces the role of Christ in the Church to that of a passive 'object' which can be incarnated by the Spirit in as many 'expressions' as the Church believes to be necessary.

Staniloae however, ascribes a central place to God's self-revelation through words and acts and to the authentic records of that revelation in the Scriptures. Hence Scripture has a prominent role for both theological epistemology and religious practice. The theological reason for this difference between Lossky and Staniloae can be traced back to their doctrine of revelation and inspiration.

Lossky's view of the relation between christology and pneumatology leads to a doctrine of inspiration that, on the one hand, rejects the view that at one time (past)²⁵⁰ the fullness of God revelation in the Church was 'greater' than it is today, and on the other, affirms that, due to the fact that the Spirit of revelation has been within the Church since Pentecost, every expression of the Truth in the Church has the same 'fullness'.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹Clapsis affirms that 'the function of the Apostles is, consequently, unique and irrepeatable. We cannot recognize Christ, who is the true object of our faith, without believing the testimony of the Apostles. This relation between Christ and the Apostles makes the latter the norm and origin of all later proclamation and binding for the church's identity'(E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', p. 4.

²⁵⁰Lossky does admit that in the Old Testament there was a 'progressive' revelation according to the view of Gregory of Nazianzus, who argued that 'The Old Testament manifested clearly the Father and obscurely the Son. The New Testament manifested the Son, but gave only indications of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Nowadays, the Spirit is among us and shows Himself in all His splendour. It would not have been prudent, before recognizing the divinity of the Father, openly to preach the divinity of the Son, and as long as that of the Son had not been accepted, to impose the Holy Spirit, if I dare so express myself (*Oratio, 31 (Theologica)*, 26; PG, 36, 161C). See V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 160.

²⁵¹V. Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 160-161. Lossky believes that both the 'traditionalists' who are concerned to preserve the teaching of the past, and the 'progressists' who advocate the theory of the development of dogma and theological knowledge lack theological support for their views. It is true that Lossky admits that the contemporary

Staniloae however, believes that the divine-human dialogue reached its highest condition in the act of the incarnation, followed by the Apostles who were under the immediate influence of God incarnate. Accordingly

Their human capacity for understanding the divine was raised to a supreme degree and so, consequently, was their capacity to express the divine element which they had understood. Hence the means by which they expressed the divine revelation have to be preserved.²⁵²

The purpose of revelation is deification; consequently, the authority of the biblical records for theological knowledge and practice flows from the fact that they are authentic records of the deification of human nature in Christ. Since in Christ human nature was deified and since his words and the words of His Apostles best express both the purpose and the meaning of God's actions to bring about our deification, they have to be observed. Here Staniloae goes along with the generally accepted, although not well expounded, Orthodox synergistic view of biblical inspiration²⁵³ which affirms

church has more dogmas than the early church, yet these dogmas do not represent a progress in theological knowledge but rather represent only new expressions of the same fullness of Truth according to the 'economic' needs of the Church. See Lossky, *In the Image*, pp. 164-165.

²⁵²D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 111. Staniloae explains his view of the relation between revelation and inspiration by analogy to the relation between the divine and human natures in the incarnation. The two technical words used are *kenosis* and *deification*. The first refers to the humiliation of the divinity, and the second to the spiritualization of the humanity, whilst maintaining each nature unchanged. (D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 126).

²⁵³The Orthodox Church does not consider it of vital importance to develop a theology of biblical inspiration which would provide an inerrant source of authority, since the Church as a whole is both inspired and inerrant being indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Hopko argues that, 'The classical formulation of this question in terms of revelation and inspiration arose outside the Orthodox Tradition and was imported into Orthodoxy through the westernized schools of recent centuries' (T. Hopko, 'The Bible in the Orthodox Church', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, XIV (1970), p. 68). However, the *Longer Catechism of the Eastern Church* states that the Bible was 'written by the Spirit of God through men sanctified by God' (Cf. P. Schaff, ed., *Creeds*, vol. II, p. 449). Further, Gavin quotes the *Orthodox Catechism* which describes the writers of the Holy Scripture men who were 'illuminated by the Holy Spirit' (F. Gavin, *Greek Orthodox Thought*, p. 21). On the basis of this illumination the Scriptures are considered to be inspired. However, the method of inspiration or the manner in which God acted upon these men is not clearly defined either in the patristic writings or in contemporary Orthodox theology. Consequently, within the Orthodox tradition there are different views concerning the method of biblical inspiration. See H. Andrușos, *Simbolica*, p. 115; M. Wiles, *The Making of the Christian Doctrine*, CUP, Cambridge, 1967, p. 46; F.B. Wavter, *Biblical Inspiration*, Hutchinson, London, 1972, p. 21; J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 60-64; I. Bria, 'Biblie' in *Dicționar de Teologie Ortodoxă*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1981, p. 58; See W. Niesel, *The Gospel and the Churches: A Comparison of Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism*, (Tr. by D. Lewis), Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1962, p. 128; N. Zernov, *Eastern Christendom: A Study of the Origin and Development of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1961, p. 231.

that whilst divine truth is communicated to man,²⁵⁴ the individual character of the writer is not by-passed.²⁵⁵ As Bratsiotis affirms:

Orthodox theology distinguishes a divine and a human element and receives the essence of the Bible as divine, the form as human. Inspiration is chiefly centred upon the essence of the Bible, although it radiates its brightness often also on the form which is given to saving truths, even if the form is to be recognized as the sphere in which the human initiative of the inspired man moves freely.²⁵⁶

Since inspiration deals with the essence, the books are accepted into the canon on the basis of their possessing this divine essence, not because of the personality or personal authority of the writer. Even if it could be shown that the Apostles and Prophets were not the authors as has been claimed, the authenticity of these books would not be diminished. This stems from the derivation of the authority of the Bible from the Church. Since the Church has declared these books authentic, they remain so no matter who the authors were.²⁵⁷ This point brings us to the next theological observation concerning Lossky and Staniloae's views on the authority of Scripture, namely the interpretation of Scripture. Since the Church established the canon of Scripture, it follows that the former is also the authoritative interpreter of the Bible.

Lossky argues that, if taken as an historical document outside the Church Scripture appears as 'fictitious and artificial writings'.²⁵⁸ Only in the Church are the Scriptures correctly understood due to the vertical dimension of the Holy Spirit imparted to the Church through the mystery of the sacraments.²⁵⁹ However, consistent with his epistemology in which words do

²⁵⁴As a result of the interplay between the divine and human factors involved in the process of inspiration, Bratsiotis draws the conclusion that there are degrees of inspiration. Amongst such aspects that explain different levels of inspiration, Bratsiotis considers the following three to be the most relevant: (a) the principle of progressive revelation; (b) the difference in the manner and the outpouring of the energy of the Holy Spirit; and (c) the receptiveness of the individual writer and his ability to show forth the spiritual gift imparted by the Holy Spirit. See P. Bratsiotis, *The Greek Orthodox Church*, (Tr. J. Blenkinsopp), University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1968, pp. 28-29.

²⁵⁵P. Bratsiotis, 'An Orthodox Contribution', in *Biblical Authority for Today*, p. 23. Cf. F. Gavin, *Greek Orthodox Thought*, p. 21. Andruţos considers that inspiration refers both to the fact that the Spirit communicates a message which surpasses the mental capacities of the author and protects the author from error. H. Andruţos, *Simbolica*, p. 115. Cosma argues that inspiration includes the careful selection of the writer, his divine calling and preparation for the task, a spiritual ascent to a higher degree of understanding and reception of the message of the divine revelation. In this process the Holy Spirit assists the writer and protects him from error without annulling his personality. Verbal inspiration, continues Cosma, would imply the absence of difference in style between the books of the Scriptures. S. Cosma, *Cuvinte ale Dreptei Credinţe (Cathezeze)*, pp. 30-31.

²⁵⁶P. Bratsiotis, 'An Orthodox Contribution', p. 23.

²⁵⁷See F. Gavin, *Greek Orthodox Thought*, p. 22.

²⁵⁸V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 155.

²⁵⁹The very nature of Scripture requests the vertical dimension due to what Lossky, inspired by Ignatius and Basil, calls the 'silence' of Scripture. The former affirms that, 'He who possesses in truth the word of Jesus can hear even its silence' (Ignatius, *Ephesians*, 15,2), and the latter continues: 'There is also a form of silence, namely the

not enjoy a preeminent role,²⁶⁰ Lossky considers that the purpose of revelation is not to provide intellectual knowledge but to lead to deification. Consequently, the acquisition of intellectual knowledge, is not for Lossky normative and essential, but mystical union with God realised in the Church through the sacraments.²⁶¹ If one does not understand Scripture or if its authenticity is challenged by biblical criticism, such issues do not impinge on the role of the Church as the means whereby the Spirit imparts the deifying grace.

On the other hand, for Staniloae the way of *theosis* is an ascending dialogue (words and acts) between God and man, and hence he ascribes a greater role to biblical hermeneutics. Aware of the fact that the biblical writers made use of the languages, ideas and literary forms of their own age, Staniloae argues that their records contain an 'essential core of revelation' which can be identified via the hermeneutical approach of 'spiritual understanding'.²⁶² In essence, 'spiritual understanding' has to identify that 'core of acts which the original words and images set forth without any deception' and subsequently to communicate that content in other words or images that are adequate for our own culture.²⁶³

In conclusion, although Lossky and Staniloae view Scripture from different perspectives, both follow the official Orthodox view that the only authentic and authoritative interpretation is that given by the Church.²⁶⁴ Yet within the Orthodox Church there is more than one universally accepted interpretation of different scriptural texts, and so there is not only the tension between different groups but also the legitimate question concerning which interpretation is authentic. Thus for Lossky the correct interpretation

obscurity used by the Scripture, which is intended in order to make it difficult to gain understanding of the teachings, for the profit of readers' (Basil, *De spiritu sancto*, 27; PG, 32, 189BC). This silence signifies that the revealed mystery can be understood only through the work of the Spirit in the Church. V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 151, 155; *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 174-195.

²⁶⁰Lossky does not believe in the validity of a hermeneutical approach to Scripture. Conversely, he argues that the Holy Spirit always imparts His Truth according to the economical needs of the Church. 'At every moment of its history, the Church formulates its Truth of the faith in its dogmas, which always express a fullness to which one adheres intellectually in the light of the Tradition, while never being able to make it definitively explicit. A truth which would allow itself to be made fully explicit would not have the quality of living fullness which belongs to Revelation: "fullness" and "rational explicitness" mutually exclude one another' (V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 166).

²⁶¹In the Church and through the sacraments our nature enters into union with the divine nature in the hypostasis of the Son, the Head of His mystical body. Our humanity becomes consubstantial with the deified humanity, united with the person of Christ' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 181).

²⁶²D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 110-111.

²⁶³This 'spiritual understanding' of Scripture is the gift of the Holy Spirit given to the Church at Pentecost through the apostolic teachings. There is no other possibility of having an authentic interpretation of Scripture outside the apostolic church. D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 111-112.

²⁶⁴See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 28-36; T. Hopko, 'The Bible', p. 99.

is the 'mystical union with God' beyond words; for Staniloae it is the 'core of revelation'; and for Florovsky it is the 'typological fulfillment'.²⁶⁵

Additionally, in the last few years, in spite of traditional opposition, there is a growing movement among Orthodox scholars, particularly in the Diaspora, that welcomes the historical-critical method in biblical studies.²⁶⁶ Thus Kesich argues that the very fact that Christianity is based upon the historical Jesus requires a historical-critical approach to biblical records.²⁶⁷ This new development in biblical studies within the Orthodox Church raises two significant questions: first, concerning the grounds for the traditional Orthodox claim that the Church received from the Apostles the authentic interpretation of Scripture, and second, concerning the relation between the Scriptures and the Church in view of the historical-critical method.

The first question will be answered in the next section (Tradition and Authority) and therefore here I shall only point out that there is an awareness among Orthodox theologians concerning a growing tension within the Church due to the existence of different and even contradictory interpretations of Scripture.²⁶⁸ These differences ask for both theological clarification and praxiological adjustments.

Since the issues related to the second question are only implicit in Lossky's and Staniloae's writings, we will look to other Orthodox scholars for an answer. Bulgakov, for example, affirms that the Word of God is used in the Church in two ways: liturgically and non-liturgically. The liturgical use of Scripture is part of the daily rite and in this liturgical context the biblical story becomes an 'event'.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, Clapsis asserts that,

²⁶⁵Florovsky distinguishes between an allegorical and a typological hermeneutic and argues that the latter is the correct approach since it is the interpretation of the events in the light of the biblical-historical correspondence between the type and its fulfilment. See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 33-36.

²⁶⁶See V. Kesich, 'The Orthodox Church and Biblical Interpretation', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 4 (1993), p. 343; E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', p. 11.

²⁶⁷The very diversity of the inspired books, the variety of traditions incorporated in them, invite and encourage the research into the Gospels. The written Gospels belong to the history of Christ and his Church, and as such they are open for historical and critical research...Historical research helps us to overcome subjective interpretations and makes us aware of the perils of modernizing Jesus, as well as of producing an "otherworldly Jesus" as an "alien figure" who supposedly had nothing in common with us and as such cannot be known or experienced by us. For Orthodox Christians, biblical criticism is rooted theologically in the Church's teaching of the incarnation and understanding of the charisma of inspiration. God became man, and the words of the incarnate Christ received the "fleshly garment" of the time and the country of his coming. To repudiate the historical examination of the record of revelation would undermine the importance of the historical incarnation and encourage docetic tendencies. Then there would be no great difference between the incarnate Christ of the New Testament and the Hindu avatars' (V. Kesich, 'Biblical Interpretation', pp. 346-347).

²⁶⁸See K. Ware, 'Tradition and Traditions', in N. Lossky, eds., *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1991, pp. 1013-1017.

²⁶⁹The Church mystically relives the happening itself, and the reading of the Gospel has the force of an event. This is why the liturgical reading of the Word of God is possible only

The Bible becomes through proclamation and worship the medium by which God relates to His people...The Bible and the Sacramental life of the Church are inseparable and mutually inclusive, leading the people into the authentic experience and knowledge of the true God through reading and preaching the Word of God, celebrating the Eucharist and serving the world.²⁷⁰

In the same vein, the Romanian Orthodox theologians Prelipcean and Marcu consider that whilst the Orthodox Church is entirely scriptural in its theology, internal life and liturgy, contact with the Scriptures can be realised only through the liturgy.²⁷¹ Since it is the Church that gave us Scripture, both theologians consider that 'if the Word of God were to come in the life of the believer through another way than the Church, it would cease to be the Word of God.'²⁷² Moreover, both consider that the preaching of the Word and the catechism can only take place if the following three conditions are met: (a) the text to be studied is in the reading programme fixed by the Church; (b) the preaching and teaching is performed by an authorized person; and (c) the assembly of the believers is canonically constituted.²⁷³ Furthermore, Galeriu affirms that in Orthodoxy there is an organic link between the Church as the Body of Christ and the Church as a dwelling which, like the body, is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the study of Scripture is related not only to the Church as a community but also as a dwelling, a building.²⁷⁴

However, Bulgakov considers that Scripture can be read outside the service and thus he distinguishes between religious and scientific approaches. The religious approach is intended to deepen the believer's understanding of Scripture according to Tradition,²⁷⁵ whereas the scientific approach follows the method of any other scientific inquiry. The latter's findings are not to be extended to the interpretation of Scripture from a dogmatic point of view but should be limited only to understanding the historical context of the respective text.²⁷⁶

in the Church, and nowhere outside' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 22). The Protestant idea that an individual can comprehend for himself the truth of the Scriptures is, for the Orthodox, illusory. The divine gift of the Word of God can be received in its fullness only in union with the Church, 'in the temple where the reading of the Word of God is preceded and followed by a special prayer. We there ask God to aid us in hearing His word and in opening our hearts to His Spirit' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 12).

²⁷⁰E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', p. 13. See also J. Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1979.

²⁷¹V. Prelipcean et G.T. Marcu, 'La Parole de Dieu dans la Vie de L'Eglise Orthodoxe Romaine', in V. Prelipcean, eds., *De la Theologie Orthodoxe Romaine des Origines a nos Jours*, Ed. de L'Institute Biblique et Mission Orthodoxe, Bucharest, 1974, p. 25.

²⁷²V. Prelipcean et G.T. Marcu, 'La Parole de Dieu', p. 36.

²⁷³V. Prelipcean et G.T. Marcu, 'La Parole de Dieu', p. 50.

²⁷⁴C. Galeriu, 'The Romanian Patriarchate', in I. Bria, ed., *Martiria / Mission: The Witness of the Orthodox Churches Today*, WCC, Geneva, 1980, p. 94.

²⁷⁵S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 23.

²⁷⁶S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 22-23.

Bulgakov acknowledges that between the liturgical and non-liturgical readings of the Scriptures disagreements may occur. In such cases the principle of the authentic interpretation by the Church in Tradition,

...curbs the individual will by placing man face to face with the Church, subordinating him interiorly to the control of tradition, making him responsible, not only as an isolated individual, but also as a member of the Church.²⁷⁷

Similarly, Florovsky, refuting the idea of the self-sufficiency of Scripture argues:

...we often limit the freedom of the Church as a whole, for the sake of furthering the freedom of individual Christians. In the name of individual freedom the Catholic, ecumenical freedom of the Church is denied and limited. The liberty of the Church is shackled by an abstract biblical standard for the sake of setting free individual consciousness from the spiritual demands enforced by the experience of the Church. This is a denial of catholicity, a destruction of catholic consciousness; this is the sin of Reformation... If we declare Scripture to be self sufficient, we only expose it to subjective, arbitrary interpretation, thus cutting it away from its sacred source. Scripture is given to us in tradition. It is the vital, crystallizing centre. The Church, as the Body of Christ, stands mystically first and is fuller than Scripture.²⁷⁸

Both Bulgakov and Florovsky unpack the institutional dimension of the relation between *episteme* and *praxis*. According to this view, the Church is *a priori* right, and although the believer is free to search for truth, he has to subject himself, unconditionally, to the truth of the institution. Whilst Clapsis²⁷⁹ and Kesich²⁸⁰ share the same view with Bulgakov and Florovsky, they prefer to maintain the discourse at the theoretical level of the relation between institutional presuppositions and epistemological freedom.

3.4.3 Sociological: The preeminence of the Church over Scripture in both apophatic and cataphatic-apophatic expressions illustrates the corporate approach to *theosis* in Orthodox tradition. However, since the Church is

²⁷⁷S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 23.

²⁷⁸G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 48.

²⁷⁹The unity between the Bible and the liturgy can become a hermeneutical key, giving guidance towards an ecclesial interpretation of the Bible...the way the Bible is used and adored in the liturgical life of the Church may determine the proper ecclesial approach of the exegete to the biblical text, which is to interpret critically the biblical text and simultaneously to preserve its doxological character' (E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', p. 14).

²⁸⁰Our basic "presupposition" is that the Orthodox interpreter is free in his research, but free within the perspective of the Church's living tradition. Scripture is not a field by itself; its meaning is revealed within the life of the Church...There have been temptations throughout the history of the Christian Church to view the Bible as 'intelligible in itself,' and to view subsequent dogmatic and liturgic growth as signs of a break with the 'purity and simplicity' of the Gospel. But what is 'pure' in the formation of the Church is manifested in its growth. The growth comes from the seed, and the seed is the Gospel itself. This is the framework within which our guiding principles of interpretation must be set forth clearly. Tradition for us is not a hindrance. "The presence of tradition does not hinder the exegete any more than gravity hampers the racer", wrote Gustav Weigel. "It only keeps him on the ground"(V. Kesich, 'Biblical Interpretation', p. 349).

conceived as a *hierarchical-sacramental* being, the authority to decide both the locus and the interpretation of Scripture belongs to the hierarchy.²⁸¹

Firstly, the locus of Scripture within the Church is determined not only by the theological tendency to which the teaching authority belongs but also by socio-historical factors. Thus Santer²⁸² argues that until the fifth century AD Scripture occupied a central place in the life of the Church and consequently the main emphasis in theological debates relied upon correct exegesis of Scripture.²⁸³ At the Council of Ephesus (431) there was a significant shift from Scriptural appeal to that of the Fathers. Subsequently, the tradition of the Fathers not only became authoritative in settling theological disputes but also slowly took precedence over the direct exegesis of biblical texts.²⁸⁴ In the same vein, Ware,²⁸⁵ analysing the views

²⁸¹See K. Ware, 'The Exercise of Authority in the Orthodox Church', in *Ecclesia kai Theologia*, Tome ?, Thyateira House, 1982, pp. 941-969, (here p. 951).

²⁸²M. Santer, 'Scripture and the Councils', in *Sobornost*, 7, 2 (1975), pp. 99-110.

²⁸³Santer affirms that during the first 150 years of the Church's life there were two sources of theological knowledge to which writers and teachers of this period appealed: the scriptures of Israel known to us as the Old Testament and the Apostolic Tradition. One of the main functions of the Apostolic Tradition was the provision of an authoritative interpretation of the ancient scriptures. By the end of the second century AD a certain body of writings was acknowledged as containing the substance of the Apostolic Tradition, and from the time of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, they were treated as 'scripture' in the same way as the Old Testament. However, the correct interpretation of the writings of the 'New Testament' is no more self-evident than the correct interpretation of the Old. Therefore, it was generally agreed that the norm of interpretation was the living tradition of the churches and eventually the bishops were looked upon as the guardians of this tradition. However, due to the fact that there was significant disagreement between the 'traditions' advocated by the bishops of the leading churches, the mode of resolving such problems was to summon a council. The first councils, argues Santer, were concerned with the issue of correct interpretation of Scripture. This was the case during the dispute about the orthodoxy of Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria, during the Arian controversy and at the Council of Nicaea. To illustrate his point, Santer refers to the writings of Athanasius's *Defence of the Nicene Definition* and Basil's *On the Holy Spirit*. However, Santer acknowledges that both Fathers already refer to earlier authors to show that their interpretation of Scripture was not an innovation, although they had introduced unscriptural terminology such as *homoousios*. The appeal to the witness of the Fathers becomes increasingly important in the succeeding centuries, and direct argument from Scripture correspondingly recedes in significance. Collections of patristic texts replace collections of biblical texts as main arguments in theological disputes. M. Santer, 'Scripture and the Councils', in *Sobornost*, 7, 2 (1975), pp. 99-100.

²⁸⁴At the Council of Ephesus (431) the shift is already evident, and despite a great deal of argument about scriptural exegesis between Nestorius and Cyril, the issue resolved at the council was the correct exegesis of the creed of Nicaea. Similarly, whilst the argument from Scripture stands at the centre of the Tome of Leo, nevertheless he thought it worthwhile to append to it a dossier of supporting texts from the Fathers. Furthermore, the Chalcedonian definition makes little reference to Scripture but presents itself as a reassertion of the faith of Nicaea. A century later the reason given by the Fifth Council for condemning the Three Chapters is that they are in conflict with the orthodox teaching of Cyril, Proclus and the previous councils; Scripture does not come into the argument. In the case of the Sixth Council, although Pope Agatho's letter to the emperor points indeed to some scriptural texts, the greatest part of the letter is nevertheless devoted to patristic texts. At the centre of the letter lies an appeal not to Scripture but to the Chalcedonian

on Scripture of some authoritative Fathers and theologians, acknowledges that there was in the life of the Church a shift from the preeminence of Scripture to the preeminence of the Church and its tradition. Thus whilst Gregory of Nyssa²⁸⁶ and John Chrysostom affirm the preeminence of Scripture,²⁸⁷ Dositheus argues that Scripture and Church share the same authority and are both infallible. However, by arguing that the authority of the Church's teaching cannot be subject to any criteria of truth, Dositheus places the final authority within the Church.²⁸⁸ Furthermore, during the nineteenth century Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow (1782-1867) shifted again towards the preeminent authority of Scripture to test all the 'traditions of the Church',²⁸⁹ whilst the Moscow statement (1976) reaffirmed that the Church alone gives the authoritative interpretation of Scripture.²⁹⁰

definition, together with a personal point of view on what the pope believes to be its necessary implications. Similarly the Council presents its own definition in the form of a gloss on Chalcedon, and its proof texts are not from Scripture but from Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Leo and Cyril. At the Seventh Council Scripture had been invoked by iconoclasts as proof texts against idols and consequently received a scriptural response from iconodules. However, the main arguments were taken from: (a) the theological appeal to the doctrine of the incarnation (only indirectly appealing to Scripture), and (b) the appeal to Tradition, which occupies a great deal of space in the Council's documents. M. Santer, 'Scripture and the Councils', pp. 100-101.

²⁸⁵K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', pp. 941-969.

²⁸⁶'We treat the Holy Bible as the test of every dogma and rule, accepting only such things as agree with the meaning of Scripture' (*De anim. et res.*; PG 46, 49C).

²⁸⁷'That which the Scriptures affirm, the Lord himself said; and so, even if someone were to rise from the dead or an angel were to come down from heaven, they would not deserve more credence than the Scriptures' (*In Lazarum*, iv,3; PG, 48, 963-1054).

²⁸⁸'Wherefore, the witness also of the Catholic Church is, we believe, not of inferior authority to that of the Divine Scripture. For one and the same Holy Spirit being the author of both, it is quite the same to be taught by the Scripture and by the Catholic Church. Moreover, when any man speaketh from himself he is liable to err, and to deceive, and be deceived; but the Catholic Church...like the Divine Scriptures, is infallible, and has perpetual authority' (*The Confession of Dositheus*, II, in J.H. Leith, ed., *Creeeds of the Churches*, 3rd ed., John Knox Press, Louisville, 1982, p. 487).

²⁸⁹'The only pure and all-sufficient source of doctrines of faith is the revealed word of God, contained now in the Holy Scriptures... Everything necessary to salvation is stated in the Holy Scriptures... Holy Scripture, being the word of God himself, is the only supreme judge of controversies... The decisions of Councils are to be tried by the Holy Scriptures... The traditions of the Church are to be tried by the Holy Scriptures' (Philaret of Moscow, 'Comparison of the Differences in the Doctrines of Faith betwixt the Eastern and Western Churches', in R. Pinkerton, *Russia: or, Miscellaneous Observations on the Past and Present State of that Country and its Inhabitants*, London, 1833, pp. 41-45. Cf. K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 945)

²⁹⁰Ware affirms that most Orthodox theologians today would prefer a more cautious and typical *exposé* of the Orthodox standpoint to that of Philaret. Such a widely accepted Orthodox view of the authority of Scripture is to be found in the Agreed Statement adopted by the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission at Moscow (26 July-2 August 1976): 'The Scriptures constitute a coherent whole. They are at once divinely inspired and humanly expressed. They bear authoritative witness to God's revelation of himself in creation, in the Incarnation of the Word and in the whole history of salvation, and as such express the Word of God in human language...Our approach to the Bible is one of obedience...The books of Scripture contained in the Canon are authoritative because they truly convey the authentic revelation of God...Scripture is the main criterion

The difference between the two approaches lies primarily not in the fact that one view offers an external objective criterion of truth whilst the other offers only an internal subjective criterion, but in their underlying presuppositions. The first approach presupposes that the Church should be in constant dialogue with Scripture not only to interpret it for believers but also to test its own teaching and practices with the Scriptures. The second approach however, presupposes that the institution of the Church, with its structure and practices, is divinely constituted and therefore is beyond any question or need of being changed. Once the 'objectivity' of the institution is affirmed, the Church functions as the only infallible agency of biblical interpretation. This brings us to the next aspect, which is the mode in which the Church uses the Scriptures in maintaining the balance between theological epistemology and religious practice.

Both Lossky and Staniloae believe that the Church is infallible,²⁹¹ and as such the only divinely accredited agency for knowing the truth. Consequently there is no space for dialogue between *episteme* and *praxis*, due to the fact that the institution with its structure and offices is placed beyond any critical analysis. The means employed by the Orthodox Church throughout the centuries in order to maintain this *status quo* range from forbidding the reading of the Bible to laymen,²⁹² to the imposition of the institutional

whereby the Church tests traditions to determine whether they are truly part of Holy Tradition or not' (K. Ware and C. Davey, eds., *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue*, SPCK, London, 1977, pp. 83-84). There are two words which the Moscow statement changed in Philaret's declaration of faith: Philaret affirms that Scripture *is* the Word of God whilst the Moscow statements consider that it *expresses* the Word of God; and where Philaret states that Scripture *is the test* of traditions, the Moscow Statements asserts that it is merely 'the *main* criterion' (K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 946). The Moscow statement introduced the phrase 'Scripture is the *main* criterion whereby the Church tests traditions' in order to avoid any tendency to isolate the Bible from its contexts within the life of the Church. The Moscow statement further continues: 'We...interpret Scripture through the Church and in the Church' (K. Ware and C. Davey, eds., *Anglican-Orthodox*, p. 84), in order to stress the fact that 'It is the Church...that alone constitutes the authoritative interpreter of the Bible' (K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 947).

²⁹¹V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 155; D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, p. 70.

²⁹²This view is presented by Dositheus: 'Ought the Divine Scripture to be read in the vulgar tongue by all Christians? No. For that all Scripture is divinely-inspired and profitable we know, and it is of such necessity, that without the same it is impossible to be Orthodox at all. Nevertheless they should not be read by all, but only by those who with fitting research have inquired into the deep things of the Spirit, and who know in what manner that Divine Scriptures ought to be searched, and thought, and in fine read. But to such as are not so exercised, or who cannot distinguish, or who understand only literally, or in any way contrary to Orthodoxy what is contained in Scriptures, the Catholic Church, as knowing by experience the mischief arising therefrom, forbideth the reading of the same. So that it is permitted to every Orthodox to hear indeed the Scriptures, that he may believe with the heart unto righteousness, and confess with his mouth unto salvation; but to read some parts of the Scriptures, and especially of the Old [Testament], is forbidden for the aforesaid reasons and others of the like sort. For it is the same thing thus to prohibit persons not exercised thereto reading all the Sacred Scriptures, as to require infants to abstain from strong meat (*The Confession of Dositheus*, Question I, in J.H. Leith, ed., *Creeeds*, pp. 506-507). Bulgakov affirms that medieval Catholicism forbade lay people to read the Bible, and consequently produced a direct

hermeneutic both in private religious reading²⁹³ and in academic research.²⁹⁴ The institutionalization of the theological epistemology and hermeneutic led, on the one hand, to a decrease in the level of biblical literacy amongst believers,²⁹⁵ and, on the other, to a stagnation of biblical studies amongst Orthodox scholars.²⁹⁶ Consequently, the authority of the Church fails to maintain the balance between *episteme* and *praxis* in a way that facilitates growth, preferring instead an institutionally enslaved theological epistemology. However, it appears that after centuries of such a relation between theological epistemology and ecclesial practice, the authority of the institutionalized epistemology is being challenged from within the Orthodox Church. One such particular challenge comes from a movement that originated within the Romanian Orthodox Church following the translation of the Bible into the vernacular by Fr. Dumitru Cornilescu.

'anti-Biblicalism', but he avoids pointing out that the same attitude was promoted by the Council of Jerusalem (1672) which approved Dositheus' Confession. See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 21.

²⁹³In the office for the reception of converts used in the Russian Church, the following question is included: 'Do you acknowledge that the Holy Scriptures must be accepted and interpreted in accordance with the belief which has been handed down by the Holy Fathers, and which the Holy Orthodox Church our Mother has always held and still holds?' (I.F. Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church*, Boston/New York, 1906, pp. 458-459. Cf. K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 947).

²⁹⁴The Church has the right and the duty to test the results of critical study, accepting, discarding or modifying them in the light of its inherited faith and its liturgical practice' (K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 947).

²⁹⁵Bulgakov affirms that the highest level of biblical knowledge is to be found amongst Protestants. See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 21.

²⁹⁶Until recently the Orthodox Church had considered biblical studies as a sphere of Protestant academic activities; however there are encouraging signs of an emerging Orthodox tradition in biblical studies. See V. Kesich, 'Biblical Interpretation', pp. 350-351.

Chapter 4

Cornilescu and the Bible Translation

4.1 Historical Background

Dumitru Cornilescu²⁹⁷ was born in 1881 in the village Slasoma, Mehedinți county. His father was a school teacher and both his grandfathers were Orthodox priests. Cornilescu was attracted to the priesthood from youth and as teenager he decided to study theology at the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Bucharest. However, he was not satisfied with the Church's teaching and rituals and asked the Principal of the Seminary to grant him the permission of expanding his theological readings beyond the school's textbooks. Impressed by Cornilescu's search for spiritual depth, the Principal gave him a catalogue with religious publications from abroad. Subsequently, Cornilescu managed to provide for himself some books written by F. Thomas, F. Bettex, R.A. Torrey, S.D. Gordon, J.H.M. Conkey, G. Müller, C.H. Mackintosh and others.²⁹⁸ Such books spoke of a Christian life totally different from his own and those around him. Being attracted by the kind of Christian life espoused, Cornilescu translated some of these books into the Romanian language. In a short booklet that he wrote later Cornilescu affirms that he thought: 'This will be my ministry in the future: to make this life known to my people.'²⁹⁹ Subsequently, he sent parts of his translations to most of the Christian magazines in the country to be published. However, after several months of publishing fragments from these books, Cornilescu asserts: 'I expected the new life to come, but the life did not come.'³⁰⁰

During his time in the Seminary Cornilescu joined the Orthodox Church St. Ștefan (known as Cuibul cu Barză, The Stork's Nest) where the well known priest Tudor Popescu consecrated Cornilescu as deacon in his parish. As a deacon in Popescu's parish (1912-1916), in addition to performing the liturgy with Popescu, Cornilescu continued to translate Christian books and to

²⁹⁷There are limited bibliographical resources about Cornilescu's life and work due to the fact that, on the one hand, the Orthodox Church was not interested in giving publicity to his work, and on the other, after leaving the Orthodox Church, Cornilescu joined a pietist group of Brethren who believed that 'genuine' spiritual work is being done in humility and anonymity. The two major sources of information about Cornilescu are: (a) D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors la Dumnezeu și cum am Spus Altoră,' in I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, Societatea Misionară Romană, Wheaton, 1988, pp. 103-115; A. Maianu, *Life and Work of Dumitru Cornilescu: Translator of the Bible into Modern Romanian Language*, Emmanuel, Vienna, 1981.

²⁹⁸See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 12-17.

²⁹⁹See D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 13.

³⁰⁰D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, p. 103.

disseminate them among the parishioners.³⁰¹ However, concerned by the fact that his work did not have the results he had anticipated Cornilescu asked himself: 'They are the same books and the same ideas; why does not the same life come?'³⁰²

Cornilescu affirms that about this time he observed that all the books that he read and translated spoke about the daily reading of the Bible. Assuming that this might be the secret of the 'new life', he resolved to read the Bible every day 'in order to find the secret of the new life.'³⁰³ Maianu describes Cornilescu's reaction as follows:

In the beginning he did not like the Bible. He was quite disappointed with it. The Romanian Bible translation of the time was so bad that he was not able to understand it. 'How is it possible to praise the Bible so much', he asked himself, 'because there is nothing beautiful or interesting in it?' But when he began to read it in a foreign language, he understood it and was very pleased with it.³⁰⁴

Cornilescu's comment on the poor quality of the Romanian translation of the Bible raises the question of the place of Scripture in the life of the Romanian Orthodox Church at the beginning of the twentieth century.

4.2 Scripture in Romania before Cornilescu

Although the written records about the process by which the Romanian people were formed³⁰⁵ and about the expansion³⁰⁶ and mode of organization

³⁰¹A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 15.

³⁰²A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 13.

³⁰³A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 15.

³⁰⁴A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 15.

³⁰⁵The country of Romania as it is today corresponds to a large extent to the ancient Dacia. The main part of Dacia was conquered by the Romans in 105-106 AD. Subsequently, the Emperor Trajan transformed Dacia into a Roman province. Alongside military and economic integration of the province into the life of the Roman Empire there was also a vigorous process of cultural integration. As the Roman population mixed with the Dacians, the Latin influence was so profound that the new culture and civilization that emerged managed to maintain its identity during the long period of barbarian invasion that followed the collapse of the Empire. See V. Dumitrescu, 'The Prehistory of Romania', in V. Dumitrescu, A. Bolomey, and F. Mogosanu, eds., *The Cambridge Modern History*, 2nd ed., CUP, London, 1982, 3/1: 1-74; *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae*, vols. 1-2, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1964-1970, *Herodotus*, (Tr. A.D. Godley), W. Heinemann, London, 1921-1924, vol. 3, pp. 292-299; V. Pârvan, *Inceputurile vieții Romane la gurile Dunării*, Cultura Națională, Bucharest, 1923, p. 8; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians: A History*, I.B. Tauris, London, 1991, pp. 1-8.

³⁰⁶The history of Christianity in Romania goes back to the first four centuries AD, especially to the period following the transformation of Dacia into a Roman province by Trajan in 106 AD. In spite of the general agreement among church historians that Christianity took root in Dacia during the Daco-Roman period, there are different theories about the century in which that occurred. See P.R. Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church*, SPCK, London, 1966, pp. 223, 916; M. Eliade, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Macmillan, New York, 1987, vol. 3, pp. 373-374; Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, III in *NPNF* 2nd ed., pp. 132-173; W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, Longman and Todd,

of Christianity in Dacia are very limited, nevertheless there is evidence that both the Romanian language and Christianity have their roots in the Latin tradition.³⁰⁷ Furthermore, the view which appears to prevail among scholars is that the Daco-Roman population was Christianized 'not by official act, missionary pressure, or mass baptisms. Rather, it was a popular movement that spread spontaneously from the many communities along the Danube.'³⁰⁸ Subsequently the Christian communities in Dacia had maintained their contact with the churches in the Empire throughout the early period of folk migrations³⁰⁹ until the invasions of the Slavs in the Balkans region in the sixth century.³¹⁰ However, the situation had changed significantly with the Christianization of the Bulgars (864), who subsequently imposed their Church with its mode of organization, rite

London, 1984, pp. 448-449, 537; H. Jedin, *Handbook of Church History*, Burnes and Oates, London, 1965, p. 379; H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *The History of the Church*, Burnes and Oates, London, 1980, vol. 1, p. 209; K.S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1955, pp. 75-76; S. Neill, *A History of Christian Mission*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1966; J.C. Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, n.d., p. 272; Tertullian, *Adversus Judaeos*, 7; *PL*, 2, 650A; M. Spinka, *A History of Christianity in the Balkans. A Study of the Spread of Byzantine Culture among the Slavs*, Hamden, Archon, 1968, pp. 2-5; B.J. Kidd, *The Churches of Eastern Christendom from AD 451 to the Present Time*, Lenox Hill, New York, 1973, p. 346; M. Ward, *The Byzantine Church*, n.ed., Madras, 1953.

³⁰⁷See J.S. Watson, ed., *Justin, Cornelius Nepos and Eutropius*, G. Bell and Sons, London, 1976; V. Iliescu, 'Die Räumung Dakiens und die Anwesenheit der romanischen Bevölkerung Nördlich der Donau im Lichte der Schriftquellen', in *Dacoromania*, 1 (1973), pp. 5-28; L. Bârzu, *Continuitatea populației autohtone în Transylvania în secolele IV-V: Cimitirul dela Bratei*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1973, pp. 79-97.

³⁰⁸V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 10. The argument in favour of this theory is the fact that in 271 A.D., under the pressure of the barbarian invasions, Aurelian withdrew the legions and the Roman administration from Dacia to south of the Danube, and thus when the Edict of Milan was issued (313), Dacia was no longer under Roman control but under the occupation of the Goths, who crossed over the country between 250-375 AD. Moreover, during the following centuries there were several waves of barbarian invasions which to a large degree destroyed the Roman civilisation that they found. Under such historical circumstances it is very unlikely that Christianity in Dacia had an institutional development similar to that of the Church in the post-Constantinian period within the boundaries of the Empire. The major barbarian invasions were those of the Goths (250-375), the Huns (375-453), the Gepids (453-466) and the Avars (566-799). See S. Neil, *A History*, p. 61; M. Spinka, *A History*, p. 2; B.J. Kidd, *The Churches*, 346; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 11.

³⁰⁹In spite of the fact that during the first half of the fifth century there was a tendency of the regional bishops to limit the influence of the bishop of Rome, the bishop of Illyricum (which included Dacia) acted as the 'vicar' of the bishop of Rome. With only a short interruption Rome's jurisdiction was maintained in Illyricum until the arrival of the Bulgars (679). See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions*, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1989, p. 64.

³¹⁰These links had been cut off by the arrival of the Bulgars (679) who, in addition to devastating the land and destroying native settlements, launched a sustained persecution against the Christian population from that region. For an account of the violence and persecution used by the Bulgars against Christianity, see F. Dvornik, *Byzantine Mission among the Slavs*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, 1970, pp. 42-46.

(Byzantine) and language (Old Slavonic) in all the territories under their control, including large parts of Dacia.³¹¹ The political, cultural and religious submergence of Dacia into the Slavonic-Byzantine tradition made a significant impact on the subsequent development of Christianity in Romania until the present time.³¹² Thus Păcurariu argues that the adoption³¹³ of the Bible and the liturgy in Old Slavonic³¹⁴ as the official

³¹¹The Christianization of the Bulgars was to a large degree a political act, and thus it was closely linked with the political agenda of their rulers. Consequently, under King Boris (852-889), the Bulgarians oscillated for a time between Rome and Constantinople but finally adopted the Byzantine rite. About this time the Bulgars had occupied almost the entire Balkan-Danubian regions. For a well-documented account of the Christianization of the Slavs, and especially for the influence of Constantine and Methodius among the Slavs see F. Dvornik, *Byzantine Mission*, pp. 1-47; M. V. Anastos, *Studies in Byzantine Intellectual History*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1979, pp. V:11-38; W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise*, p. 855; G. Every, *The Byzantine Patriarchate 451-1204*, SPCK, London, 1962, p. 114; M. Spinka, *A History*, pp. 32-33.

³¹²The cultural and religious integration was so powerful than even after the emergence of the Romanian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia (XIV century), Old Slavonic still remained the official language both in the Church and the chanceries until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when there appeared the first articulated tendency to introduce the 'vulgar' language of the people (known as the Romanian language) both into the Church and State administration. However, the Cyrillic alphabet was preserved in the Church and state administration until the nineteenth century. See N. Iorga, *Istoria Literaturii Românești*, Ed. Librăriei Pavel Suru, București, 1925, pp. 9-223; B.J. Kidd, *The Churches*, p. 348; E. Tappe, 'The Romanian Orthodox Church and the West', in D. Baker, ed., *Studies in Church History*, vol. 13, *The Orthodox Church and the West*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1976, p. 277; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 33-42. For an analysis of different theories concerning the Latin or Byzantine influences in Dacia see F. Dvornik, *Byzantine Mission*, pp. 1-42; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 6-18; J. Dujcev, ed., *Histoire de la Bulgarie*, Horvath, Roanne, 1977, pp. 79-170; I. Nestor, 'Les données archéologiques et le problème de la formation du peuple roumain', in *Revue roumaine d'histoire*, 3:3 (1964), pp. 387-417; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1980, pp. 94-235; I. Russu, *Die Sprache der Thraco-Daker*, Ed. Stiințifică, București, 1969, pp. 233-248; *Etnogeneza romanilor*, Ed. Stiințifică, București, 1981, pp. 108-110; A. Graur, *The Romance Character of Romanian*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1967, pp. 7-8; A. Rosseti, *Istoria limbii române*, Ed. Stiințifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1986, pp. 200-325; M. Constantinescu, eds. *Relations between the Autochthonous Populations and the Migratory Populations on the Territory of Romania*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1975.

³¹³In spite of the historical evidence which supports the theory of a Latin origin of Christianity in Dacia there are no records concerning the existence of the Bible in the language of the native people prior to the Slavonic invasion. Metropolitan Antonie advances the hypothesis that there had been Romanian manuscripts of the biblical books and liturgical texts long before the Slavonic period, but due to the destruction brought about by the barbarian invasions all such documents were lost. However, his theory lacks historical evidence and therefore must be considered critically. See Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget și Simțire Românească*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1981, pp. 67-68. The only records of the translation of the Bible into another language during the first four centuries in the Balkan area are about that of Ulphilas the Goth. Since Gothic was a Germanic dialect, and due to the fact that Ulphilas was Arian, it is very unlikely that his work had significant impact on the life of the Daco-Roman Christian communities. Ulphilas was consecrated bishop (341) of the Christians in Gothia by Eusebius of Nicomedia. Although Ulphilas' translation remains one of the earliest examples of cultural awareness in missiology, one has to balance this

language of the Church actually was the main factor in maintaining Dacia under the influence of Byzantium.³¹⁵ Furthermore, Metropolitan Antonie asserts that whilst the historical-cultural value of Church Slavonic cannot be denied, in practical terms it did not serve the native population who together with the majority of the priests, understood neither the Slavonic writings nor its liturgy.³¹⁶ In addition to considering the Slavonic influence as one of the most damaging factors for the development of Romanian national culture and the church, Metropolitan Antonie argues that the very use of Old Slavonic was against the nature of things; in other words, the Church's Slavonic was like a 'stopped up well' not able to meet the religious needs of the Daco-Roman population.³¹⁷ Under these circumstances it is difficult to speak of the relation between the Scriptures and the Church before the beginning of the fifteenth century when the first attempts to translate the Bible and to produce religious literature in the language of the people (Romanian) occurred. Thus, following the emergence of the Romanian Principalities of Transylvania,³¹⁸ Moldavia³¹⁹ and Wallachia,³²⁰ due to

fact by a better understanding of the political situation of the Roman Empire, which was willing to use any method to prevent the barbarian invasions. See W. Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 4th ed., T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1992, p. 148; E. Benz, *The Eastern Orthodox Church: Its Thought and Life*, (Tr. R. and C. Winston, Anchor Books, Garden City, NY:, 1963, pp. 107-110; K.S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, vol. 1, *The First Five Centuries*, Harper and Row, New York, 1937, pp. 214-224; S. Neill, *A History*, p. 55; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe*, vol. 1, pp. 94-102.

³¹⁴Cyril (826-869) and Methodius (815-885) translated the Bible and the liturgy into Old Slavonic. This translation of the Bible alongside the Slavonic liturgy were eventually adopted by the churches in Dacia during the tenth century. See F. Dvornik, *Byzantine Missions*; 'Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Rome', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 7 (1963), pp. 20-30; F. Grivek, 'Cyrille et Méthode', in *Irénikon*, 3 (1927), pp. 67-78; T. Hannick, 'Notes et Documents: Cyrillo-Methodiana', in *Irénikon*, 41 (1968), pp. 97-105; M. Lacko, *Saints Cyril and Methodius*, Slovak Editions, Rome, 1963; D. Obolensky, 'Sts. Cyril and Methodius: Apostles of the Slavs', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 7 (1963), pp. 3-13.

³¹⁵See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 1, pp. 177-180.

³¹⁶See Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, pp. 64-67.

³¹⁷This dichotomy between the language of the people and the Church's language had a negative impact not only upon the development of the Romanian language and culture in general but also upon the development of a Romanian Christian tradition in particular. In fact the pro-Slavonic Orthodox hierarchs of that time held the view that one cannot use a 'vulgar' dialect in religious practice; God does not hear prayers in any other dialect than the 'sacred languages', namely, Greek and Old Slavonic. M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 1, p. 179; N. Iorga, *Istoria Literaturii Românești*, p. 93. N. Iorga, *Istoria Literaturii Românești*; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 1; Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, I. Russu, *Etnogeneza romanilor*, A. Graur, *The Romance Character of Romanian*, A. Rosseti, *Istoria Limbii Romane*; G. Popa-Lisseanu, *Isoarele istoriei romanilor*, Ed. Bucovina, București, 1934; C.C. Giurescu, *Probleme controversate în istoriografia Românească*, Ed. Albatros, București, 1977, V. Spinei, *Moldavia in the XIth-XIVth Centuries*, Ed. Academiei, București 1986; *Realități etnice și politice în Moldova meridională în secolele X-XIII*, Junimea, Iași, 1985.

³¹⁸Following the Christianization of the Hungarians in the tenth century, Catholic missionaries were very active also in Transylvania, and established Catholic dioceses in all the main towns of the principality. However, the Catholic faith was primarily adopted

internal and external factors the official Church Slavonic was slowly replaced by the 'vulgar' language of the people.³²¹ The first attempts to translate the Bible and other religious books into the language of the people came under Hussite³²² and Protestant influence.³²³ However, these writings

by the Hungarians and the Germans, whilst the native population (Daco-Romans) having as their main occupation sheep-farming, were thus scattered all over the mountain areas and so remained outside the reach of the Catholic missionaries. From the few historical records of the religious life of the Romanian population in Transylvania, it appears that they already followed the Byzantine rite. See G.R. Elton, ed., *The New Cambridge Modern History*, CUP, Cambridge, 1990, vols, 1 and 2; A. Armbruster, *La romanité des Roumains: Histoire d'une idée*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1977, pp. 140ff; L. Makkai, *Histoire de la Transylvanie*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1945, pp. 24-72; I. Fodor, *In Search for a New Homeland: The Prehistory of the Hungarian People*, Corvina, Budapest, 1982, pp. 278-285; B. Köpenczy, ed., *Erdély története*, Akadémia, Budapest, 1986, vol. 1, pp. 71-76; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 8-18.

³¹⁹Moldavia was founded in the fourteenth century by a group of Wallachs led by their leader Dragoș, who acted under the suzerainty of the Crown of Hungary. Bogdan who succeeded Dragoș on the throne of Moldavia threw off the overlordship of the Hungarian Crown and in 1349 rendered the country independent. However, from the end of the fourteenth century Moldavia was brought into the orbit of Poland through marriage alliances and political manoeuvres. From a religious point of view the Moldavian princes wanted the same kind of State-Church relation as in Byzantium. There were, nevertheless, several attempts to bring Moldavia under Catholic influence, but besides minor successes the Catholic Church did not make a significant impact on Moldavia. See C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, pp. 119-125; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 1. pp. 257-267.

³²⁰The Daco-Roman population on the north of the Danube, in spite of being totally submerged among the Slavs, reappeared later as a separate ethnic group called Wallach, the name under which the Daco-Roman population had been known since the ninth century. Taking advantage of the general confusion that followed the Tatar invasion in the territories of the present day Romania, some small Wallachian communities from the north of the Danube, together with other Wallachian groups which had moved from Transylvania to the region between South Carpathians and the Danube, established the Wallachian state (or *Tara Românească*) in 1330 under the leadership of Besserab. The hostility of the Hungarian kings towards the new Romanian principality favoured the later decision to seek Byzantine help. Consequently, the Wallachian princes asked the Ecumenical Patriarch to recognize their right to have their own Metropolitan See to represent and lead the Wallachian Church. See E. Tappe, 'The Orthodox Church', pp. 277-291; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 1, pp. 239-256; C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, pp. 110-117; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 33-40; M. Neagoe, *Problema centralizării statelor feudale românești*, pp. 133-150; D.C. Giurescu, *Țara Românească în secolele XIV-XV*, 1973, pp. 213-245.

³²¹See. N. Iorga, *Istoria Românilor*, București, 1920, p. 153; Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, pp. 65-66.

³²²The Hussite idea of spreading the 'Word of God' into the language of the people had a significant impact in North-East Transylvania and Moldavia. Consequently some Romanian priests and believers who adopted Hussite views translated the whole Bible as well as separate sections (such as the Book of Psalms, the Gospels, and the Book of Acts) into Romanian in order to disseminate them more easily among the people. See W. Walker, *A History*, pp. 377-385; N. Iorga, *Istoria Literaturii Românești*, pp. 100-124.

³²³Both Lutherans and Calvinists made some efforts to encourage the translation of the Bible and other books into Romanian. See C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Românilor*, p. 240; G. Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii Române de la Origini pînă în Prezent*, 2nd ed., Ed. Minerva, București, 1986, pp. 9-10; E. Tappe, 'The Romanian Orthodox Church', p. 281-283. The

had a limited area of influence due to the fact that both, these movements were significantly weakened by political and religious counter-measures. The Romanian population was largely illiterate and morally unready to overcome the official prejudice against the use of 'vulgar' language in religious practice.³²⁴ Nevertheless the desire of ordinary people to read the Scriptures and other religious writings in their own language was clearly expressed by Coresi³²⁵ when he affirmed in 1654:

Almost all languages have the word of God in their language, only we Romanians do not, and Christ says...whoso readeth, let him understand. What good does it do to the Romanians if the priest speaks to them in a foreign language?³²⁶

Subsequently some Orthodox hierarchs decided to produce Christian literature for the general public. Thus Metropolitan Varlaam of Moldavia (1632-1653),³²⁷ Peter Moghila of Kiev (1632-1646),³²⁸ Metropolitan Simion

spreading of Calvinist teachings in the Principalities together with the publication of the Calvinist Confession of Cyril Lucaris (1629) were the main reasons for the convoking of the Councils of Jassy (1642) and Jerusalem (1672) in order to refute Calvinist teaching and to approve genuine Orthodox teaching as defined by the Confessions of both Peter Moghila and Dositheus. See G. Hadjiantoniou, *Protestant Patriarch*, pp. 91-109; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 208-211; N. Iorga, *Istoria Poporului Românesc*, Ed. Stiințifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1985; I. Bodensieck, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, Augsburg Publishing House, 1965, vol. 3; G.R. Elton, ed., *The New Cambridge Modern History. The Reformation 1520-1559*, CUP, Cambridge, 1990; G.H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, The Westminster Press, 1961; L.W. Sitz, *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements*, vol. 2, *The Reformation*, Concordia, St. Louis, 1971; P.F. Sugar, eds., *A History of Hungary*, I.B. Tauris, London, 1990.

³²⁴In order to counter the Calvinist emphasis on the duty of all believers to read the Scriptures in their own language, Dositheus wrote in his Confession that the Divine Scriptures ought not to be read in the vulgar tongue by all Christians but to be received only interpreted by the Church from the sacred languages. See *The Confession of Dositheus*, Q. I and II.

³²⁵Coresi (- 1583) was an Orthodox deacon who, being persecuted by the Wallachian prince Mircea III (Ciobanul), fled to Brașov where, under the protection of the city patron he became one of the first to introduce the Romanian language in publishing religious books. For more information about Coresi and his work, see N. Iorga, *Istoria Poporului Românesc*, p. 334; C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, p. 240; A. Mares, 'Cînd a murit Coresi?' in *Limba Română*, XXI, 2 (1972), pp. 155-158; G. Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii*, pp. 7-8.

³²⁶Cited by V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 66.

³²⁷Varlaam is the first one to respond to the Calvinist Catechism by writing in Romanian: *Carte Românească de Învățătură* (1643); *Răspuns la 'catechismul calvinesc'* (1645); and *Scapte taine a Bisearecii* (1644). See A. Rosetti, eds., *Istoria literaturii române*, București, 1962, vol. 1, pp. 285-286; A.Z.N. Pop, 'Viața Mitropolitului Varlaam al Moldovei', in *MMS*, XXXIII, 10-12 (1957), pp. 742-774; T. Bodogae, 'Mitropolitul Varlaam ca teolog', in *MMS*, XXXIII, 10-12 (1957), pp. 775-790; I. Lupaș, 'Carte Românească de învățătură' de la 1643, într-o ediție transilvană de la Alba-Iulia în 1609', in *MMS*, XXXIII, 10-12 (1957), pp. 791-805; C. Harea, 'Legăturile Mitropolitului Varlaam cu Bisericile Ortodoxe din Kiev și Moscova', in *MMS*, XXXIII, 10-12 (1957), pp. 806-819; Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, pp. 85-88.

³²⁸Peter Moghila was one of the sons of the Moldavian ruling family, the Movilești. His father Simeon Movila was prince of Moldavia, and after Peter failed to succeed the throne of Moldavia, he took the monastic vow and later became the Metropolitan of Kiev. In this

Ștefan of Transylvania,³²⁹ Metropolitan Antim Ivireanul of Wallachia (1708-1716)³³⁰ and Metropolitan Dosoftei of Moldavia (1624-1693)³³¹ were among the first to undertake this task. Consequently in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a growing number of religious books were translated, written and published in the Romanian language. Amongst these writings a special place belongs to the New Testament (*Noul Testament*, 1648)³³² and

capacity he was particularly concerned to equip the Moldavian metropolitan see with a printing press to facilitate the spreading of religious books in order to counter Calvinistic teachings. He was also the author of the *Orthodox Confession*, ratified by the Council of Iassy (1642). See Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, pp. 88-91.

³²⁹Simion's primary concern was that the Romanians did not have a unified language, due to the fact that they were either a scattered people or that a foreign language had been imposed on them. Consequently he translated the New Testament (1648) into a popular language so that it might be understood by all. Furthermore he translated the book of Psalms (1651) for the liturgical needs of the Church. Metropolitan Simion argued that 'the words are like money; their money is good that is circulating in all countries; exactly so with the words, those words are good that are understood by all' (Cited by Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, p. 92). See also, G. Istrate, 'Un moment important in istoria limbii române literare: Noul Testament de la Bălgrad (1648)', in *MMS*, XLVIII, 9-12 (1972), pp. 749-755; P. Mihai, 'Noul Testament de la Bălgrad și personalitatea Mitropolitului Simion Ștefan', in *GB*, XXXII, 11-12 (1973), pp. 1349-1358; P. Bogdan, 'Considerații generale asupra Noului Testament de la Bălgrad (1648) al Mitropolitului Simion Ștefan', in *MB*, XXIII, 10-12 (1973), pp. 636-647; Al. Hanță, *Idea de patrie în limba română*, Ed. Minerva, București, 1976, p. 39.

³³⁰Antim Ivireanul continued and developed the use of the popular language in religious writings. One of his writings *Didahiile* is considered to be among the best literary productions of the time. See D.P. Bogdan, 'Viața lui Antim Ivireanul', in *BOR*, LXXIV, 8-9 (1956), pp. 679-688; I.V. Georgescu, 'Antim Ivireanul și locul lui în cultura poporului român', in *BOR*, LXXXIV, 9-10 (1966), pp. 967-970; E. Negrici, *Antim, logos și Personalitate*, Ed. Minerva, București, 1971; Antim Ivireanul, *Opere*, Ediție critică și Studiu introductiv, de G. Ștrempel, Ed. Minerva, București, 1972.

³³¹Dosoftei was the first to translate the book of Psalms in Romanian poetry (*Psaltirea în versuri*, 1673) being inspired by Ian Kochanowski from Poland who arranged the scriptural texts into poetry. He also wrote in Romanian *Viața și petrecerea sfinților*, 4 vols. 1682-1686. Further, Dosoftei translated and printed *Holy Liturgy* (1683); *Molitfelnic* (1686); and *Octoih* (1683). See G. Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii*, pp. 48-52; C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Românilor*, pp. 294-295; A.Z.N. Pop, "'Psaltirea în versuri" după trei veacuri', in *GB*, XXXII, 5-6 (1973), pp. 531-537; G. Istrate, 'Limba română literară în "Psaltirea în versuri" a lui Dosoftei', in *MMS*, L, 9-12 (1974), pp. 777-800; S. Porcescu, 'Activitatea cărturărească a mitropolitului Dosoftei', in *MMS*, L, 9-10 (1974), pp. 800-837; Dosoftei, *Opere*, in A.N. Ursu, ed., *Opere. Versuri*, Ed. Minerva, București, 1978.

³³²The New Testament (1648) which was translated and printed in Transylvania illustrates both the extent to which the ideas of the Reformation influenced the Romanian population in Transylvania and the willingness of the Orthodox hierarchs to offer to their subjects the Scriptures in their own language. Generally speaking, the Protestant Reformation had a significant impact among the German and the Hungarian communities but a very limited one among the Romanian communities in the Principalities. For an account of the spread of Protestant ideas in the Romanian Principalities and of the specific aspects given by the interplay of the political, cultural, ethnic and religious factors see R. Rouse and S.C. Neil, eds., *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1968; K.S. Latourette, *A History*, vol. 3, *Three Centuries of Advance*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1970; H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *History of the Church*, vol. 6, *The Church in the Age of Absolutism and Enlightenment*, Burns and Oates, 1981; R.A. Huston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe*:

to the Bible (*Biblia de la București*, 1688).³³³ Călinescu, for instance, affirms that the Romanian Bible (1688) represents for the Romanian people what Luther's Bible represents for the Germans.³³⁴ Similarly, Metropolitan Antonie affirms that *Biblia de la București* (1688) has the same value for Romania as Luther's Bible for Germany and the King James version for England.³³⁵ However, the truth is that the translation of the New Testament (1648) and the Romanian Bible (1688) was followed neither by a wide popular movement of bible-reading nor by a period of theological clarification as in Germany after Luther.

The reason for this is two-fold: socio-cultural and theological. Firstly, the Romanian Bible was inaccessible to ordinary people due to the fact that it was printed in Cyrillic and was very expensive. Consequently the Bible was limited only to liturgical use in the Church.³³⁶ Secondly, since during the period of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation the Orthodox Church was struggling with its own conservatism and the theology of 'repetition', it did not engage in theological clarifications which could have stimulated the Romanian Church to make better use of its Scripture in the vernacular.³³⁷

Culture and Education 1500-1800, Longman, London, 1988; J.H. Grimm, *The Reformation Era 1500-1650*, Macmillan, New York, 1973; E. Cameron, *The European Reformation*; N. Iorga, *Istoria Poporului Romanesc*, (1985); G.R. Elton, ed., *The New Cambridge Modern History. The Reformation 1520-1559*; G. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*; L.W.Sitz, *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements*, vol. 2, *The Reformation*; P.F. Sugar, eds., *A History of Hungary*; G.H. Williams, 'New England Puritan Interest in the Christian East', in *Andover Newton Quarterly*, 15:4 (March, 1975), pp. 268-269.

³³³The printing of the whole Bible in the Romanian language, under the rule of the Wallachian prince Șerban Cantacuzino, represented an important step in the process of replacing the Old Slavonic with the Romanian language in the Church. Giurescu and Călinescu argue that the Western views about the role of the liturgy in the vernacular made their ways into the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia not only through Transylvania but also through Poland and Greece. See C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, pp. 293-297; G. Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii Romane*, p. 10.

³³⁴G. Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii Romane*, p. 10.

³³⁵See Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, p. 97. Without denying the importance of the New Testament (1648) and of the Romanian Bible (1688) for the development of Romanian language and culture in general and of the Romanian Orthodox Church in particular, one has to make a distinction between apologetic nationalism, Church rhetoric and historical facts.

³³⁶See N. Iorga, *Istoria Literaturii Românești*, pp. 365-398; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 58-121.

³³⁷Schmemmann affirms that 'during the Reformation, at the most critical point in the ecclesial history of the Christian West - a period of review and re-evaluation of traditional values in the West - the Orthodox Church was mute, and because of this the Western dispute was one-sided, deprived of any genuine universal perspective. The East could only fence itself off, defend itself, preserve; it lacked resources to contribute its own experience or its uninterrupted tradition as a way out of Western blind alleys.' A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, Harvill Press, London, 1963, p. 284.

In conclusion, Georgescu affirms that whilst between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries the Orthodox Church played an important role in the translation and the printing of religious books in Romanian, nevertheless its traditionalism represents more a factor of cultural stagnation than of progress.³³⁸ However, once the process had started, there were successive generations of Orthodox hierarchs and scholars committed to offering to the Romanian people the Bible in their own language.³³⁹ Furthermore, the spread of the Romanian Bible among the people of the Romanian Principalities has been actively supported by the British and Foreign Bible Society since 1819.³⁴⁰ Consequently between 1688 and 1921 (when Cornilescu published his version) there were about seventeen versions of the Bible published in the Romanian Principalities. However, the spreading of the Bible among the Romanian people was limited by the fact that all the editions published in Romania were printed in Cyrillic characters until 1860 and in Roman characters only thereafter.³⁴¹

The main version used in Romania, before Cornilescu, was the edition published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1871 at Iași, known as the *Biblia de Iași*.³⁴² Yet in spite of being printed in Roman characters and being revised several times, the Romanian Bible was still unclear and thus difficult to understand. In fact, a contemporary Romanian Orthodox theologian, in his attempt to refute Cornilescu's Bible as 'sectarian', acknowledges that compared with the unclear texts and massive book of the official version approved by the Synod in 1914 Cornilescu's version was a better one.³⁴³ Consequently, in the absence of a dynamic relation between Scripture and the ecclesial community at the beginning of the twentieth century, Romanian Orthodoxy was characterized by biblical illiteracy and ritualism. As Kidd puts it:

The peasants, who form the bulk of the population, are fanatically attached to their religion, and do not consider as Christians those of another Faith. They

³³⁸V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 66-67.

³³⁹This process was further stimulated by the union of a part of the Orthodox Church from Transylvania with Rome (1700-1701). Being motivated by the desire to demonstrate the Latin origin of the Romanian nation and of their religion, the Uniate scholars promoted the use of the Romanian language and Roman alphabet in the Church and schools. See E. Tappe, 'The Romanian Orthodox', pp. 284-287; Mitropolitul Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, pp. 252-265.

³⁴⁰Although the historical records are not certain, it appears that as early as 1819 there was an initiative by the British and Foreign Bible Society to support the translation of the Bible into Romanian. See N. Serbănescu, 'Sfînta Scriptură tîlmăcită în limba romană', in *BOR*, CVII, 3-4 (1989), pp. 41-78, (here p. 44).

³⁴¹E.A. Nida, ed., *Book of a Thousand Tongues*, U.B.S., 1972, P. 372.

³⁴²This edition had been revised several times by the BFFS: 1874 Iași, 1893 Bucharest, 1905 Vienna, 1906 Bucharest, 1908 Bucharest, 1909 Bucharest; 1911 Bucharest, 1912 Bucharest, 1920 London. All these revisions have been done by Romanian Orthodox scholars, but for some unknown reason in 1914 the Romanian Orthodox Church published its own edition of the Bible, approved by its Holy Synod and having as patron his majesty King Carol I of Romania. See N. Șerbănescu, 'Sfînta Scriptură', pp. 41-78.

³⁴³P.I. David, *Călăuză Creștină pentru Cunoașterea și Apărarea Dreptei Credițe în Fața Prozelitismului Sectant*, Editura Episcopiei Aradului, Arad, 1987, p. 426.

conscientiously follow every precept of the Church, and consider it a greater sin not to keep the forty days' fast before Easter than to steal a neighbour's goods. They love the ceremonial of their Church without understanding it, and they piously dream through the two-hour-long Sunday service, in which no sermon is preached... They may be unfortunate enough to have an unworthy priest in their village whom they thoroughly despise on the week-days, but on Sundays they respectfully listen to the Mass held by him, and kiss his hand when he presents to them the Cross, and anoints their foreheads at the end of the service. God is to them a very shadowy conception: Jesus Christ is worshipped rather from a distance...; but they feel at home with their Saints-SS. Nicholas and Dmitri, Basil and Grigori, and especially the Holy Virgin. They burn candles before their shrines: pray to them in distress: take the clothes of the sick to the holy images to be blessed by the priest: and very scrupulously keep the feasts of the Saints.³⁴⁴

4.3 Cornilescu's Translation: Theological Implications

Two particular aspects motivated Cornilescu to start his new translation: first, the lack of clarity of the Church's version of the Bible, and second, his belief that the religious life of the Romanian people could be improved only by direct access by the people to Scripture. His views were shared also by Princess Callimachi, who was instrumental in providing Cornilescu with both the permission of his bishop for this work and the material resources.³⁴⁵

As Cornilescu started to work on the new translation, in addition to the linguistic difficulties, he was also challenged by the theological meaning of different Hebrew or Greek words which appeared to contradict what he had believed so far. During this struggle to reconcile the meaning of the texts with his beliefs, Cornilescu underwent a religious experience that brought him to a more Protestant view of soteriology and the relation between Scripture and Church.³⁴⁶

Firstly, as Cornilescu attempted to understand the book of Romans, he shifted from the Orthodox paradigm of 'revelation-deification', to the Protestant one 'revelation-justification'. Thus he defined salvation as a right relationship with God. This approach naturally led to the use of legal or forensic categories such as sin and the wrath of God,³⁴⁷ justification by

³⁴⁴B.J. Kidd, *The Churches of Eastern Christendom from A.D. 451 to the Present Time*, Burt Franklin, New York, 1973, pp. 350-351.

³⁴⁵ See I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, p. 102; A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 25; A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing of the Orthodox Church in Romania', in *Religion in Communist Lands (RCL)*, 3, 6 (1975), p. 15.

³⁴⁶Cornilescu believes that the religious experience and the theological clarification that he underwent during the translation of the Bible are very significant for his approach to the whole issue of the relation between Scripture and the Church, and particularly to the soteriological role of Scripture. See D. Cornilescu, 'How I Found the Truth and How I Passed it On', I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, pp. 103-115; A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 19-24.

³⁴⁷One of the things that surprised Cornilescu during the work on the New Testament's text was the fact that the Bible speaks so much about sin and that it appears to be something very repulsive in the sight of God. Cornilescu affirms: 'I always believed that

faith,³⁴⁸ and pardon for guilt³⁴⁹ in order to explain the relation between God and man. However, this forensic approach to soteriology was not for Cornilescu an abstract system but primarily a soteriological experience rooted in his belief that Scripture is the Word of God which not only explains God's purposes with human beings but actually enables them to respond to

sin is very bad; but if somebody had asked me what sin was, I would probably have replied, 'If you kill somebody, you commit a sin...The murderer is a sinner, and his place is in jail.' But when I read that '...whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgement...' (Matt. 5:2), I was quite astonished, because everyone gets angry every day' (D. Cornilescu, 'How I found the Truth', in A. Maianu, p. 19). He could not agree that the expression 'all have sinned' (Rom. 3:23) is true, and consequently Cornilescu claimed that he was not a sinner. (See D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in I. Ţon, p. 104). Further, he considered that the sentence, 'There is no one righteous, not even one' (Rom. 3:10), is nonsense. By the time he reached the sentence, 'For the wages of sin is death' (Rom. 6:23), Cornilescu was convinced that the Bible was full of nonsense. (D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in Ţon, p. 105). Consequently he abandoned the book of Romans, and continued the translation of the other books of the New Testament. However, when he reached Revelation 20:14, Cornilescu interpreted the expressions 'the second death' and 'the lake of fire' as referring to the 'wages of sin'. Cornilescu confesses that he was curious to see who would be there in the 'lake of fire', and as he went on to Revelation 21:8 he agreed that murderers should be there, but he was frightened when he read that there will be also 'all liars' because he realised that he had told lies in his life. Being confused and frightened, Cornilescu affirms that there was a deep desire in his heart not to go in 'the lake of fire'. He affirms that, 'I did not know the way of salvation', was very confused and finally decided to return to the book of Romans (D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in I. Ţon, p. 106).

³⁴⁸Studying the book of Romans Cornilescu came to the passage which says that all 'are justified freely' (Rom. 3:24), and so he thought that the Bible was 'full of contradictions...One verse says that all are under condemnation, and now, suddenly, another says that all are justified freely' (D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in I. Ţon, p. 106). However, reflecting on the text, he observed that it speaks about a justification that comes by faith in Christ because 'God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood' (Rom. 3:25). Reflecting on these verses, Cornilescu developed his view of 'imputed' sin and 'imputed' righteousness in order to explain the relation between the sin and death of mankind on the one hand, and the sinlessness of Christ and his death as the ground for justification by faith on the other (D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in I. Ţon, p. 106). Consequently, for the first time in the history of Bible translation in Romania, Cornilescu introduced the expression of 'being reckoned righteous' in order to convey the idea of 'imputed' righteousness. Further, Cornilescu replaced all the expressions that convey the Orthodox synergistic view of salvation. Technically he realised that in his translation he was replacing the Active Voice of the verbs used in the Orthodox version to refer to redemption, salvation, justification or sanctification by the Passive Voice in order to point out that God does the work for man.

³⁴⁹Cornilescu was confronted with the problem that, although he had learned in the Seminary that Christ died for the sins of the world, he was convinced that his own sins were not forgiven. Reflecting upon the fact that Christ died for the sins of the world, Cornilescu affirms: "This is not useful to me", I said, "because I am a sinner and my sins are not forgiven. But if He died for the sins of the world, that means that He died for my sins, too, because I am one of the world. Anyhow, I understand now in this book that there is forgiveness for sins; that Jesus Christ died for me, too; and thus this forgiveness is also for my sins...When I will go to judgement, I will say to God, I don't know anything else, except this Book. You say that it is Your written Word. I read in it that Jesus Christ died for me; I accepted forgiveness for myself and if You will condemn me, it is not my fault" ('How I Found the Truth', in A. Maianu, p. 21).

God according to His will.³⁵⁰ Faith is, for Cornilescu, adherence to God's Word and reliance on the promises of the Word. This reliance awaits that which the Word promises.³⁵¹ Thus the one-sided forensic conception of justification is corrected by a progressive dialogue between God and man which leads to sanctification.³⁵²

Secondly, concerning the relation between Church and Scripture, Cornilescu observed that the latter was not 'the book of the people'³⁵³ but the 'book of the institution' so completely 'incorporated into the rest of the liturgy that anyone not specialised in this field was not able to differentiate between what was tradition and what was God's Word.'³⁵⁴ Furthermore, the services were not read but rather 'sung in a monotonous and incomprehensible language...participation of people was only a formality. Whilst the priest conducted the liturgy at the altar, the 'Christians' entered the church, made the sign of the cross, lighted a candle, and then left. This worship presented no hope for teaching the people about the Saviour.'³⁵⁵ Since Cornilescu was skeptical about the possibility of changing the institution, he decided to give the Bible to the people and subsequently to encourage them both to read and to live according to its teachings.³⁵⁶ Thus, after almost six years of work, the Bible was ready for printing and was published by Societatea Evanghelică Romană in 1921. Subsequently, the British and Foreign Bible Society adopted Cornilescu's translation as their standard Romanian text and, after a revision in 1924, Cornilescu's version has been published every year in the tune of about 100,000 copies.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁰Cornilescu refers to the relation between Christ and believers by analogy to the relation between a master and his servants. '...I discovered that He is Lord, too. And Lord means "master of slaves". That is, He is the Master; we are the slaves. We do not belong to ourselves; we belong to Him-all we have and are. And when I saw that Paul was a slave (bond servant) of Jesus Christ, I said, "If Paul was that, I must be the same." And so I took him as my Lord, and since He has to give orders, I have had to obey' ('How I Found the Truth', in A. Maianu, p. 22).

³⁵¹I did not read the Bible any more with the former question, "Is this possible? Is it true?" but with other questions, "Have I this? Am I That? If not, why not? If yes, thank God for it!" (D. Cornilescu, *How I Found the Truth*, in A. Maianu, p. 22).

³⁵²Cornilescu reflected also on the implications for daily life of the fact that Christ is alive. Until that time he thought that sin was, more or less, a normal component of human nature. However, in the light of his view of Christ's death, he was convinced that sin is a horrible thing. Consequently, the question was if there was a way to overcome sin on a daily basis. Cornilescu asserts: 'My greatest joy was when I discovered that he is not only a Friend for me to speak to, but a Saviour who gives me the power to become a winner over sin, power to overcome sin, because He broke the power of our enemy, Satan, by His resurrection. "Well", I said again, "if this is true-and I see that is true-I want to take it for myself, because I no longer want to be a sinner who keeps on killing my Saviour"' (D. Cornilescu, 'How I Found the Truth', in A. Maianu, p. 22).

³⁵³K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 947.

³⁵⁴A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 8.

³⁵⁵A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 8.

³⁵⁶A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 15.

³⁵⁷See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 7.

4.4 Cornilescu and the Non-Liturgical Use of Scripture

Cornilescu considered the Bible as the authoritative source for both theological epistemology and ecclesial practice.³⁵⁸ Consequently he decided to spread the Scriptures among the people and to encourage them to study them. However, we saw above that within the Orthodox tradition Scripture belongs to the Church and consequently its authentic interpretation can be offered only by the Church. Thus Cornilescu began to reflect whether it is possible for other people to undergo the same kind of soteriological experience by reading the Bible.³⁵⁹ To his surprise, he discovered that the lay people not only had a significant understanding of Scripture but that many were also searching for a different kind of ecclesial community. Thus, instead of joining the Orthodox liturgy on Sunday, Cornilescu started regular meetings in his house. These meetings had a corporate and *charismatic* approach to both biblical hermeneutic and worship.³⁶⁰ Furthermore, in 1919 when Cornilescu moved to Bucharest in order to make preliminary preparations for the printing of the Bible, his ideas were spread initially in Popescu's parish (the Stork's Nests) and from there throughout the country. The new movement began to grow rapidly, especially after Popescu was converted to Cornilescu's ideas.³⁶¹ Subsequently the two priests organized, in addition to the official liturgical meetings, bible-study groups in homes and a school hall in order to explain the Scriptures to those who were interested. Due to the fact that the number of those who adhered to their ideas was growing rapidly, the two priests decided to start a bi-monthly journal called 'The Christian Truth' in order to provide systematic biblical teachings for their converts.³⁶² In all their teachings Cornilescu and Popescu affirmed the authority of Scripture over the Church and Tradition and consequently began to eliminate from the liturgy those parts that appeared to them to contradict the Scripture.³⁶³ Such a shift generated a strong reaction from the Church's hierarchy, and eventually Cornilescu was exiled³⁶⁴ and Popescu defrocked.³⁶⁵

³⁵⁸D. Cornilescu, 'Cum M-am întors', in I. Țon, pp. 113-114.

³⁵⁹'...the trouble was that I was the only person I knew that had received life in that way. So, I began to think, "Oh, this life is wonderful; but who knows if it is not only imagination, because I only received it through the study of the Bible!" (D. Cornilescu, 'How I Found the Truth', in A. Maianu, p. 22).

³⁶⁰See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 42-46.

³⁶¹At the beginning Popescu rejected Cornilescu's ideas but after a few months he decided to follow Cornilescu's method of biblical exposition during his Sunday liturgy. According to Popescu's account, on one particular Sunday, as he was preaching during the liturgy, he underwent a similar experience of salvation as Cornilescu's. See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 48-49.

³⁶²For an account of the spread of the new movement in Bucharest and in other parts of the country, see A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 50-58.

³⁶³See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 59. The relation between Scripture and Tradition in the teaching of Popescu and Cornilescu will be presented in the next section 'Tradition and Authority'.

³⁶⁴Due to the fact that Princess Callimachi continued to support Cornilescu, the Romanian Patriarch Miron Cristea did not follow official procedure to bring Cornilescu before the Church Consistory but encouraged him instead to leave the country. Moreover

However, the new approach to the relation between Scripture and the Church that started with Cornilescu continued to spread within the Romanian Orthodox Church through the work of Popescu and later through the work of another Orthodox priest, Iosif Trifa, who founded the 'Lord's Army' movement based upon the same view, namely, the supreme authority of Scripture for Christian faith. Confronted with the rapid growth of this movement, in addition to the measures taken against the two priests, the Church developed other forms of response which will be presented in the following methodological, theological and sociological observations.

4.5 Observations

4.5.1 Methodological: From a methodological point of view Cornilescu adopted a Protestant view of Scripture as the only source of theological epistemology and the supreme authority in matters of faith and practice.³⁶⁶ Therefore the relation between revelation and deification in the Orthodox approach was interpreted by Cornilescu as the relation between revelation and justification. Due to his view on the authority of Scripture Cornilescu considered that a correct interpretation of Scripture is vital for salvation. Furthermore, he considered that Scripture is materially and formally sufficient for the Christian faith and therefore does not need an officially sanctioned interpretation. However, whilst becoming aware of the role of a hermeneutical community in balancing private interpretation, Cornilescu believed that the authority to maintain a balanced relation between *episteme* and *praxis* within the Christian community is *sola scriptura*. Although such a belief represents a radical shift from the Orthodox view, the Romanian Orthodox Church avoided any open theological debates with Cornilescu regarding biblical authority, preferring instead to reject his teachings on the grounds that they were Protestant and thus heretical.³⁶⁷

4.5.2 Theological: In his theological approach Cornilescu replaced the ontological categories regarding *theosis* with personalistic concepts. Thus instead of mystical union with God Cornilescu considered that salvation

there were two different reactions amongst the Orthodox hierarchs and clergy. One party used the disagreements between Cornilescu and Popescu and the Church in order to launch an appeal for renewal within the Romanian Church, and whereas the other, the traditionalist party, demanded the condemnation of the two priests. However, since Cornilescu was not willing either to recant his teachings or to leave the country, the traditionalist party encouraged the Army General Russescu to provoke Cornilescu to a duel on the grounds that the latter had insulted him by calling him a sinner during his sermon. Under such circumstances Cornilescu left the country in 1923 and lived in exile until his death in 1975. See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 7, 64-116.

³⁶⁵See I. Ţon, *Credința Adevărată*, pp. 115-141.

³⁶⁶For a presentation of the Protestant views on the authority of Scripture, see J.K.S. Reid, *The Authority of Scripture: A Study of the Reformation and Post-Reformation Understanding of the Bible*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1957.

³⁶⁷P. Deheleanu, *Manual de Sectologie*, Tipografia Diecezeană Arad, 1948, pp. 64-66; P.I. David, *Călduză Creștină*, pp. 418-435.

consists in a right relationship with God based upon the saving work of Christ and appropriated by faith. However, in spite of this theological shift and his belief that Orthodox teaching and practice are not in agreement with the Scriptures, Cornilescu did not engage in theological dialogue with the Church in order to present a critical view of these doctrines. Instead he preferred a non-confrontational mode of spreading his teaching wherever people were interested. Consequently his teachings and writings were primarily intended for devotional use. Therefore the attempt of some to call Cornilescu 'the Romanian Luther'³⁶⁸ is more a kind of eulogy than a historical-theological fact; in fact, after Cornilescu, Romania did not undergo a time of theological clarification similar to that Germany as a result of Luther's work.

Similarly, the Romanian Orthodox Church avoided a comparative and critical reflection concerning the distinction between Cornilescu and the Church's views on the issue of Church and Scripture, preferring instead the repetition of the official formula. As a matter of fact, Cornilescu is very seldom mentioned in Orthodox writings.³⁶⁹

However, in spite of this 'double silence', in time the spread of Cornilescu's Bible among Orthodox believers influenced the Church to reconsider the locus of Scripture in its life. Thus Bunea³⁷⁰ argues that among the threefold aspect of Christ's office (prophet, priest and king) entrusted to the Apostles and through them to the bishops, the teaching office has preeminence. In the biblical pattern, argues Bunea, teachings come first and then the sacraments, and not the other way around.³⁷¹ He considers that the apostolic pattern, based on the fact that 'faith comes from hearing' (Rom. 10:17) reflects the divine order of the ministries in the Church. One cannot partake of the sacraments without first believing, and because the early church understood this principle teaching and preaching always preceded the other aspects of the liturgy.³⁷²

In addition to the soteriological function of Scripture within the Church, Bunea also emphasizes also the normative and didactic function of the Scriptures for the entire life of the Church with its sacramental-hierarchical structures. However, this emphasis on the centrality of Scripture is

³⁶⁸See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 37.

³⁶⁹See P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 64-66; I.P. David, *Călăuză Creștină*, pp. 418-435.

³⁷⁰I. Bunea, 'Cuvîntul de învățătură, parte integrantă a cultului divin', in *BOR*, CVII, 3-4 (1989), pp. 79-89.

³⁷¹His proof texts are Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15-16. See I. Bunea, 'Cuvîntul de Învățătură', p. 79.

³⁷²Bunea mentions the fact that the Apostles appointed deacons in Jerusalem not to administer primarily the sacraments but to give themselves 'to prayer and the ministry of the word' (Acts 6:4). Further, he outlines the primacy of teaching in the life and the work of Jesus (Luke 4:43; John 17:4,6,8,12) and that of the Apostles (I Cor. 3:9; I Cor. 9:16; II Cor. 3:7; II Tim. 4:2-5; Acts 9:20; 13:5; 14:1; 18:4-7; 19:9; 20:8,20,31). I. Bunea, 'Cuvîntul de Învățătură', pp. 79-80.

subjected to the principle of institutionalized hermeneutic,³⁷³ and as we shall see in the next two sections of the thesis, the Romanian Orthodox Church uses biblical 'proof texts' to emphasize the biblical base of all its teaching and practice.³⁷⁴ Consequently, the emphasis on the role of the Bible in both liturgical and non-liturgical spheres is not followed by a significant development of biblical studies. In fact, Maloney points out that 'one of the weakest and less developed branches of Romanian theology seems to be that of Old and New Testament studies.'³⁷⁵

4.5.3 Sociological: Cornilescu's work has had significant success in Romania not because of his theological stature but primarily due to some favourable sociological circumstances. Thus at the beginning of the twentieth century there was an openness of the Romanian population towards religion, and because the Orthodox Church was in a state of moral decline³⁷⁶ a large segment of the population was ready to look for answers from other religious movements that emerged during that time.³⁷⁷ Consequently, with the spread of Protestant-Evangelical teachings about the authority and sufficiency of Scripture there arose an interest in the ordinary people in the reading of Scripture.³⁷⁸ The Orthodox Church was not in a position to meet this new interest in Bible reading due to the fact that,

³⁷³For an account of the Romanian Orthodox Church's instructions concerning the reading of Scripture by laity, see M. Basarab, 'Domnul nostru Isus Hristos interpret al Sf. Scripturi', in *MA*, 5-6 (1983); I. Bria, 'Scriptură și Tradiție', in *ST*, XXII, 5-6 (1970), pp. 384-395; N. Chițescu, 'Cum se studiază Scriptura', in *GB*, XVII, 11 (1958), pp. 1042-149; 'Inspirație și Revelație în Sf. Scripturi', in *MMS*, 1-3 (1978), pp. 7-27; 'Scriptură, Tradiție și tradiții', in *Ortodoxia*, VI, 3-4 (1963), pp. 363-423; N. Corneanu, *Temeiurile învățaturii ortodoxe*, Ed. Mitropoliei Banatului, Timișoara, 1981; P.I. David, 'Hristos-"Cheia" Scripturii', in *Ortodoxia*, XXXV, 2 (1980), pp. 212-217; 'Atitudini mai noi cu privire la valoarea și interpretarea Sfintei Scripturi', in *MB*, XXXIV, 3-4 (1984), pp. 128-138.

³⁷⁴See N. Petrescu, *Omiletica*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1977; I. Bria, 'Biserica și Liturghia', in *Ortodoxia*, 4 (1982), pp. 486-487; D. Belu, 'Cu privire la predică în concepția Sf. Ioan Gură de Aur', in *Mitropolia Ardealului*, 3-4 (1958), pp. 265-278; D. Tudor, 'Jertfa Laudei, Predici Liturgice', Tipografia Diecezană, Arad, 1945; pp. 142-145; D. Belu, 'A propovădui, ce înțeles are', in *MA*, 3-4 (1959), pp. 264-276; G. Cristescu, 'Predică și predicatori în vremea noastră', in *ST*, 3-6 (1950), pp. 139-150; V. Coman, *Scrieri de Teologie Liturgică și Pastorală* Ed. Episcopiei Ortodoxe Romane a Oradiei, 1983, pp. 133-225; Patriarhul Teoctist, ed., *Invățătură de Credință*, pp. 7-425.

³⁷⁵G.A. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology since 1453*, Nordland Publishing Company, Belmont Massachusetts, 1976, p. 293.

³⁷⁶For a presentation of the moral decline in the Orthodox Church at the beginning of the twentieth century see M. Costea, 'Lupta contra rachiului', in *RT*, 5-6 (1910), pp. 227-228; Arhim. Scriban, 'Chestiunea Alcoolismului', in *BOR*, 14 (1923), pp. 1046-1053; 'Când urmărim beția', in *BOR*, 2 (1929), pp. 218-223; 'Preoți în luptă împotriva beției', in *BOR*, 1 (1925), pp. 164-165; G. Vartolomeu, 'Beția și mijloacele de a o combate', in *BOR*, 6 (1926), pp. 337-341; 'Alcoolul și combaterea lui.' in *BOR*, 2-3 (1931), pp. 194-196.

³⁷⁷For a presentation of the moral-spiritual decline of the Romanian Orthodox Church at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the subsequent spread of different 'sects' see P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 23-30.

³⁷⁸See P.I. David, *Călăuză Creștină*, p. 426.

in addition to the bad translation and high cost,³⁷⁹ the Orthodox Church printed only a small number of Bibles, as Maianu affirms. Thus, in 1855, in cooperation with the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Orthodox Church published 5000 New Testaments in Cyrillic characters. Even after the Latin script replaced the Cyrillic, the number of copies printed each year between 1912 and 1914 varied between 500 and 1000.³⁸⁰ By contrast, Cornilescu's version (having a better translation and a more convenient price) has been published at a rate of about 100,000 a year, and Maianu and Țon state that between 1921 and 1981 there were over 5,000,000 copies printed.³⁸¹ As a result of the widespread diffusion of Cornilescu's Bible among Orthodox believers, the Orthodox Church took some measures to counter the phenomenon. Thus with the support of the state the Church began to persecute and eventually to ban various 'sectarian' groups, hoping thereby to prevent them from growing.³⁸² Furthermore, the Orthodox Church organized a widespread campaign of discrediting all other religious groups. In addition to the open attack launched by the priests during the liturgy, the Church produced a large number of booklets in which it exposed the heresy of the 'sects'.³⁸³ However, the impact of these methods has been very limited due to their apologetic overtone and poor academic standard.³⁸⁴

Alternatively, the decision of the Church to offer a more central place to Scripture in both liturgical and non-liturgical use has had a better effect in the life of the Church. Due to its concern to prevent the risk of the false interpretation of Scripture, the Church has produced bible-study guidelines to help the faithful to remain in the tradition of the Church. Moreover, the parish priests are encouraged to take part in the non-liturgical bible-readings in order to supervise the preservation of Orthodoxy. As a result of

³⁷⁹For an account of the spreading of Cornilescu's Bible as a result of its convenient price see P.I. David, *Călăuză Creștină*, p. 426.

³⁸⁰See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 22-23.

³⁸¹See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 7; I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, p. 140. However, since it is impossible to have access to accurate statistics concerning the printing and the distribution of Scriptures in Romania due to Communist persecution, on the one hand, to the secrecy kept by each Bible agency operating in Eastern Europe during the Communist régime, and on the other, these figures have to be taken critically.

³⁸²For an account of the legal and civil methods used by the Orthodox Church against these religious groups, see A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 59-63; T. Popescu, *Am Trăit Atâtea Minuni*, Ed. Lumina Lumii, București, 1991, pp. 58-177; A. Popovici, *Istoria Bapțiștilor din Romania*, vols. 1 and 2, Ed. Bisericii Baptiste Romane, Chicago, 1980-1989; T. Dorz, *Istoria Unei Jertfe*, vol. 1, (manuscript).

³⁸³For a presentation of these methods, see I. Felea, 'Ortodoxie și sectarism', in *RT*, 12 (1928), pp. 376-379; 'Cum trebuie să se comporte preotul', in *RT*, 8-9 (1931), pp. 273-281; 'Sf. Scriptură în mîna preotului', in *RT*, 4 (1937), pp. 148-150; Gr. Marcu, 'Dialogul luptei antisectare', in *RT*, 5-6 (1943), pp. 271-276; A.D. Popa, 'Măsuri pentru combaterea sectelor religioase', in *RT*, 14-17 (1912), pp. 441-446; D. Staniloae, 'Care dintre eretici și schismatici vor putea fi primiți în sînul Bisericii Ortodoxe', in *RT*, 11-12 (1931), pp. 444-447; Vasile al Oradiei, 'Rolul și rostul preotului în parohie', in *MA*, XXVI, 7-9 (1981), pp. 479-492; P.I. David, 'Responsabilitatea misionară', in *ST*, 5-6 (1984).

³⁸⁴For example, P.I. David in his *Călăuză Creștină*, p. 426, affirms that Cornilescu's Bible claims that in the year 2000 the end of the world will come, but fails to identify such an assertion in the Bible's text.

these meetings the Church takes the form of a hermeneutical community, although for the time being the institutionalized hermeneutic reduces in a significant way the active participation of the laity.³⁸⁵

One other positive aspect of this change is the fact that once Orthodox believers are biblically literate they engage in dialogue with the members of other churches and religious groups. David affirms that since 'Holy Scripture is the only platform for dialogue with the "sectarians"' the Orthodox priests and believers need to know their Scripture very well.³⁸⁶ However, he exhorts Orthodox believers to avoid debates over the dogmatic teaching of the Church when the 'sectarians' bring biblical 'proof texts' to contradict them.³⁸⁷ In spite of these official restrictions, there are signs of both numerical participation in the liturgy and of inter-faith dialogue at the lay level which encourages the exchange of ideas between the members of different traditions. This phenomenon generates an internal dynamism in the Romanian Church that is in many ways unique in the Orthodox world. Ware asserts:

Of all the Orthodox Churches, not excluding the Greek, it is the Romanian that is undoubtedly the most vigorous in its outward life, and the best supported by the people.³⁸⁸

This dynamism of the Romanian Church undoubtedly has many internal and external causes but amongst them the movement that originated with Cornilescu and continued with Popescu and Trifa has a significant place.

³⁸⁵For an interesting presentation of this view see P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 37-42; P.I. David, *Călăuză Creștină*, pp. 3-42, 98-133, 134-165, 188-234.

³⁸⁶See P.I. David, *Călăuză Creștină*, p. 125.

³⁸⁷See P.I. David, *Călăuză Creștină*, p. 125.

³⁸⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 176.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

From the perspective of biblical authority within the Orthodox Church, the twentieth century can be described as the century of struggle for space between *episteme* and *praxis*. In the area of theological epistemology a significant number of Orthodox theologians are aware of the risk presented by either a Greek meta-historical or a Jewish historicism approach to the question of truth. Consequently both apophatic *agnosia* and cataphatic *logolatria* are rejected in favour of a patristic synthesis between history and *eschata*.³⁸⁹ In this context, the purpose of revelation as the only source of theological knowledge is not the development of a theological system but deification. In placing the emphasis on mystical union with God, the contemporary Orthodox Church follows the tradition of the Greek Fathers who have considered concepts and language not as absolutes or as an end in themselves but primarily as 'an instrument, a tool in their effort to make the content of our faith more meaningful, to fight errors, to instruct catechumens, to strengthen the weak in faith.'³⁹⁰

Further, Staniloae's synthesis between cataphatic and apophatic approaches to theological epistemology and the relation between words and acts in divine revelation offers a theological framework for the role of the Bible in the ecclesial community. Thus the Church as a historical-eschatological community continues its ascending dialogue with God through the Scripture interpreted according to the Apostolic Tradition. Revelation, community and deification are thus inextricably linked together. Consequently it is the responsibility of the entire ecclesial community to know and to live the truth. In this respect the authority which maintains the balance between *episteme* and *praxis* belongs to the entire community.

However, due to the fact that the Orthodox Church is a sacramental-hierarchical community, the role of the *sensus fidelium* is limited to that of the *bearer* of the revealed truth, whilst the hierarchy defines, examines and expounds the truth.³⁹¹ As a result of this concentration of authority in one office, the space between *episteme* and *praxis* has been reduced to the point where the two are merging. Furthermore, this shift from *ecclesia* as a hermeneutical community to the episcopate as the Church's organ of theological definition of truth was followed by the development of an 'ideology' which affirmed that only within such a hierarchical-sacramental ecclesial community can one attain deification. In this case the dynamic

³⁸⁹For a critique of the Greek influence on the apophatic approach to theological epistemology see R. Mortly, *From Word to Silence*, vol. 2, *The way of negation, Christian and Greek*, Hanstein, Bonn, 1986.

³⁹⁰E. Timiadis, 'God's Immutability', p. 23.

³⁹¹See K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', pp. 948-953.

between *episteme* and *praxis* is replaced by an institutionalized epistemology which is intended to justify the traditional practice. The enslavement of theological epistemology by traditional practice is well expressed by Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople (1590):

It is not the practice of our Church to innovate in any way whatsoever, whereas the Western Church innovates unceasingly...We do not dare to remove from the ancient books a single 'jot or tittle', as the saying goes. So we were taught and such is our purpose—to obey and to subject to those who went before us.³⁹²

Since the second part of the eighteenth century there have been signs of change towards increasing space being given to theological epistemology.³⁹³ Indeed it is the hallmark of the twentieth century to bring to the forefront of Orthodox theology the importance of theological epistemology.³⁹⁴ Thus in all Orthodox countries, as well as in the Orthodox diaspora, there are well respected theological schools which represent 'a movement away from mere translations of Russian and Greek compendia to the composition by their own national theologians of compendia. Academics took on greater seriousness as their respective theological journals developed into organs of creative theology.'³⁹⁵ As a result of this theological revival in the Orthodox Church there are some encouraging signs of change in the relation between *episteme* and *praxis*.

In the most recent decades, despite traditionalist opposition, a growing number of Orthodox scholars have welcomed biblical criticism as a valid academic approach to biblical studies.³⁹⁶ The Orthodox Church also is reconsidering the place of Scripture in the liturgy. Bunea affirms that the contemporary church has to rediscover the centrality of Scripture that it had in the early church.³⁹⁷ A similar view was adopted at the 'European Seminar

³⁹²Quoted by K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology in the Christian East: the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries', in H. Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of Christian Doctrine*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1978, p. 307.

³⁹³The Hesychast renaissance in the last decades of the eighteenth century was followed by the emergence of the Russian theology of the nineteenth century. See K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology in the Christian East: the Eighteenth to Twentieth Centuries', in H. Cunliffe-Jones, ed., pp. 455-457.

³⁹⁴A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 282.

³⁹⁵G.A. Maloney, *A History*, pp. 317-318.

³⁹⁶See V. Kesich, 'Biblical Interpretation', pp. 343-351.

³⁹⁷See I. Bunea, 'Cuvîntul de învățătură', p. 81.

³⁹⁸The final document of the seminar underlines, among other things, the following points regarding the place of the Bible: 'The necessity to reaffirm constantly the biblical content and understanding of the liturgy, which can be easily distorted by a merely folkloristic, ritualistic, or cultural attitude...It is therefore crucial for Christians to understand their life and history in the perspective of the Holy Scripture...Every Christian should have direct access to the text of the Holy Scripture both through private and liturgical reading...The group felt that there is a need for renewal of the preaching and teaching ministry, especially in view of the concerns and problems of the audience of the worship services. This process has to be started at the level of the education of the clergy in the teaching of the Bible, homiletics, catechetical, and liturgics...A strong recommendation was formulated "to have the entire text of the Bible (Old and New

on the Role and the Place of the Bible in the Liturgical and Spiritual Life of the Orthodox Church-Prague, September 12-18, 1977.³⁹⁸ Furthermore, Istavridis affirms that under the influence of the Protestants, the Orthodox Church decided to introduce a Sunday School programme. Thus the Orthodox have adapted the methods and the teaching manuals of the Protestants to the needs of their own Church.³⁹⁹

In addition to liturgical and bible-study programmes organized under the supervision of the priest, the Orthodox Church in America encourages its members not only to read the Bible on a daily basis but also to memorize it. Coniaris affirms: 'Most books *inform* us, a few *reform*, the Bible alone *transforms*.'⁴⁰⁰ Further, Coniaris offers examples of people who were converted by reading the Bible, thus distancing himself from the Orthodox traditional view that 'if the Word of God were to come in the life of the believer through another way than the Church, it would cease to be the Word of God.'⁴⁰¹ The recognition of the soteriological role of the Scriptures outside the liturgical-sacramental institution suggests a new understanding of the

Testament) read during the liturgical Sunday synaxes and to improve the traditional system of the biblical pericope...Acknowledging the special place of the Bible in the liturgical life of the Church, we express the wish that it should become more understandable and accessible to our contemporaries...The Orthodox Church should be open to an examination of possible changes of the pericope of evangelical and apostolic readings prescribed for the Sundays and feasts of the year. For in these days multitudes of God's people assemble who because of the incompleteness and monotony of the pericope, are deprived of the possibility to listen to the Word of God and its interpretation in its fullness...Taking into account the all-sanctifying and illuminating power of the Divine Grace which is communicated in the liturgy and through the Word of God, a more extensive reading of the Bible in liturgies not combined directly with the Eucharist should be promoted...Holy Scripture is the Source and basis of the whole liturgical and spiritual life of the Church...The incarnate Word of God nourishes the Church in the liturgy, as Good News and as spiritual Bread. Indeed, one cannot share in the eucharistic part of the liturgy without fully sharing in its kerygmatic part (biblical readings, sermons, etc.)...The faithful should have a better knowledge of, and a more direct access to the biblical texts printed wholly or in part in the language they speak. The translation and distribution of the Bible remains an important task and responsibility of the Church" (In *International Review of Mission*, LXVI, 264 (Oct. 1977), pp. 385-388).

³⁹⁹See V.I. Istavridis, 'The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement 1948-1968', in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1948-1968*, vol. 2, WCC, Geneva, 1986, pp. 287-309, (here p. 300).

⁴⁰⁰A.M. Coniaris, *Introducing the Orthodox Church*, p. 159.

⁴⁰¹V. Prelipcean et G.T. Marcu, 'La Parole de Dieu', p. 25.

relation between the Word and the Spirit and their freedom to operate beyond the canonical boundaries of the Church. At the same time such views represent a significant rapprochement between Orthodox and Protestants, at least in the Diaspora.⁴⁰²

However, in spite of all these changes, Orthodox theologians are in agreement that in the relation between Scripture and the Church, the latter has preeminence. Consequently, the relation between *episteme* and *praxis* is still heavily dominated by traditional institutional epistemology. This unbalanced relation between *episteme* and *praxis* requires a new approach to the question of authority in the Church. Authoritarian methods, as used by the Romanian Church in response to Cornilescu's movement, prove to be less effective than the participation of the entire ecclesial community in the life of the Church. Since both revelation and deification are inextricably linked with the community, its active participation in the process of knowing and the translation of that truth into practice not only avoids any dualism between clergy and laity but actually offers a valid example to the West for a dynamic relation between epistemology and tradition. When the whole community participates in the process of knowing and in the translation of truth into practice the role of authority can be defined as 'enabling authority' rather than 'ruling authority'.⁴⁰³

From an ecumenical perspective, an important point of convergence between East and West concerning the relation between epistemology and practice is offered by Newbigin⁴⁰⁴ and Kesich.⁴⁰⁵ Newbigin affirms:

When we are received into the Christian community, whether by baptism as infants or by conversion as adults, we enter into a tradition which claims authority. It is embodied in the Holy Scriptures and in the continuous history of the interpretation of these Scriptures as they have been translated into 1,500 languages and lived out under myriad different circumstances in

⁴⁰²See A.M. Coniaris, *Introducing the Orthodox Church*, pp. 149-169.

⁴⁰³In this context authority does not have oppressive meaning (*imperium, potentia* and *potestas*) but liberating ones such as: to enable, to cause to grow, to enlarge. *Imperium* means order, command, power, mastery, government; *potentia*-naked power; and *potestas*-legal power. See S.W. Sykes, ed., *Authority in the Anglican Communion*, Anglican Book Centre, Toronto, 1987, p. 34ff; E. Hill, *Ministry and Authority in the Catholic Church*, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1988, p. 16; E.D. Watt, *Authority*, St. Martin Press, New York, 1982, p. 14.

⁴⁰⁴The authority of tradition is maintained by the community of scientists as a whole. This community is held together by the free acceptance by its members of the authority of the tradition...The maintenance of the tradition depends on the mutual trusts which scientists have in one other, in the integrity with which each does her work, for no one scientist can have direct knowledge of more than a tiny fraction of the whole. But the authority of the tradition is not something apart from the vision of truth which the tradition embodies. It would be a violation of the tradition if authority were to be substituted for the personal grasping of the truth' (L. Newbigin, *The Gospel*, pp. 47-48).

⁴⁰⁵'It has been well said and often repeated that we should not only learn the Fathers but learn *from* them. We should not simply repeat what they said but explore how and why they said it, the way they encountered the problems and interests of their own time and how they struggled to find solutions. Our problems and our questions are different from theirs.' V. Kesich, 'Biblical Interpretation', p. 345.

different ages and places...Like the scientist, the Christian believer has to learn to indwell the tradition. Its models and concepts are things which he does not simply examine from the perspective of another set of models, but have to become models through which he understands the world. He has to internalize them and to dwell in them...But being personal does not mean that it is subjective. The faith is held with universal intent. It is held not as 'my personal opinion', but as truth which is true for all. It must therefore be publicly affirmed, and opened to public interrogation and debate.⁴⁰⁶

Pointing in the same direction, Kesich considers that the development of biblical studies within the Orthodox Church will have significant impact in its practice.

The interest in Biblical research is definitely linked to what has been going on in Orthodox parishes. In many Orthodox communities Bible studies are organized and held regularly as church activities...These study groups, usually under the leadership of their pastors, ask for Biblical commentaries...This is a challenge to Orthodox scholars and teachers, to translate their research and to convey in clear terms an Orthodox perspective within which the people would be able to use, to judge and evaluate new ideas which are appearing so frequently in our pluralistic society. In view of these developments, Biblical interpreters may influence Christian life significantly. Their findings or interpretations not only furnish information to satisfy public curiosity, but become a call to a new life in Christ, as it was in the early Church. Revival of interest in the Bible accompanies theological awakening. A theological revival will not occur without genuine interest and active participation in Biblical research. One cannot take place without the other.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁶L. Newbigin, *The Gospel*, pp. 49, 50.

⁴⁰⁷V. Kesich, 'Biblical Interpretation', p. 351.

Section II

Tradition and Authority

Chapter 1

Introduction

In Orthodox theology the issue of religious authority understood from the perspective of the relation between theological epistemology and praxis has to be addressed within the overarching category of *theosis*: the purpose of revelation is deification. Since divine revelation was entrusted to the Church, then the task of both theological epistemology and ecclesiastical praxis is to enable the community to attain deification. However, we saw that every community runs the risk of either disintegration due to an 'anarchic' epistemology which completely disregards communal praxis, or of 'petrification' due to a total subjection of epistemology to an over-institutionalized praxis. Meyendorff identifies these tendencies within the Orthodox Church under the form of 'modernism'¹ and 'conservatism'.²

Although Meyendorff argues that neither 'modernism'³ nor 'conservatism'⁴ affected Orthodoxy to the extent that it did the Western churches, nevertheless the Orthodox Church,

¹Meyendorff asserts that this trend is best illustrated by the Renovated Church in Russia which under the influence of the Communist régime abandoned the canonical tradition of the Church and subsequently introduced ecclesiastical reforms, particularly in the area of Church governance and liturgy. See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 132-133, 190.

²Meyendorff affirms that the best example of conservatism is represented by the 'Old Believers' who tend to canonize the past. J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 190.

³Oppressive traditionalism was one of the main charges brought by the Enlightenment against Christianity, and in spite of the waning influence of Enlightenment rationality the contrast between the autonomous critical mind, accepting only what cannot be doubted, and the mere belief in the authority of tradition is still part of the anti-traditional bias of modernity. In his essay 'What is Enlightenment?' Kant affirms that the motto of the Enlightenment is *Sapere Aude!* 'Have courage to use your own reason.' Such a state involves release from dependence on external authorities. I. Kant, 'What is Enlightenment?' in *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, (Tr. L.W. Beck), Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1959, pp. 85-86ff; C.E. Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, p. 153.

⁴Eastern Orthodoxy affirms that the Western tradition became 'oppressive' due to its legal approach to the issue of the relationship between God and mankind, an approach which was further expanded to ecclesiology, and especially to the doctrine of ministry, the role of dogmatic definitions and of the canon law. Archer argues that in the Roman Catholic understanding the Church enjoys the fullness of God-given authority to rule its members, to prescribe what they should believe and how they should live. A. Archer, *The Two*

is under strict obligation to distinguish carefully in this heritage between that which forms the Church's Holy Tradition, unalterable and universally binding, received from the past, and that which is mere relic of former times, venerable no doubt in many respects but sometimes also sadly out of date and even harmful to the mission of the Church.⁵

The task of the contemporary church, then, is to distinguish between those elements of Tradition which lead to *theosis* and those which are of human origin and as such not only not essential to Christian faith but could also present barriers on the way to deification.⁶ In addition to the influences of such factors as modernism,⁷ ecumenism⁸ and internal dynamics,⁹ the

Catholic Churches, SCM Press, London, 1986, pp. 7-14; E. Every, 'The Orthodox Church', p. 153; E. Benz, *The Eastern Orthodox Church*, pp. 1ff.

⁵J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 190.

⁶T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 205.

⁷Bauckham argues that by rejecting the Mediaeval Ages *authoritarian* view of tradition and by affirming the autonomy of reason as the source of all valid knowledge, the Enlightenment obscured the extent to which all human knowledge and thought is indebted to tradition. Although the revolt against the Mediaeval Ages enslavement of *episteme* by *praxis* is to a large degree justified, the alternative, namely the 'disincarnation' of *episteme* from the traditional values of the community, led to belief in the supra historical universality of rational categories at the expense of the role of particularities of communal traditions as legitimate sets of presupposition for epistemic endeavour. Further, Gunton argues that the suppression of the particular in the name of the universal is in fact nothing less than the replacement of one form of totalitarianism by another. See R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', in B. Drewery and R. Bauckham, eds., *Scripture, Tradition and Reason*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1988, pp. 132-133; C.E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many*, p. 13; 'Knowledge and Culture: Towards an Epistemology of the Concrete', in H. Montefiore, ed., *The Gospel and Contemporary Culture*, Mowbrays, London, 1992, pp. 84-99.

⁸In responding to the challenge of modernity concerning the role of authority of its tradition Christianity faces yet another challenge: namely that within Christendom there are a plurality of traditions which, in spite of the fact that each one of them claims to embody the genuine Apostolic Tradition, in reality are in striking disagreement with one another. See R.B. Eno SS., *Teaching Authority in the Early Church*, Michael Glazier, Inc., Wilmington, Delaware, 1984, p. 13. Meyendorff argues that 'if there is any issue upon which Protestants, Roman Catholics and Orthodox have historically divided it is precisely tradition' (J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New-York, 1983, p. 93). Although it is commonly believed that Tradition became a matter of dispute in theology only after the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, in reality Tradition has played a significant role both in the unity and the disunity of Christianity throughout the centuries. Louth, for example, mentions the early Gnostic controversies about tradition, the appeal to Tradition during the iconoclastic controversy (the Councils of Hieria 754, and the Seventh Ecumenical Council, Nicaea II, 787), as well as the late Mediaeval Ages disputes around the question of novelties in the Church's teaching and practice. See A. Louth, *Discerning the Mystery*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1983, pp. 73-74. Recognizing that any attempt to restore the unity of divided Christendom has to give an answer to these questions within the Faith and Order Commission, a special Commission was formed under the name 'Tradition and traditions' with the specific task of addressing those divisive issues that sprung from tradition. C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions within Christendom', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1978, p. 221.

⁹The internal dynamic is characterized by disagreements both between different national Orthodox churches on such issues as unity, ecumenicity and the primacy of honour, and

Orthodox Church believes that the primary reason for a re-evaluation of both the content and the authority of Tradition is soteriological.¹⁰ Concerning this latter aspect, namely the content and the soteriological role of Tradition, there was significant disagreement between the Romanian Orthodox Church and Popescu, an Orthodox priest. Popescu accused the Orthodox Church of having introduced novelties such as the cult of Mary and the Saints, changing thus the content of Apostolic Tradition.¹¹ Within such a context, the purpose of this section is to explore the Orthodox view on the authority of Tradition from the perspective of the distinction between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions. A special place will be given to the question raised by concerning the tension between the Apostolic Tradition embodied in Scripture and the ecclesiastical tradition embodied in the teaching and practices of the contemporary church.

within the same church between the traditionalists, who attempt to restrict the Orthodox faith to the Byzantine period of the Ecumenical Councils, and those who affirm the value of the contemporary conciliar decisions of the local (national) churches. See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 92-97.

¹⁰J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 190-191.

¹¹See O. Goga, 'Părintele Popescu și Turma Sa: Furtuna de la Cuibul cu Barză', in *Țara Noastră*, No. 2, 13 (1924), pp. 1-2. An extract of this article was published by A. Scarfe, 'Fr. Popescu and His Flock: The Storm at the Stork's Nest', in *Religion in Communist Lands*, 1975, pp. 18-19.

Chapter 2

Between Apostolic and Ecclesiastical Traditions

2.1 The Concept of 'Tradition'

Tradition is a polysemantic concept.¹² Though etymologically the word *tradition* simply means 'transmission',¹³ in practice the concept is used in a variety of senses. Thus, when Tradition refers to the content (object) of what is transmitted it can have an all-embracing sense which designates the whole of Christian faith and practice handed down within the Church from the beginning to the present day. Understood in this comprehensive way, Scripture is part of Tradition.¹⁴

In a narrower sense Tradition may refer to a body of extra-biblical teachings considered to be of apostolic origin and which can have equal authority with Scripture.¹⁵ In a more particular sense it may refer to the teaching and customs of different churches (Catholic tradition, Lutheran tradition, Orthodox tradition, etc.), in which case we speak about traditions in the plural.¹⁶ Additionally the act of handing on this body of teachings and practices is sometimes described as 'active tradition' in contrast to 'passive tradition', the stress being laid upon the *process* rather than upon the content.¹⁷

When we speak about the source of Tradition it can be 'apostolic' or 'post-apostolic', depending on if its origins are in the time of the Apostles or later.¹⁸ Alternatively the concept is related to the form in which the

¹²K. Ware, 'Tradition and Traditions', in N. Lossky, eds., *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1991, p. 1013; V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 141.

¹³Latin, *traditio*; and Greek, *paradosis*.

¹⁴Ware argues that in this sense tradition includes 'not only doctrinal teaching but worship, norms of behaviour, living experience, sanctity' (K. Ware, 'Tradition and Traditions', p. 1013. For Lane, this inclusive sense 'denotes the sum total of the Christian heritage passed down from previous ages' (A.N.S. Lane, 'Scripture, Tradition and Church: An Historical Survey', in *Vox Evangelica*, IX (1975), pp. 37-55 (here p. 37).

¹⁵See J.H. Elias, 'Authority', in S.B. Ferguson, eds., *New Dictionary of Theology*, IVP, Leicester, 1988, p. 65.

¹⁶See R.P.C. Hanson, 'Tradition', in A. Richardson, eds., *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1983, p. 574.

¹⁷G.H. Tavard, 'Tradition', in J.A. Komonchack, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology*, G & M, Dublin, 1987, p. 1037; G. Moran, *Scripture and Tradition*, Herder and Herder, New York, 1966, p. 19.

¹⁸See D.M. Beegle, *Scripture, Tradition, and Infallibility*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1973, pp. 91-119.

Tradition is transmitted, in which case we speak about 'oral' or 'written' tradition.¹⁹

Moreover, since Tradition cannot exist in a vacuum but only in a specific community, the whole subject has to be investigated in the context of ecclesiology. In other words it is the contemporary church which determines the sense in which *tradition* is used, as well as the latter's place in theological epistemology and practice. Furthermore, since traditional Christianity considers Scripture and Tradition to be the 'deposit' of the divine revelation, from a historical perspective A.N.S. Lane and R. Bauckham trace four different points of view concerning the relation between Scripture and Tradition: the coincidence view,²⁰ the supplementary view,²¹ the ancillary view²² and the unfolding view.²³ Generally speaking, these

¹⁹G.H. Tavard, 'Tradition', p. 1037.

²⁰This view holds that the teaching of the Church, Scripture and Tradition coincide. Apostolic tradition is authoritative but does not differ in content from Scripture. Tradition is necessary because the heretics have misinterpreted Scripture. In conclusion, the Scripture is *materially* sufficient (it contains all that is necessary) but *formally* insufficient (it needs an authorized interpreter). See A.N.S. Lane, 'Scripture, Tradition and Church', pp. 37-55; R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', pp. 117-145. Tavard speaks about the 'coinherence' of Scripture and tradition. See G.H. Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1959.

²¹According to this view Tradition not only provides the correct interpretation of Scripture but also supplements it. Thus Scripture is both *materially* and *formally* insufficient. This view arose from the fact that not all that the Church thought was to be found in Scripture, and consequently the task of Tradition was to fill the gap between the teaching of the Church and Scripture. Congar asserts that, besides the Gnostics who held this view, among the Fathers we find Basil the Great and Augustine. See Y.M.-J. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, Burnes and Oates, London, 1963, pp. 52-53. The theological argument in favour of this approach is pneumatological, namely that it is the Holy Spirit within the Church who guarantees the reliability of its tradition in all aspects: content, transmissions and teaching. See R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', pp. 120-121. For a analysis of the Catholic shift from the 'coincidence view' to the 'supplementary view' see G.H. Tavard, 'Tradition in Early Post-Tridentine Theology', in *Theological Studies*, 23 (1962), pp. 377-405.

²²Scripture is *materially* and *formally* sufficient and therefore the ultimate criterion and norm. Tradition is neither normative interpretation nor a necessary supplement to Scripture. Rather it is a tool to help the Church to understand it. This view was built upon the principle of the perspicuity of Scripture. This was the view of the Protestant Reformers. Luther and Calvin did not protest primarily against Tradition as such but against the teaching of the Catholic Church which, in their understanding, was contradicting the Scriptures. Moreover, Calvin tried to prove that his interpretation of Scripture is in consensus with the Fathers. See R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', pp. 122-124; G.H. Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church*, pp. 210-243; H.A. Oberman, 'Quo Vadis? Tradition from Irenaeus to Humani Generis', in *SJT*, 16 (1963), pp. 240-244; J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (Tr. H. Beveridge), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1989, II.iv,3; III.v,10; III.xv,2; IV.xv,7.

²³The awareness of the insufficiency of the early tradition to support the teaching of the Church gave birth to the 'unfolding view.' This implies the *material* insufficiency of both Scripture and early tradition. According to this view the Church can develop new dogmas if it can show that such teaching was implicit in the earlier tradition. Thus the Church became a *de facto* source of doctrine and practice. See A.N.S. Lane, 'Scripture, Tradition and Church', pp. 37-55; R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason',

views reflect the role of the teaching authority of the contemporary church in shaping the relation between theological epistemology and practice in different historical settings.²⁴

2.2 The Origin of Tradition

2.2.1 Apostolic Tradition: As we saw in the first section the Orthodox believe that all theological knowledge is based upon revelation. Furthermore, we saw that since the way to *theosis* is in *communion*, revelation cannot be separated from the Church.²⁵ Moreover, we saw not only that revelation constitutes the Church but also that Christ, who is the fullness of God's self-revelation, entrusted the gospel to the Apostles and the latter to the Church, which becomes thus the custodian and the interpreter of revelation.²⁶ Clapsis affirms that 'the Church today knows about Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the love of God the Father through the witness of the Apostles.'²⁷ In other words, the Apostolic Tradition represents the heritage that the Apostles received from Jesus and handed on to the Church.²⁸ However, this heritage or *Deposit of Faith* is not to be understood as a set of normative doctrine and formulated beliefs but 'as the whole living Fact of Christ and his saving Acts in the indivisible unity of his Person, Word and Life, as through the Resurrection and Pentecost he fulfilled and unfolded the content of his self-revelation as Saviour and Lord within his Church.'²⁹ Similarly Meyendorff argues that,

The new reality made available to the world by the Incarnation of the Word and made effective in the Church through the Operation of the Holy Spirit is not a mere sum of knowledge, but a New Life.³⁰

However, T.F. Torrance argues that if one cannot identify Christ with the preaching and teaching of the Apostles, it is equally true that He can be neither separated from Apostolic Tradition, that is 'from the apostolic time onwards people may have access to the *Deposit of Faith* only in the form which, under the creative impact of the risen Lord and his Spirit, it has assumed once and for all in the Apostolic Tradition.'³¹ Consequently the *Deposit of Faith* is to be understood as spanning two levels:

pp. 117-145; O. Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman: The Idea of Doctrinal Development*, The University Press, Cambridge, 1957; A. Dulles, *The Survival of Dogma*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1971, pp. 186-225.

²⁴See A.N.S. Lane, 'Scripture, Tradition, and Church', p. 37.

²⁵See E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', pp. 2-3.

²⁶Clement, *Epistle to the Corinthians*, 42; *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 36-37.

²⁷E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', p. 3.

²⁸Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeresis*, I.2,10 in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 11.

²⁹T.F. Torrance, 'The Trinitarian Foundation and Character of Faith and of Authority in the Church', in T.F. Torrance, ed., *Theological Dialogue Between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, vol. 1, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1985, p. 92.

³⁰J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 192.

³¹T.F. Torrance, 'The Trinitarian Foundation', p. 92.

At the deepest level it is identical with the whole saving Event of the incarnate, crucified, and risen Son of God, but on the other level it is identical with the faithful reception and interpretation of the Gospel as it took authoritative shape in the Apostolic Foundation of the Church.³²

Although the task of the Church has been to keep these two levels in balance, eventually during the process of theological crystallization certain aspects were detached from the *Deposit of Faith* and organized into a system of truth on their own.

2.2.2 Ecclesiastical Tradition: Konstandinidis affirms that in the process of transmission and interpretation the Apostolic Tradition underwent both qualitative and quantitative transformation which resulted in the formation of ecclesiastical tradition. Although these two are not mutually exclusive, Konstantinidis asserts that the 'Apostolic Tradition is also ecclesiastical, but the ecclesiastical is large enough to contain some other forms of tradition, which are 'forms of tradition *in the Church*', but not directly apostolic.'³³ This brings us to the question of the transmission of Tradition and of the empirical distinction between the two forms of tradition within the Church: Apostolic and ecclesiastical.

2.3. The Transmission of Tradition

Zizioulas affirms that according to the preeminence of Jewish or Greek influence on Christianity there are two major approaches to the question of transmission of Apostolic Tradition: 'historical' and 'eschatological'.³⁴

The historical approach emphasises the continuity with the past and thus attempts to prove that the teaching and the practice of the contemporary church are basically identical with those of the early church. The adherents of this view argue that both the mode of transmission and the content of tradition have been guarded in an undistorted way in the Church throughout the centuries. However, Zizioulas affirms that such an approach leads to traditionalism and institutionalism.³⁵

Alternatively, the eschatological approach, whilst affirming the apostolicity of the Church, is more concerned to demonstrate that here and now the Kingdom of God manifests itself in the Church. The adherents of this trend are in favour of a theology of liturgy and sacraments as means whereby *eschata* are already present in history. Such an approach leads very often to triumphalism and belief in realized eschatology.³⁶

³²T.F. Torrance, 'The Trinitarian Foundation', p. 102.

³³C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions within Christendom', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1978, p. 222.

³⁴See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 171-208.

³⁵See H. Andruşos, *Simbolica*, pp. 97-105; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 171-208.

³⁶Due to an over-emphasis on pneumatology at the expense of christology the triumphalists affirm that the liturgical-sacramental presence of the Kingdom of God here

Since both approaches run the risk of undermining either the historical or the eschatological dimensions of truth, Zizioulas proposes a synthesis between them in order to safeguard the nature of truth and to protect the Church from either 'traditionalism' or 'triumphalism.'³⁷ Although significant steps have been made towards such a synthesis in the last few decades, the Orthodox Church has not yet fully overcome the problems of the past.³⁸

Whilst these two approaches agree that the Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ on earth and that it has guarded the Apostolic Tradition unaltered,³⁹ there are disagreements amongst them concerning both the mode(s) of transmission and the content of that which has been handed down to successive generations. Generally speaking there are two theories that attempt to explain this process: firstly, the 'two-source' theory which has been dominant in the Orthodox world since the Middle Ages and which is still dominant in the official teaching of the Church; and secondly, the 'one-source' theory which is widely spread among Orthodox scholars who participate in the ecumenical dialogue.

2.3.1 Konstantinidis. The 'Two-Source' Approach: Following the Tridentine formula of 'two-source',⁴⁰ this approach claims that the content of revelation has been transmitted and preserved in the Scripture and the Holy

and now embraces the entire cosmos. Generally speaking, the triumphalists underestimate the social-ethical responsibilities of the Church in the world. See G. Limouris, 'The Sanctifying Grace of the Holy Spirit', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 42, 3-4 (1990), pp. 288-295; S. Harakas, *Let Mercy Abound*, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brooklyn, 1983, pp. 169-170; G. Mantzaridis, 'How We Arrive at Moral Judgment: An Orthodox Perspective', in *Phronema*, 3 (1987), pp. 11-20; D.J. Constantelos, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1968; G. Florovsky, *Christianity and Culture*, Nordland, Belmont, 1974; J. Zizioulas, 'The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church', in *International Catholic Review*, March/April 1973; S. Agourides, 'The Social Character of Orthodoxy', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, VIII, 1-2 (1962-63), pp. 7-20.

³⁷See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 171.

³⁸See I. Bria, *The Sense of the Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 41-44.

³⁹The Orthodox affirm that the Apostolic Tradition can be found today only in their Church, which is the only true Church of Christ on earth. Consequently no appeal to tradition other than the tradition of the Orthodox Church is acceptable. 'The Eastern Tradition is not one of the regular forms of Tradition, but it is the Holy Tradition of the Church of Christ itself' (C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions within Christendom', p. 226. See also S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 9; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 190. Bratsiotis considers that the Church would have ceased to have been the Church if it had departed from the Holy Tradition. It is the very historical continuity with the early church that marks Orthodoxy as the true faith. P.E. Bratsiotis, 'The Fundamental Principles and Main Characteristics of the Orthodox Church', in A.J. Philippou, ed., *The Orthodox Ethos*, Holywell Press, Oxford, 1964, pp. 24ff.

⁴⁰At the Council of Trent (1546-1563) the Roman Catholic Church declared: '...both saving truth and moral discipline' are 'contained in the written books and the unwritten traditions' and it belongs to 'holy mother church...to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scripture' (P. Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 2, pp. 80,82.

Tradition.⁴¹ Konstantinidis argues that the Church received the revelation in the form of 'oral' tradition which was anterior to Scripture, and from which the content of the New Testament has been compiled. However, since the New Testament does not contain the whole revelation, the Church has guarded the *Depositum of Faith* both in the 'written' and 'unwritten' tradition of the word of God.⁴² The written tradition being completed by the last of the inspired Apostles eventually formed the canon of the New Testament, whilst the unwritten tradition had been preserved in the Church 'first orally and then in the form of the literary monuments, as the great Tradition of the Church, i.e. the "apostolic," or the "ecclesiastical," or simply the "holy" Tradition, according to our conceptions.'⁴³ Konstantinidis continues:

Only in a perspective such as this can one understand why we, Orthodox, consider Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition as two sources of revelation of equal weight and authority, as two equivalent sources of dogma and of supernatural faith. It is only through this prism that one can understand how Holy Tradition can be divided into Tradition concerning the faith and consequently of equal authority to the Holy Scripture, and traditions of a more ecclesiastical character, that is to say, historical, liturgical, canonical, and other traditions, changeable, and with only relative authority; because they do not affect, of course the faith and dogma of the Orthodox Church.⁴⁴

⁴¹The 1962 *Almanac* of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America writes: 'Eternal truths are expressed in the Holy Scriptures and the Sacred Tradition, both of which are equal and are represented pure and unadulterated by the true Church established by Christ to continue His mission: man's salvation' (1962 *Almanac*, Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, 1962, p. 195). Similarly, Callinicos asserts: 'As, however, those things which God revealed to man were promulgated either from mouth to mouth, or by the written word, we say, therefore, that Christianity has two sources: the oral Divine Revelation or *Holy Tradition*, and the written Divine Revelation or *Holy Scripture*' (C.N. Callinicos, *The Greek Orthodox Catechism*, Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, New York, 1960, p. 6). Likewise, the Catechism of the Romanian Orthodox Church writes: 'The divine revelation is to be found in the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition' (Patriarch Teoctist, ed., *Invățătură de Credință Creștină Ortodoxă*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1992).

⁴²The Apostles never accepted anything written from the Lord: they received by His own word in their hearts the Revelation made by the Holy Spirit; and the believers, similarly, received the word of God from the mouth of the Apostles (Rom.10.17) and preserved in their hearts the delivered Truth by the word of Paraclete, who co-operates in the preaching of the word of God. Thus was created by tradition the *Depositum*, the '*parakatatheke*' of the revealed Truth' (C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', p. 222).

⁴³Further, Konstantinidis argues that from a historical point of view the preservation and interpretation of revelation have known some points of transition. There was initially a long period of 'oral transmission' of revelation (called 'tradition', with a small 't') followed by a second period of 'written transmission' of the revelation (called 'Scripture', with a capital 'S'); this second period was followed by a third one which produced a great number of written expressions, interpretations and formulations of the formerly delivered truth (called 'scripture', with a small 's'); and, finally, from these writings the Church derived its 'Tradition' in the proper sense of the word. See C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', p. 222.

⁴⁴C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', pp. 223-224.

The main argument of this approach is the material and the formal insufficiency of Scripture and Tradition.⁴⁵ Further, this approach claims that there is no conflict between the two sources. On the contrary, they are viewed as complementary because both are legitimate expressions of the source of ultimate authority, that is, of God's self-disclosure.⁴⁶

However, Konstantinidis distinguishes between the Holy Tradition which concerns the faith and has the same authority as Scripture and the ecclesiastical tradition which is changeable and consequently has only relative authority. Such a distinction, however, requires further clarification concerning, on the one hand the origin, content and theological use of the ecclesiastical tradition, and on the other, the relation between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical tradition. These aspects will be dealt with when we examine the content of tradition according to the 'two-source' approach.

2.3.2 Ware. The 'One-Source' Approach: Other Orthodox theologians repudiate the 'two source' view on the grounds that it introduces a dichotomy that ascribes to Scripture an exterior and mechanical authority role within the Church. The Moscow statement writes:

Any disjunction between Scripture and Tradition such as would treat them as two separate 'sources of revelation' must be rejected. The two are correlative...Holy Tradition completes Holy Scripture in the sense that it safeguards the integrity of the biblical message...By the term Holy Tradition we understand the entire life of the Church in the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷

Such an approach not only overcomes any epistemological dualism (Scripture-Tradition) but also conveys more accurately the Orthodox view of the relation between revelation and community.⁴⁸ However, this approach requires further clarification concerning the relation between Scripture as a written and formally accepted deposit of Apostolic Tradition and the rest of

⁴⁵'...there exist in Tradition elements which, although not mentioned in the New Testament as they are in the Church today, are indispensable to the salvation of our souls.' Further, Archbishop Michael argues that Tradition supplies the words of invocation at Eucharist. Without these words, '... it is impossible to have the sacred mystery of the Eucharist; but without the mystery...there is no salvation for the soul' (Archbishop Michael, 'Orthodox Theology', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, III, 1 (Summer, 1957), p. 13.

⁴⁶See Patriarch Teoctist, *Invățătura de Credință*, p. 32. Alternatively, Metropolitan Athenagoras distinguishes four channels, not just two, whereby the divine revelation is mediated. These are the written and unwritten tradition, the theandric life of Christ and the reproduction of that life in His apostles. See Metropolitan Athenagoras, 'Tradition and Traditions', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, VII (1963), pp. 102-114.

⁴⁷The Agreed Statement adopted by the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission at Moscow, 26 July to 2 August 1976', in K. Ware and C. Davey, eds., *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue*, SPCK, London, 1977, p. 84.

⁴⁸Ware asserts that in contrast to the Muslims, Christians are not the 'People of the Book', but rather the Bible is the Book of the People. In this sense it is the Church which gave us the Bible, and consequently the latter owes its authority to the former. Moreover, according to this view, it is the Church alone that constitutes the authoritative interpretation of the Bible. See K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', pp. 946-947.

tradition.⁴⁹ Ware, for instance, argues that this is to be decided by the Church because Scripture is not an authority set up *over* the Church, but lives and is understood *within* the Church.⁵⁰ Whilst, on the one hand, 'Scripture is the main criterion whereby the Church tests traditions to determine whether they are truly part of the Holy Tradition or not',⁵¹ on the other the Church is the only legitimate authority to interpret Scripture.⁵² However, Clapsis asserts that even when Orthodox scholars agree that the Church is the only agency to give an authentic interpretation to Scripture, disagreements continue concerning the *how* of this interpretation.⁵³

In conclusion, whilst the 'two-source' theory affirms that both Scripture and Tradition represent the Apostolic *Deposit of Faith*, it fails to establish a clear distinction between that part of Tradition which is of apostolic origin and the other part which is of ecclesiastical origin. The 'one-source' theory however affirms that Tradition has an all-inclusive sense but it fails to distinguish between the authority of canonical Scripture and the rest of

⁴⁹Bauckham argues that Scripture is not simply the first part of Tradition but represents both a point of continuity and discontinuity in the life of the Church. The continuity is given by the fact that the written tradition contains in essence the same revelation which was entrusted by Christ and His Apostles to the Church, whilst the 'church's recognition of the canon of Scripture created a real break, which gave the origin of tradition, in this written form, a uniquely normative status in relation to the rest of the tradition' (R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', in R. Bauckham and B. Drewery, eds., *Scripture, Tradition and Reason*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1988, p. 127). Likewise, Cullmann believes that by establishing the biblical canon the Church indicates the normative source of Apostolic Tradition. See O. Cullmann, *The Early Church*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1956, p. 96. For a similar view, see J.B. Torrance, 'Authority, Scripture and Tradition', in *Evangelical Quarterly*, 59 (1987), pp. 249-250.

⁵⁰The authority of the Bible...is not to be 'materialized' and treated in an exterior fashion, as if the letter of Scripture could by itself, in some mechanical and automatic way, immediately answer all the questions of the Church in later ages...When the written documents appeared, it was the Church that decided which of them should constitute the canon of Scripture; and so, in this sense, Scripture owes its authority to the Church. It is the Church likewise that alone constitutes the authoritative interpretation of the Bible...the decisive criterion for our understanding of Scripture is *the mind of the Church*' (K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', pp. 946-947).

⁵¹It is stated that Tradition 'completes' Scripture in the sense that it 'safeguards the integrity of the biblical message', but Ware and Davey consider that 'tradition' is not here envisaged as a source of factual information about Christ's life and teaching, distinct from the Bible. See 'The Moscow Statement Agreed by the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission Meeting in Moscow 26 July to 2 August 1976', III, 9; in K. Ware and C. Davey, eds., *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue*, pp. 55, 84.

⁵²Similarly, Bulgakov asserts that although Tradition is the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and thus includes the Bible as well, nevertheless the other forms which Tradition takes, such as literary, canonical documents, and memorials have to be always in agreement with the Bible interpreted within the tradition of the Church. S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 9-27. Further, whilst emphasizing the sufficiency of Scripture, Florovsky points out that Tradition refers first and foremost to correct hermeneutic, that is, the interpretation of Scripture according to the apostolic teaching. See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 73-92.

⁵³E. Clapsis, 'Prolegomena to Orthodox Dogmatic: Bible and Tradition', in *Diakonia*, 16 (1981), p. 18. See also T. Hopko, 'The Bible in the Orthodox Church', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, XIV (1970), p. 67.

tradition which may or may not be of apostolic origin. The absence of a clear space between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical tradition becomes clearer when we explore the content of Tradition.

2.4. The Content of Tradition

Orthodox scholars do not always speak the same language when they refer to the content of Tradition. This is true not only between the adherents of the two approaches ('one-source' or 'two-source') but also amongst those who belong to the same approach. Konstantinidis and Archbishop Michael, for example, belong to the same trend ('two-source'), and yet disagree concerning the content of Tradition. Thus Konstantinidis affirms that Tradition includes: (1) the valid and authentic interpretation of Scripture in the Church; (2) official formulations and confessions of faith; (3) the formulations, definitions and creeds of the Ecumenical Councils; (4) the larger accords of the teaching of the Fathers and ecclesiastical authors (*Consensus Patrum*); and (5) the forms, acts, institutions and liturgies of the early church, which form the living expression of the apostolic spirit in the way of worship in the Church. Everything which remains outside these forms can be ecclesiastical tradition but 'not the Holy Tradition of dogma and saving faith.'⁵⁴ The above five points, then, contain the Apostolic Tradition which is binding on the Church, whilst the other ecclesiastical aspects such as 'historical, liturgical, canonical, and other traditions' have only relative authority due to their ecclesiastical origin.⁵⁵ Yet, except for the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils, the content of all the other points in Konstantinidis' diagram has never been formally accepted by the Orthodox Church. Archbishop Michael affirms that the oral tradition was handed on 'from generation to generation until it was embodied and codified in the works of the major Fathers of the Church and in the resolutions of the seven Ecumenical and the ten local synods of the Church.'⁵⁶ Since Archbishop Michael indicates neither who the major Fathers with their respective works are nor which are the ten local councils with their formal definitions, it is again impossible to distinguish between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions. In the absence of such clarification the Church runs the risk of either placing the canonical Scriptures on the same footing with a supplementary body of teachings and practices which were not canonically defined or of ascribing apostolic authority to certain teaching and practices which could well have only ecclesiastical origin (personal opinions of some influential Church leaders or local traditions).⁵⁷

⁵⁴C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', p. 224.

⁵⁵C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', pp. 223-224.

⁵⁶The Archbishop does not list the ten local ecumenical councils he considers authoritative. Archbishop Michael, 'Orthodox Theology', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, III, 1 (Summer, 1957), p. 13.

⁵⁷Bria affirms that the history of the Orthodox Church demonstrates how cultural context, missionary environment, forms of establishment and other factors influence the reception or rejection of Christian tradition. See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 42.

There are similar disagreements among those who believe in the 'one-source' theory. Thus Ware asserts that Tradition includes: (1) the Bible; (2) the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Creed; (3) later councils; (4) the Fathers; (5) the liturgy; (6) Canon Law; and (7) icons.⁵⁸ In order to avoid the risk of conflicting authorities within Tradition, Ware proposes a 'hierarchy' of Tradition within the Church. From an epistemological perspective the contemporary church is the final authority in interpreting the Scriptures⁵⁹ and in deciding what is authoritative in the definitions of the local councils⁶⁰ and in the writing of the Fathers,⁶¹ whilst the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils are to be taken as irrevocable.⁶² In other words, the contemporary church and the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils are the final authority in theological epistemology. From a praxiological perspective the role of the liturgy⁶³ and of the icons⁶⁴ are beyond any question, whilst concerning the

⁵⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 207-215.

⁵⁹The Bible is authoritative but its authority is not *over* but *within* the Church. Ware asserts: 'It is from the Church that the Bible ultimately derives its authority, for it was the Church which originally decided which books form a part of the Holy scripture; and it is the Church alone which can interpret Holy Scripture with authority' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 207).

⁶⁰The later Councils are the means whereby the Church has expressed its mind since Nicaea II, 787. However, their authority is relative due to the fact that their decisions are liable to error. The local Councils can acquire universal authority only if their decisions are accepted by the rest of the Church. Yet, besides referring to the Orthodox theory of silent *receptio*, Ware does not explain which are the criteria to verify if the definitions of the local Councils have been accepted or not by the Church. In addition to the fact that silent *receptio* does not distinguish between the local and the Ecumenical Councils, this approach presupposes that *consensus ecclesiae* is primarily a mystical rather than a historical reality, and as such it fails to reconcile the mystical and the historical aspects of truth. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 210-211; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 53.

⁶¹Ware argues that the tradition of the Fathers has to be taken selectively due to the fact that 'individual writers have at times fallen into error and at times contradict one another. Patristic wheat needs to be distinguished from Patristic chaff' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 212).

⁶²The doctrinal definition of the Seven Ecumenical Councils are infallible and possess an abiding and irrevocable authority; that is, the definition of the Councils are subjected to no further interpretation by the contemporary Church. Yet amongst these definitions which have absolute authority Ware believes that the most important of all the Ecumenical statements of faith is the *Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*. The *Apostle's Creed* and the *Athanasian Creed* have a lesser authority because they have not been proclaimed by an Ecumenical Council. Moreover, the definition of the Councils have a more privileged position in the Church than Scripture itself due to the fact that the former have been formulated once and for all, whilst the latter is subject to the on-going interpretation of the contemporary church. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 210.

⁶³The liturgy is considered to be apostolic on the grounds of the witness of the Church. Moreover, it represents the way in which the Church expresses its faith. See Basil the Great, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 27; PG, 32, 189 BC; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 212-213.

⁶⁴Ware considers that the icons express 'the mind of the Church' and they are part of tradition which held a middle way between *episteme* and *praxis*. Thus, on the one hand, the icons are windows towards the spiritual world, whilst on the other, they play an

role of Canon Law⁶⁵ the contemporary church has the authority to decide what is or is not binding.

However, other adherents of the 'one-source' approach have different views. Thus, the Moscow statement writes:

By the term Holy Tradition we understand the entire life of the Church in the Holy Spirit. This tradition expresses itself in dogmatic teachings, in liturgical worship, in canonical discipline, and in spiritual life. These elements together manifest the single and indivisible life of the Church.⁶⁶

Clapsis affirms that although in its all-encompassing sense Tradition includes the fullness of Christian knowledge and experience, in reality,

The Orthodox Church has only a small number of dogmatic definitions, forming the profession of faith obligatory for all its members. Strictly speaking, this minimum consists of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, which is read during the baptismal service and the liturgy, and the definitions of the seven ecumenical councils.⁶⁷

Alternatively, Meyendorff adopts a less concise approach:

In a way that is often puzzling for Western Christians, the Orthodox, when asked positively about the sources of their faith, answer in such concepts as the whole of Scripture, seen in the light of the tradition of the ancient Councils, the Fathers, and the faith of the entire people of God, expressed particularly in the liturgy. This appears to the outsiders as nebulous, perhaps romantic or mystical, and in any case inefficient and unrealistic.⁶⁸

Analysing the variety of views regarding the content of Tradition it can be observed that whilst Orthodox theologians disagree concerning the approach to the subject, the mode(s) of transmission and the content of Tradition, they all agree that their tradition is apostolic and that the Church is the warrant of such belief.⁶⁹ In other words, what keeps Orthodox scholars together is their shared ecclesiology. However, both approaches ('two-source' and 'one-source') acknowledge that there are certain teachings and practices in the Church which are not apostolic. Thus Konstantinidis argues:

The Apostolic Tradition is also ecclesiastical, but the ecclesiastical is large enough to contain some other forms of tradition, which are 'forms of tradition *in the Church*', but not directly apostolic.⁷⁰

Similarly, Ware asserts that,

important role in the Church's worship and liturgy. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 214.

⁶⁵The Canon Law which embodies the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, local councils and individual bishops concerning Church organization and discipline has again to be taken selectively due to the fact that 'at the present day many of the Canons are difficult or impossible to apply, and have fallen wisely into disuse' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 213-214).

⁶⁶The Moscow Agreed Statement', p. 84.

⁶⁷E. Clapsis, 'Prolegomena', p. 26.

⁶⁸J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1983, p. 100.

⁶⁹See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 46-47.

⁷⁰C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', p. 222.

Not everything received from the past is of equal value, nor is everything received from the past necessarily true. As one of the bishops remarked at the Council of Carthage in 257: 'The Lord said, I am the truth. He did not say, I am the custom.' There is a difference between 'Tradition' and 'traditions': many traditions which the past handed down are human and accidental-pious opinion (or worse), but not a true part of the one Tradition, the essential Christian message.⁷¹

These critical remarks concerning the distinction between the Apostolic and the ecclesiastical traditions raise questions concerning the test of Tradition, the theological use of Tradition and the changing of the content of Tradition. These aspects will be dealt with in the following methodological, theological and sociological observations.

2.5 Observations

2.5.1 Methodological: Whilst Florovsky affirms that the 'source and the criterion of truth is the Divine Revelation'⁷² and that 'The ultimate "authority" is vested in the Church which is for ever the Pillar and Foundation of Truth',⁷³ the main methodological question is: what criterion does the Orthodox Church use to distinguish between the Apostolic (authentic) and the ecclesiastical tradition? Although the Orthodox Church does not have a formally accepted criterion of truth, it appears, however, that there are two major criteria widely accepted within Orthodoxy: firstly, apostolicity, that is, the doctrine comes from the Apostles themselves who in turn received it directly from Christ; and secondly, universal acceptance on the part of the Church.⁷⁴

2.5.1.1 Apostolicity: The main arguments in favour of this approach are 'antiquity' and 'pneumatology'. The argument of 'antiquity' refers to the Church's attempt to trace every dogma or practice back to the time of the Apostles. The validity of this argument rests upon the reliability of the means whereby the Apostolic Tradition has been transmitted throughout the centuries. 'Traditionalists' appear to have total confidence in the accuracy of the transmission of the Apostolic Tradition both in 'oral' and 'written' forms. Radu argues that the forms of transmission may differ but not the essence. The fact that Scripture has been transmitted in writing and Tradition orally does not imply that one is more reliable than the other. If that were the case, the Church today would have only one part of the revelation but not the whole.⁷⁵ Moreover, Lossky believes that:

⁷¹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 205.

⁷²G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 97.

⁷³G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 103.

⁷⁴I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 108.

⁷⁵See D. Radu, 'Revelația Dumnezeiască: Sfânta Scriptură și Sfânta Tradiție', in *Îndrumări Misionare*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1986, pp. 34-59 (here p 34). Similarly, Congar contends that the reliability of the oral tradition is warranted by the fact that it preceded in time the New Testament writings. Consequently, if one does not accept the accuracy of

The Church could dispense with Scripture, but she could not exist without Tradition,...because the Church always possesses the revealed Truth, which she makes manifest by preaching and equally could have remained oral and passed from mouth to mouth, without ever having been fixed by writing.⁷⁶

However, the above mentioned authors not only fail to bring historical evidence for their assertions but, to a large degree, also overlook the problems posed by both the existence of a variety of local traditions in the early church⁷⁷ and the difference between the 'oral' and 'written' mode of transmission of Tradition.⁷⁸ Whilst the conclusions of recent historical and anthropological studies⁷⁹ have offered significant arguments concerning the

the oral transmission, one has no further grounds to affirm the reliability of the written tradition due to the fact that the latter was compiled from the former. See Y.M.-J. Congar, *Tradition*, p. 5.

⁷⁶V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 144.

⁷⁷Many scholars affirm that even during the biblical period there were a variety of traditions such as: the Mosaic and Prophetic Tradition, the Davidic Tradition, the Priestly Tradition, the Confrontation Tradition, the Wisdom Tradition, the Sadducee Tradition, the Essene Tradition, the Pharisee Tradition, the Tradition of Jesus, the Tradition of Peter and the Tradition of Paul; in the early church, the Tradition of Judaism, the traditions of the pagan world and the Secret Tradition of the Gnostics. See D.M. Beegle, *Scripture, Tradition, and Infallibility*, pp. 77-90; F.F. Bruce, *Tradition Old and New*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1970; O. Cullmann, *The Early Church*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1956; J. Danielou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1973, p. 139; G. Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism*, (Tr. A. Alcock), Blackwell, Oxford, 1990; B. Layton, ed., and Tr., *The Gnostic Scripture*, SCM Press, London, 1987; W.H. Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel*, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1983; R. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, Harper & Row, New York, 1963.

⁷⁸The belief that both oral and written transmission share equal reliability has to be reevaluated in the context of the changes which appears in a traditional community once its tradition takes a written form. Lord, for example, affirms that oral tradition does not have a stereotyped 'original form' and consequently each time when the events are being narrated the narrator recreates the story in a slightly different version, and, generally speaking no version is significantly closer or further from the historical events being narrated. However, when tradition is fixed in writing the texts become an authoritative document which serves as the standard by which to judge all further narration of the events in question. A.B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, Harvard, Cambridge, MA:, 1960, pp. 123ff. Blomberg considers that a similar phenomenon was occurring in Christianity by the mid-second century, whilst 'in the earlier years in which the evangelists were writing their gospels they did not see their sources as dictating the only way in which the life of Jesus could be told' (C. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, IVP, Leicester, 1987, p. 30). For similar conclusions based on targumic studies of the Aramaic paraphrases of biblical texts used in the ancient Jewish synagogues, see B.D. Chilton, 'A Comparative Study of Synoptic Development: The Dispute between Cain and Abel in the Palestinian Targums and the Beelzebub Controversy in the Gospels', in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 101 (1982), pp. 553-562.

⁷⁹Riesenfeld argues that the history of the oral tradition behind the gospel should be understood not in the terms of 'transmitting popular folk-tales' as the form critics suggest but in terms of a much more rigid pattern of memorization and paraphrase dominant in the rabbinical circles in the centuries immediately following the birth of Christianity. Thus there are warranted reasons to believe that the tradition was reliably preserved. See H. Riesenfeld, *The Gospel Tradition*, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1970, pp. 1-29. Further Gerhardsson gives evidence concerning the practice of memorization in ancient rabbinical circles (many rabbis had the entire Old Testament and much of the oral law committed

reliability of oral transmission in traditional communities, such conclusions do not provide indubitable arguments concerning the absolute accuracy of oral transmission either within the same community over a long period of time or among cross-cultural communities (both in time and space).⁸⁰

Furthermore, the argument of 'antiquity' faces the problem that besides the emergence of the New Testament canon in the Pre-Nicene period there existed a variety of different or even contradictory local traditions. This does not support the view that in addition to Scripture the Church received or

to memory!) and argues that Jesus' twelve disciples formed an authoritative circle of leadership which carefully safeguarded the traditions and prevented them from the inevitable distortion to which indiscriminate use would have led. See B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*, Gleerup, Lund, 1961; *Tradition and Transmission in Early Christianity*, Gleerup, Lund, 1964; *The Origins of the Gospel Tradition*, SCM Press, London, 1979. Subsequently, Riesner developed the theory of the 'Scandinavian school' in the area of the educational methods common to ancient Israel and her neighbours. R. Riesner, *Jesus als Lehrer*, Mohr, Tübingen, 1981. See also R.H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teaching*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1978, pp. 1-33; E. Güttgemanns, *Candid Questions concerning Gospel Form Criticism*, Pickwick, Pittsburgh, 1979. Recent anthropological studies have enabled scholars to observe twentieth-century examples of oral folklore and sacred history being preserved by specially designated members of very traditional communities uninfluenced by the development of literacy and technology. Lord, for example, studied certain Yugoslavian folk-singers who had memorized epic stories up to 100,000 words in length, and he affirms that the plot, the characters, all the main events and the vast majority of the details stayed the same every time the stories were retold or sung. Members of the community were sufficiently familiar with them to correct the singer if he erred in any significant way. Yet anywhere from 10% to 40% of the precise wording could vary from one performance to the next. From these studies Lord drew some similarities with the differences among the Synoptics. See A.B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, Harvard, Cambridge, MA., 1960; 'The Gospels as Oral Traditional Literature', in W.O. Walker, eds., *The Relationships among the Gospels*, Trinity University, San Antonio, 1978, pp. 33-91. See also J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1965; W. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1983.

⁸⁰The early Christian communities were related to the Jewish Synagogue and consequently were familiar with the Old Testament narratives. In such cases the interpretation of the text in the light of the Christ-event could easily set up new hermeneutical communities which could have memorized significant parts of the gospel stories. In addition, being relatively small and stable these communities placed a special emphasis on catechetical instruction of the new converts. See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 41-42; S.C. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church*, SPCK, London, 1991, pp. 14-22; C. Jones, eds, *The Study of the Liturgy*, SPCK, London, 1978). However, the spread of Christianity to other communities and cultures even during this period generated a variety of local teachings and practices. See J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, pp. 11-41. Further, the christianization of the Empire changed the nature of ecclesiastical communities. Thus Meyendorff argues that, '...while the concept of 'people' could be clearly defined, in pre-Constantinian times, as long as Christian communities were small and generally composed of committed Christians, the situation in the large Churches of imperial times was different: the 'people of God' (*laos*) became frequently indistinguishable from a 'mob' (*ochlos*)'. (J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 44). Moreover, Meyendorff asserts that the shift towards infant baptism tended to reduce the number of adult catechumens, and 'the massive collective baptisms performed in Germanic, Celtic or Slavic lands made little use of the ancient institution of catechumenate, rendering it largely nominal'(J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 71).

established another unified body of Apostolic Tradition which has been subsequently transmitted undistorted to following generations.⁸¹ Moreover, the Post-Nicene attempts to establish a canon of tradition failed due to the disagreements among the Fathers concerning the criteria of apostolicity. This assertion is well illustrated by the failure of both the Augustinian⁸² and Vicentian canons.⁸³ Consequently, Florovsky argues that the argument of 'apostolicity', although successfully used by Irenaeus and Tertullian in refuting the Gnostic threat, has to be used with certain caution due to the

⁸¹Further, Holmes asserts that the lack of unity among the pre-Nicene Fathers is clearly reflected in the diversity of theological opinions and of practices described in their writings. See M.W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, pp. 3-4. Similarly, Pelikan argues that a careful study of the credal phrases in Irenaeus, Tertullian and Hippolytus shows great variation not only between one writer and another but between one quotation and another from the same writer. See J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1971, p. 117. This variety of local traditions illustrates the fact that apart from the canon of the New Testament, during the pre-Nicene period the Church succeeded in developing neither a universally accepted hermeneutical principle nor a universally accepted ecclesial practice.

⁸²Augustine, for example, proposed 'catholicity' as the rule of truth. Those regulations observed by the whole Church, considered Augustine, require no further proof of their apostolicity. Augustine, *On Baptism: Against the Donatists*, II.7,12; IV.24,31; V.23,31 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. IV, pp. 429-430; 461-462; 474-475. However, 'catholicity' appears to be an insufficient proof for the truth of such a regulation, due to the fact that 'very often the measure of truth is the witness of a minority' (G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 51).

⁸³Vincent considered that catholicity, antiquity and consensus represent valid criteria to distinguish between the apostolic tradition and heresies or novelties. '*Id teneamus quod ubique, quod semper, quod ad omnibus creditum est* (We may hold fast to that which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all).' Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitorium*, c.2 in *NPNF*, 2nd ed., vol. XI, p. 132. However, the Vicentian canon was not easily applicable due to the fact that, on the one hand, during the previous centuries the Church had not had such a consensus, and on the other, at that time it was confronted with some major internal problems related to disagreements among the Fathers. Thus Origen had been condemned at the Council of Constantinople for his doctrine of the preexistence of the soul; Tertullian was condemned for Montanism; a council in Carthage decided to re-baptize heretics, whilst Pope Stephen in Rome rejected second baptism for heretics. Consequently, although the Church was committed to guarding the Apostolic Tradition from novelties, in reality such a task was very difficult, if not impossible. The outcome was a sort of compromise described by Vincent of Lérins as follows: 'And O marvelous revolution! The authors of this same doctrine are judged Catholics, the followers heretics; the teachers are absolved, the disciples condemned; the writers of the books will be children of the Kingdom, the defenders of them will have their portion in Hell' (Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitorium*, 6,18 in *NPNF*, 2nd ed., vol. XI, p. 135). Subsequently, the Vicentian canon based on *ubique, semper* and *omnibus* was carefully rejected by the Church. Further, Florovsky argues that such a canon is not relevant for the Church's truth which is not empirical-historical but mystical. See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 51-54; A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 3, p. 337. See also J. Stevenson, ed., *Creeks, Councils and Controversies*, (new edition revised by W.H.C. Frend), SPCK, London, 1989; H. Bettenson, *Later Christian Fathers*, OUP, London, 1970; I. Hazlett, ed., *Early Christianity: Origins and Evolution to AD 600*, SPCK, London, 1991.

fact that, on the one hand, it can be ambiguous and misleading,⁸⁴ and on the other, it can be equally used to prove false traditions.⁸⁵

Secondly, the 'pneumatological' argument affirms that the relation between the Spirit and the Church is the warrant of the accuracy of the transmission of the Apostolic Tradition throughout the centuries. Although such an argument is important from a theological point of view,⁸⁶ methodologically⁸⁷

⁸⁴Such was the case during the baptismal controversy in the third century when the question of the authority of 'ancient customs' had been formally raised at the time. Already Tertullian contended that 'customs' in the Church had to be examined in the light of truth. 'Our Lord designated himself, not as custom but as truth' (*de virginibus velandis*, I.1 in *ANCL*, XVIII, pp. 154-156). The phrase was taken up by Cyprian ('for antiquity without truth is the old age error' *Epist.* 74.9 in *ANCL*, VIII, p. 291) and was adopted by the Council of Carthage in 256. Further, Augustine took the same approach to the argument from antiquity: 'In the Gospel the Lord says-I am the truth. He did not say-I am custom', *On Baptism*, III.6,9 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. IV, p. 439. The difficulty lies in the fact that 'antiquity' as such was not necessarily truth, whilst the Christian truth was intrinsically 'ancient' truth, and 'innovations' in the Church had to be resisted. See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 98-99; S.G. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice*, pp. 92-94.

⁸⁵Florovsky argues that since certain 'alleged' traditions were simply wrong and false, the Church during the first centuries had to identify the 'true Tradition' which could be traced back to the authority of the Apostles and which could be confirmed by an universal *consensus* of churches. However, such a *consensus* could not be easily discovered, firstly due to the absence of a universally agreed methodology, and secondly, due to the considerable variety of local traditions, even within the unbroken communion in faith and in *sacris*. It suffices to point to the Paschal controversy between Rome and the East, the tension between Carthage and Rome, between Rome and Alexandria and between Alexandria and Antioch with its tragic climax in the fifth century. During this period of theological controversy all participating groups appealed to tradition and 'antiquity.' Eventually, certain local traditions, liturgical and theological, were disavowed by the overarching authority of an 'ecumenical' *consensus*. However, this practice raised the question of the extent to which it was legitimate to disavow the faith of those who had died in peace and communion with the Church. Yet, in spite of all opposition against 'retrospective discrimination', at the Fifth Ecumenical Council 'antiquity' was overruled by ecumenical *consensus*. See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 99-100.

⁸⁶Konstantinidis asserts that, 'The Apostles never accepted anything written from the Lord; they received by His own word in their hearts the Revelation made by the Holy Spirit; and the believers, similarly, received the word of God from the mouth of the Apostles (Rom.10.17) and preserved in their hearts the delivered Truth by the Grace of Paraclete...The unwritten tradition of the Apostles...which was formed under the action of the Paraclete, has been preserved in the Church, first orally...' (C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', p. 222). Theologically, Bulgakov affirms that the foundation for the belief in the accuracy of the oral tradition is the relation between pneumatology and ecclesiology: 'The unity and continuity of tradition follow from the fact that the Church is always identical with itself. The Church has a unique life, guided at all times by the Holy Spirit; the historical form changes, but the Spirit remains unchanged. Thus belief in Church tradition as the basic source of Church doctrine arises from a belief in the unity and self-identity of the Church' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 10).

⁸⁷Very often there are references made to Irenaeus' argument when he affirms that: 'Having received this preaching (*kerygma*) and this faith...the Church, although scattered throughout the whole world, guards it with care, as though dwelling in one house; and likewise she believes in these things as though she had but one soul and one heart, and proclaims them with harmonious voice, and teaches and hands them on (*paradidosin*) as

it fails to reconcile dogma with history, suggesting thus that truth is primarily a mystical and not a historical reality.⁸⁸

Furthermore, the pneumatological argument presupposes the infallibility of the Church, a presupposition which still has to identify the organ and the means whereby infallibility is expressed.⁸⁹ Moreover, Bria argues that the pneumatological argument has to be evaluated critically because 'the Spirit may be misused to justify everything from domestic difficulties to ecclesiastical ambitions to intolerant theologies and pieties.'⁹⁰ Consequently he asserts that the Orthodox have to avoid the risk of an 'otherwordly' approach to the doctrine of the Church in order to come to terms with historical and sociological realities. Therefore he proposes an *ecclesiology in flesh and bones* capable of overcoming the incoherence between mystical and historical realities.⁹¹

2.5.1.2 **Universality:** The test of universality is applied differently by the adherents of the 'one-source' and of the 'two-source' theories. Those who advocate the 'one-source' theory believe that universality refers only to the dogmatic content of tradition,⁹² whilst the adherents of the 'two-source'

though possessing but one mouth. For even though languages are dissimilar throughout the world, the power of tradition (*dunamis tes paradoseos*) is one and the same... Neither do the churches established in Germany believe any differently, nor those established in Iberia, or among the Celts, or in the east, or in Egypt, or in Lybia, or in the centre of the world, but just like the sun, the creation of God, is one and the same all over the world, so also the proclamation of the church shines everywhere, and illuminates all men who wish to come to a knowledge of the truth (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, I.10,2 in *ANCL*, vol. IV, p. 43). Since Irenaeus was primarily interested in countering the Gnostic threat to the Church, in his apologetic approach he disregarded the variety of local traditions within the catholic Church. Moreover, since the days of Irenaeus there has been a long period of Church history in which the Christian tradition has spread to different communities and cultures, a phenomenon which requires a more critical approach. See J. Danielou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, pp. 150ff.

⁸⁸Florovsky asserts that, 'Charismatic tradition is truly universal; in its fullness it embraces every kind of *semper* and *ubique* and unites *all*. But empirically it may not be accepted by all. At any rate we are not to prove the truth of Christianity by means of 'universal consent', *per consensus omnium*. In general no *consensus* can prove truth' (G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 52).

⁸⁹This aspect will be analysed in the next section on 'Church and Authority.'

⁹⁰I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 31.

⁹¹See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 43-44.

⁹²Universal acceptance does not refer to conformity in practice or liturgical rite but in matters of faith. 'Faith' in this context means the primary doctrinal definitions to which the entire Church adheres. An example would be the christological dogma (the two natures of Christ) which separated the Chalcedonian and the Non-Chalcedonian churches. (See *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, X, 2 (Winter, 1964-1965); also vol. XIII, 2 (Fall, 1968). Local traditions represent the mode in which the faith of the Church is expressed in national (local) forms which might vary from place to place, and although these local customs are important locally they do not have universal authority. Meyendorff argues that the unity of Orthodox Christians is not a unity of language, liturgical rite or baptismal formula but rather the unity of faith. Strict conformity in matters of liturgical practices has never been considered to be a real obstacle to the reunion of the East and West. Meyendorff cites several Orthodox authorities such as Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople (858-886), and Peter, Patriarch of Antioch (1052-

theory argue that it has to include ecclesiastical practice in addition.⁹³ In other words, whilst believing in the universality of faith, the former affirm the particularity of its practical expression in different cultures. The latter however believe that both dogma and practice are equally universal, and so they have to be preserved undistorted in every culture because they both express the Apostolic tradition. However, in spite of the disagreement concerning the content of Tradition which has to meet the criterion of universality, the Orthodox scholars agree that, generally speaking, universality is expressed in the *Consensus Patrum*, the definition of the Ecumenical Councils and the *Consensus Ecclesiae*. The question at hand, however, concerns the mode in which these represent valid criteria for universality.

Firstly, although frequently invoked by the Orthodox Church as a criterion for authentic tradition,⁹⁴ in reality *Consensus Patrum* was never formally defined. There is no official list of the Fathers⁹⁵ nor is there any work

1056), who considered local practices, even those defined by local conciliar decrees, as matter of indifference. Within the central faith there remains room for local practice to create what might be considered a unique and expressive worship experience. C.S. Lewis, for example, writing on the experience of worship, affirms: 'What pleased me most about Greek Orthodox mass I once attended was that there seemed to be no prescribed behaviour for the congregation...The beauty of it was that nobody took the slightest notice of what anyone else was doing'(C.S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcom: Chiefly on Prayer*, Fontana Books, London, 1966, p. 12). See J. Meyendorff, 'Tradition and Traditions', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Press*, VI, (1962), p. 122; P.P. Bratsiotis, 'Basic Principles and Chief Characteristics of the Orthodox Church', (Tr. by T. Lockard), in *Anglican Theological Review*, XLII (April, 1960), 101-112. J. Meyendorff, 'The Meaning of Tradition', in L.J. Swidler, ed., *Scripture and Ecumenism*, Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh, PA:, 1965, pp. 55-56. See also W.A. Adeney, *The Greek and Eastern Churches*, Reference Books Publishers, Clifton, NJ:, 1965, pp. 237-241.

⁹³Alternatively, Karmiris affirms that the Church has 'preserved, intact and without alteration, the dogmatic teaching, the divine worship, the administrative system, and the treasure of ancient traditions, without changing or innovating any of these' (I.N. Karmiris, 'Contemporary Orthodox Theology and Its Task', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, XIII (1969), p. 19). Similarly, Konstantinidis believes that 'the forms, acts and institutions of worship and liturgies of the early Church, which form the living expression of the apostolic spirit in the way of worship' belong to the 'Tradition of dogma and saving faith' (C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', p. 224).

⁹⁴Bebis asserts that the Fathers have been gifted with intrinsic inspiration and intuition to see and acknowledge the mysterious teachings which were hidden between the lines of the Scripture. Consequently the doctrine of inspiration is equally important for both the authors of the Scriptures as well as for the Fathers. See G.B. Bebis, 'The Concept of Tradition in the Fathers of the Church', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, XV, 1 (1970), p. 27.

⁹⁵Although the Fifth Ecumenical Council, after condemning theologians who had already died and had been revered as Fathers, furnished a sort of review and re-evaluation of local traditions and produced a list of 'Selected Fathers' as the undisputed bearers of genuine tradition, the Orthodox Church does not accept the list as normative. The list included Athanasius, Hilary of Poitiers, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine, Chrysostom, Theophilus and Cyril of Alexandria, Leo the Great, and Proclus. See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 184. Florovsky affirms that the term 'Father' was already occasionally used by early ecclesiastical

accepted in all parts due to the fact that some of those who are revered as Fathers have fallen into error. Consequently it takes a critical approach to separate 'Patristic wheat' from 'Patristic chaff'.⁹⁶ Moreover, Florovsky and Clapsis argue that the attempt to limit the age of the Fathers to the first eight centuries would convey the idea that the subsequent centuries of church history represent a spiritual decline, undermining thus the pneumatological aspect of the Church as a continuous Pentecost.⁹⁷ Acknowledging the methodological difficulty of such a concept as *Consensus Patrum*, Ware and Florovsky consider that it would be better to replace it with the syntagma 'the mind of the Fathers'.⁹⁸ The latter does not presuppose an empirical content; it mainly describes the methodology of the Fathers which reflects the 'mind of the Catholic and Universal Church'.⁹⁹ In conclusion, *Consensus Patrum* has to be understood not as an empirically reached agreement concerning a certain 'deposit' of faith, but as a reflection of the Church's mystical relation with God. However, from a methodological perspective such an approach fails both to maintain the balance between the eschatological and historical aspects of truth, and to make a distinction between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions.

Secondly, additional aspects whereby the universality of Tradition is expressed include the Ecumenical Councils and *Consensus Ecclesiae*. Ware argues that both are to be seen from two complementary points of view. There is, firstly, the authority of the entire Church, or the 'general conscience'

writers when referring to Christian teachers and leaders of previous generations. It gradually became a title for bishops, in so far as they were appointed teachers and witnesses of the faith. Later the title was applied specifically to bishops in Councils. The common element in all these cases was the teaching office. Fathers were those who transmitted and propagated the right doctrine, the teaching of the Apostles, who were masters in Christian instruction and catechesis. In this sense the title 'Fathers' was also applied to the great Christian writers. It is obvious, however, that these Fathers never met all in one place to express their agreement on some dogmatic or practical issues. In fact, Florovsky asserts that *Consensus Patrum* is not to be understood empirically but in the sense that it represents the 'mind of the Catholic and Universal Church.' Further, he argues that no *consensus* can prove truth. Truth is universal even when expressed by a few believers, or even by a single confessor of faith. See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 52, 10-103.

⁹⁶T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 212,

⁹⁷G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 106-111; E. Clapsis, 'Prolegomena', pp. 18-19.

⁹⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 212.

⁹⁹J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, p. 21; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 101-103. The 'mind of the Fathers' expresses the mystical approach to faith, as Louth affirms: 'At the heart of the faith of the Fathers is no principle, or creed, or formula, but a *mystery*, a mystery that is lived, a mystery that claims the whole man, a mystery that we apprehend not simply with our minds but in ways that are unconscious and unfathomable, a mystery that draws out our love' (A. Louth, 'The Hermeneutical Question Approached through the Fathers', in *Sobornost*, 7, 7 (1978), p. 545).

¹⁰⁰See A.A. Bogolepov, 'Which Councils are Recognized as Ecumenical?' in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, VII (1963), pp. 54-72; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 18-38; N. Zernov, *Eastern Christendom*, p. 231; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 75-81.

of the Church (*sensus fidelium*), and secondly, the authority of the episcopate. The Orthodox Church asserts that neither bishops nor laity can function without each other due to the fact that whilst the bishops, individually or in Council (*in solidum*), have the right to formulate the truth, their definitions become authoritative only when they are accepted by the whole Church.¹⁰⁰ This is in the final analysis the proof of universality, namely when a certain doctrine or practice has been accepted by the whole Church. However, this approach lacks a formal criterion of reception. In other words, the Church does not have a mechanism to verify whether or not all its members agree with a certain doctrine or practice. In fact, Florovsky asserts that this reception resides not in empirical universality but in the silent *receptio* which represents the inner catholicity of the Church.¹⁰¹ Further, he argues that,

...we have no outward criterion to discriminate between the two [Apostolic and ecclesiastical]. The methods of outward historical criticism are inadequate and insufficient. Only from within the Church can we discern the *sacred* from the *historical*. From within we can see what is catholic and belongs to all time, and what is only 'theological opinion', or even a simple casual historical accident.¹⁰²

However, it appears that this approach 'from within' is equally confusing, the above mentioned scholars remain within the Church yet their views concerning the content of the Apostolic Tradition are strikingly contradictory.

In conclusion, neither the test of 'antiquity' nor that of 'universality' provide an indubitable proof that the entire tradition of the Orthodox Church is of apostolic origin. In fact, a significant number of Orthodox scholars are addressing this question and subsequently are proposing different modes of distinguishing between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions. Ware, for example, affirms that,

Amongst the various elements of Tradition, a unique pre-eminence belongs to the Bible, to the Creed, to the doctrinal definitions of the Ecumenical Councils: these things the Orthodox accept as something absolute and unchanging, something which cannot be cancelled or revised. The other parts of Tradition do not have quite the same authority.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰See A.A. Bogolepov, 'Which Councils are Recognized as Ecumenical?' in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, VII (1963), pp. 54-72; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 18-38; N. Zernov, *Eastern Christendom*, p. 231; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 75-81.

¹⁰¹G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 53. 'It appears that the Vicentian Canon is a postulate of historical simplification, of a harmful primitivism. This means that we are not to dissect catholicity in empirical universality. Charismatic tradition is truly universal; in its fullness it embraces every kind of *semper* and *ubique* and unites *all*. But empirically it may not be accepted by all. At any rate we are not to prove the truth of Christianity by means of 'universal consent', *per consensus omnius*. In general, no *consensus* can prove truth'(G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 52).

¹⁰²G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 50.

¹⁰³T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 205. The Creed referred to is the Nicene-Constantinopolitan. Similarly, Bulgakov contends that the part of Tradition which has the highest authority and is obligatory for all 'is the Nicene Creed recited during the

Further, Ware argues that the Orthodox Church has to examine critically its past on the basis of both a difference between 'Tradition' and 'traditions' and also that not everything which has been handed down is part of the one Christian Tradition.¹⁰⁴

2.5.2 Theological: Tradition has been used within the Orthodox Church both as the authoritative interpretation of Scripture and as a supplementary source of theological knowledge. The former aspect emerged during the 'coincidence view' and continued during the 'supplementary view' until the present time, whilst the latter emerged during the 'supplementary view' and is significantly challenged by contemporary Orthodox theology.¹⁰⁵

Historically, the appeal to Tradition as the only valid source of biblical interpretation goes back to the early Church's controversies with various heretics, when it appeared that the appeal to Scripture was insufficient since even heretics quoted scriptural texts in order to support their views.¹⁰⁶ The question subsequently raised concerned correct interpretation. The Church responded by elaborating its hermeneutical principles: ecclesiological, unity and the spiritual meaning of Scripture.

First, the ecclesiastical principle affirms that the Church is the sole guardian and interpreter of the truth of revelation due to the fact that the Spirit of truth with all His *charisma* indwells the Church.¹⁰⁷ More precisely, the gifts imparted by the Spirit to the Apostles in order to understand the meaning of Scripture are transmitted to the bishops by virtue of apostolic succession. Thus Irenaeus affirms that the bishops as successors of the Apostles 'have received *charisma veritatis certum*',¹⁰⁸ the natural conclusion of this view being that outside the Church there is no understanding of Scripture.¹⁰⁹

Secondly, in response to the heretics' practice of using 'proof-texts' by disregarding 'the order and connection of the Holy Writ', the Church affirmed the internal harmony and unity of Scripture.¹¹⁰ This pattern, or the 'canon of

liturgy...Then come the dogmatic definitions of the seven ecumenical councils. Anyone who does not accept this minimum of Church tradition by that fact separates himself from the society of the Church' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 27)

¹⁰⁴T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 205.

¹⁰⁵See K. Ware and C. Davey, eds., *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁶Gnostics, Sabellians, Montanists and Arians, appealed to Scripture. See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 75-76.

¹⁰⁷See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 223-225.

¹⁰⁸Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeresis*, IV.26,2 in *ANCL*, vol. V, pp. 462-463.

¹⁰⁹N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Unity of Scripture and Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox Contribution to the Prolegomena of Hermeneutics', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, XI, 2 (Winter, 1965-66), p. 204; *The Greek Orthodox Church*, (Tr. by J. Blenkinsopp), University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1968; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 76; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 207.

¹¹⁰See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 77. Irenaeus compared the hermeneutical approach of the heretics with one who breaks the original mosaic image of a king into pieces and rearranges the pieces into another pattern so as to produce the image of a dog or a fox. Further, he argued that only the Church possesses the original

truth' which was imparted to the believers in their baptismal profession, was nothing other than the Apostles' teaching which was 'deposited' in the Church. However, the *charism* of truth which is the gift of the Spirit to the Church has its locus in the bishop. Hence the Church's approach to the question of hermeneutic was simultaneously 'charismatic' and 'institutional'.¹¹¹

Thirdly, the Church affirmed that the ultimate purpose of hermeneutics was 'to elicit the meaning and the intent of the Holy Writ',¹¹² that is, to distinguish between the 'letter' and the 'spirit' of Scripture. As Hilary of Poitiers puts it: *scripturae enim non in legendo sunt, sed in inteligendo*.¹¹³ Scripture was a God-inspired book and consequently its meaning has to be found *beyond* the 'letter'.¹¹⁴ Since the recipients of the special grace to interpret the Scriptures were considered to be Fathers, they were placed alongside the Apostles as authorities, and the orthodox doctrine had to be in accordance with both the Scriptures and the Fathers. Moreover, the rule of faith was considered now to be the doctrine of the Fathers.¹¹⁵ Yet in spite of wide agreement on these principles, the Fathers opted for different hermeneutical methods, of which the allegorical and the typological were the most important.¹¹⁶

Furthermore, the development of the hermeneutical role of tradition has been significantly influenced by the use of Tradition as a source of doctrine, distinct from Scripture, an approach which sprung from a shift in the relation between *episteme* and *praxis*.

Whilst it is true that in addition to its hermeneutical role (the rule of faith) the concept of 'tradition' in the early church included also liturgical aspects,¹¹⁷ the latter were primarily expressions (*praxis*) of the Church's

picture of Scripture and the pattern of its internal structure. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeresis*, I.8,1 in *ANCL*, vol. V, pp. 31-32. For a similar view, see Tertullian, *De praescriptione*, 39 in *ANCL*, vol. XV, p. 47.

¹¹¹See G. Florovsky, *Church, Scripture, Tradition*, p. 79.

¹¹²G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 84.

¹¹³'For Scripture is not in the reading, but in the understanding' (*ad Constantium Aug.*, II.9; ML X, 750. Cf. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 75).

¹¹⁴As Pelikan asserts: 'The true authorities for the understanding of the spiritual sense were those who dealt with the words of God 'mystically'; this understanding was given only to those who were 'worthy' of the Holy Spirit' (J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, p. 18).

¹¹⁵Special names and offices were attributed to the Fathers: the holy Apostle Paul and...Gregory [of Nazianzus], 'the great and wondrous teacher, a God-bearing teacher, most divine'; Athanasius was 'this God-bearing teacher' and the 'inerrant winner of contests'; St. Basil was 'the great eye of the church'; Clement of Alexandria was 'the philosopher of philosophers'; Dionysius the Areopagite was 'the one who truly spoke of God, the great and holy Dionysius, this blessed one who was made worthy of divine inspiration, the revealer of God.' See J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, pp. 19-20; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 53, 100-101.

¹¹⁶See G. Florovsky, *Church, Scripture, Tradition*, pp. 26-36.

¹¹⁷Kelly affirms that Christian faith found its first expression precisely in liturgical practice, and that the Creeds first emerged as an integral part of the rite of initiation.

faith and not its source of doctrine (*episteme*). However, if the argument from Tradition has been used occasionally used in the early church,¹¹⁸ the classical expression of the role of *praxis* as source of theological knowledge is attributed to Pope Celestine (422-432) who affirmed: 'Let the rule of worship lay down the rule of faith.'¹¹⁹ Subsequently, the dialectic between theological epistemology and *praxis* based upon a progressive dialogue between the divine revelation and the life of the Church shifted towards an uncritical subjection of *episteme* to *praxis*. The Church appealed to its own practice and to unwritten traditions in order to fill the gap between Scripture and the Church's teachings whenever these were lacking biblical support.¹²⁰ Congar argues that from Basil the Great, Epiphanius, John Chrysostom, Augustine and John of Damascus the idea that Scripture needs not only an official interpretation but also an official supplement led to the practice of *Probatum ex Traditione*.¹²¹ Moreover, this Tradition that was

(J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1950, p. 167). For similar views see also R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', p. 119. See also R.B. Eno, S.S., *Teaching Authority in the Early Church*, pp. 15-24; M.W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 5-9. Congar affirms that in addition to the rule of faith the early tradition included also the rule of discipline, usage in worship, liturgy and examples of doing things. Y.M.-J. Congar, *Tradition*, pp. 28-29.

¹¹⁸The argument from liturgical tradition had been used by Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius and the Cappadocians in their controversies with heretics, but it was Basil the Great (bishop of Caesarea 370-379) who for the first time used liturgical practice in order to defend the divinity (*homotimia*) of the Holy Spirit against Arianism. 'Therefore we present our confession of faith in accordance with our baptism' (Basil, *Ep.* CLIX, 2; in J. Stevenson, *Creeds, Councils, and Controversies*, SPCK, London, 1989, p. 83). See also G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 85.

¹¹⁹Cf. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 84. It appears that this view was firstly elaborated by Prosper of Aquitania, but it was later attributed to Pope Celestine. See Dom M. Capuyns, 'L'origine des Capitula Pseudo-Celestiniens contre les Semipelagiens', in *Révue Bénédictine*, 41 (1929), pp. 156-170; Dom B. Cappelé, 'Autorité de la liturgie chez les Pères', in *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale*, XXI (1954), pp. 5-22. Although this was not an authoritative proclamation of the Pope, but a private opinion of an individual theologian, eventually it was taken out of its immediate context and transformed into the principle of the relation between *episteme* and *praxis*: '*ut legem credendi statuat lex orandi*'. (so that the rule of worship should establish the rule of faith'; f. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 84). For an analysis of the influence of the *lex orandi* on *lex credendi*, see M. Wiles, *The Making of Christian Doctrine*, CUP, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 62-93; R.P.C. Hanson, 'Basile et la doctrine de la tradition en relation avec le Saint-Esprit', in *Verbum Caro*, 22 (1968), pp. 56-71; Basil the Great, *De spiritu sancto*, 27; PG, 32, 188A-189BC; Augustine, *Against the Epistle of Manicheus Called Fundamental*, V.6 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. IV, pp. 130-131; *On of thBaptism*, II.7.12; IV.6.9 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. IV, pp. 429-430; 450.

¹²⁰Since the 'supplementary view' emerged during the controversy over the source and authority of the Church's teaching and practice, its main purpose was to prove that the teaching of the contemporary church is substantially identical with that of the Apostles. See R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', pp. 120ff. The theological argument in favour of this approach is pneumatological, namely that it is the Holy Spirit within the Church who guarantees the reliability of its tradition in all aspects: content, transmissions and teaching. See R. Bauckham, 'Tradition in Relation to Scripture and Reason', pp. 120-121; H. Tavard, 'Tradition in Early Post-Tridentine Theology', in *Theological Studies*, 23 (1962), pp. 377-405.

¹²¹Y.M.-J. Congar, *Tradition*, pp. 46-47.

supplementary to Scripture was not, from Basil the Great onwards, the public tradition of Irenaeus¹²² but mysterious teachings¹²³ kept under the discipline of secrecy.¹²⁴ This raises, however, the question concerning the change in the content of Tradition, to which we now turn.

2.5.3 Sociological: The response to this question varies according to the historical or eschatological approach to Tradition. The former affirms that the Church preserved the faith once handed down having neither added anything, nor subtracted anything.¹²⁵ As Bratsiotis affirms:

...if Holy Tradition is accepted as a source of faith, its immutability must be recognized, just as the Bible (the other source of faith) is recognized as immutable.¹²⁶

Alternatively, the eschatological approach believes that Tradition is not simply a set of abstract propositions but 'a personal encounter with Christ in the Holy Spirit...it is the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church.'¹²⁷ This approach makes a distinction between the inward and changeless dimension of Tradition, which refers to the presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Church, and the historical forms which may change.¹²⁸ Yet, this does not imply that there is a historical gap between the contemporary church and the early church. On the contrary,

There is here more than just an unbroken *historic continuity* which is quite obvious. There is above all an ultimate *spiritual and ontological identity*, the same faith, the same spirit, the same ethos. And this constitutes the distinctive mark of Orthodoxy.¹²⁹

¹²²The public tradition of Irenaeus is opposed to the secret tradition of the Gnostics, that was reserved for 'the perfect.' See Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III.1,1 in *ANCL*, vol. V, p. 258; III.2,1 in *ANCL*, vol. V, p. 259; J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, p. 115.

¹²³'Of the dogmas and kerygma preserved in the Church, some we possess from written teaching and others we receive from the tradition of the Apostles, handed down to us in mystery' (Basil the Great, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 27,66).

¹²⁴Once this view was accepted, it opened the door to mysteries and legends. Especially in the East numerous legends about the Apostles began to circulate among churches. They have been used in connection with the government and cultus of the churches in such a way that detailed regulations were attributed to the Apostles whenever they were required for the discipline and the cultus of the time. For example, Gregory of Nyssa affirms that the creed used by Gregory Thaumaturgus to instruct the catechumens in Neo-Caesarea was given to him by the Virgin Mary and the Apostle John immediately after entering into his bishopric. See *NPNF*, vol. 20, A. Roberts, eds., *The Works of Gregory Thaumaturgus*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, n.d., p. 3; A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 3, p. 212.

¹²⁵D.J. Constantelos, *The Greek Orthodox Church, Faith, History, and Practice*, Seabury Press, New York, 1967, p. 22; Archbishop Michael, 'Orthodox Theology', p. 14.

¹²⁶P.P. Bratsiotis, 'Fundamental Principles', p. 25.

¹²⁷T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 206.

¹²⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 206.

¹²⁹G. Florovsky, 'The Ethos of the Orthodox Church', in *Orthodoxy: A Faith and Order Dialogue*, WCC, Geneva, 1960, p. 39.

Therefore, while the truth does not change, namely unity in faith, the outward forms can change to conform to the new situations in which the Church finds itself. Consequently Ware considers new doctrinal formulation a distinct possibility:

Tradition, while inwardly changeless (for God does not change), is constantly assuming new forms, which supplement the old without superseding them. Orthodox often speak as if the period of doctrinal formulation were wholly at an end, yet this is not the case. Perhaps in our own day new Ecumenical Councils will meet, and Tradition will be enriched by new statements of faith.¹³⁰

This however raises the question concerning the validity of the historical forms in which the changeless truth is expressed. Ware argues that not all Orthodox theological statements have the same weight.¹³¹ However, so far, the Orthodox Church has pointed only to the Western influences on Orthodox theology as an example of admission of foreign elements in its Tradition.¹³² Even in this case some argue that whilst the formulations of the seventeenth century may not have been in the fullest spirit of the Eastern Church, in their essence they were and are right.¹³³ Thus, despite the fact that a growing number of Orthodox scholars affirm that the past must be critically examined, so far, since 1936 when the First Congress of Theological Faculties (Athens) required serious interpretation of Tradition in order to extirpate Latin and scholastic influences,¹³⁴ Orthodox theologians have made little progress in distinguishing between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions. This brings us to the next point: the emergence of the ecclesiastical tradition of the cult of Mary, the Saints and icons.

¹³⁰T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 206.

¹³¹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 205.

¹³²These influences are seen in the *Confession of Peter Moghila* and the *Confession of Dositheus*. However, Kaloghirou affirms that the Orthodox Church was weakened by the Turkish conquest, and consequently it found itself in an uneven struggle with the West during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. See J. Kaloghirou, 'Sacred Tradition: Its Sources and Its Task in the Church', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, XI, 1 (Summer, 1965), pp. 110-111.

¹³³E.A. P'Stephanou, *The Orthodox Church Militant*, Greek Diocese of North and South America, New York, 1950.

¹³⁴See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 41.

Chapter 3

The Emergence of Ecclesiastical Tradition

3.1 The Cult of Mary

3.1.1 The Place of Mary within the Church: Within Orthodox tradition Mary is venerated as the most exalted among God's creatures.¹³⁵ Moreover, Lossky affirms that 'the Orthodox liturgy ascribes [her] the glory which is appropriated to God.'¹³⁶ Also, during the liturgy, prayers are addressed to Mary to intercede for the believers.¹³⁷ Whilst affirming that Mary is not a substitute for Christ, Bulgakov argues that both the belief that Mary intercedes before her Son for all humanity and that she is exalted above all created being is the very mark of Orthodoxy.¹³⁸ However, since the movement which originated from Popescu's work within Romanian Orthodoxy questioned the apostolicity of the cult of Mary,¹³⁹ it is important to investigate the origin of this practice.

3.1.2 The Origin of Mariology: Different views exist among Orthodox scholars concerning the origin of Mariology. Lossky, for instance, affirms

¹³⁵She is called 'The Mother of God (*Theotokos*)', 'The Blessed Virgin Mary', 'Our All-Holy, immaculate, most blessed and immaculate Lady, Ever-Virgin Mary' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 261-262).

¹³⁶V. Lossky, 'Mariology' in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1978, p. 188.

¹³⁷In some of these prayers the believers pray: 'We have no other help besides you; All-Holy Theotokos, save us' (P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, Tipografia Diecezeana Arad, 1948, p. 169). See also Patriarhul Teoctist, *Ceaslov*, Tipărit cu Aprobarea Sfântului Sinod, Ediția a 4 a, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1990, pp. 210-244.

¹³⁸The Orthodox Church venerates the Virgin Mary as 'more honourable than the cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim', as superior to all created beings. The Church sees in her the Mother of God, who without being a substitute for the One Mediator, intercedes before her Son for all humanity. We ceaselessly pray to her to intercede for us. Love and veneration for the Virgin is the soul of Orthodox piety, its heart, that which warms and animates its entire body. A faith in Christ which does not include His virgin birth and veneration of His Mother is another faith, another Christianity from that of the Orthodox Church' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 116). (N. Zernov, *Eastern Christendom*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1961, p. 234). Ware and Staniloae explain that the veneration rendered to Mary follows immediately after the worship rendered to God. In technical terms this hierarchy of veneration is described by the following words: *latreia* (worship due to God alone); *hyperdulia* (veneration due to Mary); and *dulia*, *proskynesis* (veneration of Saints and icons). See D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol 3, p. 319; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 262.

¹³⁹See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 58-74.

that neither Scripture¹⁴⁰ nor the dogmatic definition of the Christological Councils provide enough support for Mariology.¹⁴¹ The only possible explanation for the cult of Mary is the 'vital connection' between Scripture, dogma and Tradition; a connection which ascribes a prominent role to Tradition, understood as the 'hearing of the Word of God' where Scripture is silent.¹⁴²

Apart from church tradition, theology would be dumb on this subject and unable to justify this astounding glorification. This is why Christian communities which reject the idea of tradition in every form are alien to the cult of the Mother of God.¹⁴³

However, Chialda affirms that the veneration of Mary is strongly grounded in Scripture. His 'proof-texts' are: Ps. 44:11,20-21 (in the Orthodox Bible This corresponds to Ps. 45:11,16-17 in other versions) interpreted as a prophetic text about the honour that will be paid to the Virgin Mary; Luke 1:30 - she finds favour (grace) with God; Luke 1:28 - she is venerated by the angel; Luke 1:42-43 - she is venerated by Elizabeth; Luke 2:42-43 - Jesus, Himself obeys Mary; John 2:3-10 - at the wedding in Cana Jesus answers Mary's request; John 19:26-27 - Jesus entrusts her to the Apostle John; Luke 11:27 - Mary is venerated by the crowds who heard Jesus' message; Luke 1:48-49 - all nations will venerate Mary.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰Lossky affirms that there are few passages in the New Testament that speak about Mary, and in the Old Testament only the prophecy in Isaiah about the Virgin Birth seems to be a clear reference to the subject, but none of these passages provide enough support for the cult of Mary. On the contrary, Scripture alone 'seems to contradict quite flagrantly the extreme glorification and unlimited veneration of the Theotokos in the Church.' V. Lossky, 'Mariology', pp. 177-188.

¹⁴¹Lossky argues that neither does the dogma of the Third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus 431) provide arguments for the cult of Mary due to the fact that, besides ascribing Mary the title of *Theotokos*, the definitions of the Council are entirely Christological. That this is so is demonstrated by the fact that there are Christians who, 'while recognising for purely Christological reasons the divine maternity of the Holy Virgin, abstain from all special devotion to the Mother of God for the same reasons, desiring to know no other Mediator between God and man save the God-Man, Jesus Christ' (V. Lossky, 'Mariology', p. 188).

¹⁴²Here Lossky follows St. Basil who argued that there is a difference between *kerygma* and *dogma*. Whereas the former belongs to the category of public teachings, the latter belongs to those teachings that are kept under the discipline of secrecy. It is from this secret pool that the Church received all the teachings concerning the worship of Mary. See V. Lossky, 'Mariology', p. 189; see also pp. 145-190. Similarly, Staniloae argues that the Cult of Mary has its origin in the interplay between the doctrine of the Church understood as a fellowship of love between the living and the departed, the special relationship between Mary and Jesus as Mother and Son, the motherly love of Mary for the whole of mankind and, finally, the Tradition of the Church. See D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol 3, pp. 317-322.

¹⁴³V. Lossky, 'Mariology', p. 189.

¹⁴⁴M. Chialda, 'Preacinstirea Maicii Domnului' in D. Radu ed., *Îndrumări Misionare*, p. 787. For a similar view see P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 158-162.

The relation between these scriptures and the cult of Mary is grounded, according to Chialda, in the tradition of the Church which unveils the 'spiritual' meaning of Scripture.¹⁴⁵

From a historical perspective, Meyendorff argues that the origin of Mariology goes back to the Constantinian and post-Constantinian period when,

It befitted the pastoral need to give Christian worship a more dramatic and spectacular character, able to secure the interest and participation of large congregations in the major cities. With the confirmation by the council of Ephesus (431) of the title of *Theotokos*, or Mother of God, for the Virgin Mary, an added impulse was given to the development of the 'Marian' cycle of feasts, with the West generally following the Eastern initiative. This new insistence on the liturgical commemoration of individual biblical events-or, in the case of the Virgin, of events like her Nativity, or 'Repose', which were not reported in the canonical Scriptures-was now accompanied with the cult of saints, predominantly martyrs, but also, soon, holy monks, military saints, or other holy people.¹⁴⁶

Whilst the above mentioned authors believe that the cult of Mary is apostolic, such disagreements within Orthodoxy fail to provide indubitable evidence concerning the apostolicity of Mariology. Consequently we will explore the patristic records in order to identify the views of the Fathers on this subject.

3.1.3 Mariology in Patristic Literature: Since there are significant differences between the Pre-Nicene and the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers concerning this subject we will examine their views separately.

3.1.3.1 The Pre-Nicene Fathers: Kelly affirms that during the first three centuries of Christianity the veneration of Mary was overshadowed by 'the enthusiastic cult of martyrs'.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, he argues that there is no reliable evidence about prayers being addressed to Mary, or about her protection and help being sought, during the first four centuries.¹⁴⁸ The existing records from this early period are rather concerned with Mary's role in God's plan of salvation.¹⁴⁹ However, the questions related to the mystery

¹⁴⁵M. Chialda, 'Preacinstirea', pp. 787-789.

¹⁴⁶J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 75.

¹⁴⁷J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 491.

¹⁴⁸J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 491

¹⁴⁹Generally speaking, such texts refer to: (a) The antithesis between Eve and Mary: 'We understand.... that he became man through the Virgin, so that the disobedience which resulted from the serpent might be ended by the same means as that by which it had its beginning. For Eve, while still a virgin and uncorrupted, conceived by the word from the serpent, and brought forth disobedience and death. But Mary received faith and joy, when the angel Gabriel brought her the good news that the spirit of the Lord would come upon her.... and answered, 'Be it unto me according to thy word" (Justin Martyr, *Dial.*, C.4-5 in *ANCL*, vol. II, pp. 224-225); Irenaeus in *Adv. Haer.*, III.32,3-4 in *ANCL*, vol. V, pp. 360-362. The typological interpretation of the biblical texts became very popular in the Early Church. See J. Danielou, *Gospel Message*, 203-211; (b) The soteriological implications of Incarnation in accordance with the plan of God carried out by the Virgin Mary. Justin Martyr, *Dial.*, 120, 1 in *ANCL*, vol. II, p. 250; J. Danielou, *Gospel Message*,

of the Virgin Birth opened the door to further debates about the person of Mary such as: her virginity *in partu* or *post partu*, her sinfulness or sinlessness, and her mediatory role. The response of the Fathers to these questions appears to be contradictory and incoherent. Thus Irenaeus¹⁵⁰ and Clement of Alexandria¹⁵¹ held that Mary's child-bearing was exempt from physical travail, whilst Tertullian¹⁵² rejected the idea and argued that the opening of her womb was prophesied in Exodus 13:2.¹⁵³ Origen followed Tertullian and affirmed that Mary needed the purification demanded by the Law.¹⁵⁴ Further, Tertullian argued that Mary had normal conjugal relations with Joseph after Jesus was born and that the children of Joseph and Mary were true brothers of Jesus,¹⁵⁵ whereas Origen maintained that she remained a virgin the rest of her life (virginity *post partu*) and that Jesus' brothers were the sons of Joseph from a previous marriage.¹⁵⁶ However, Irenaeus,¹⁵⁷ Tertullian,¹⁵⁸ and Origen¹⁵⁹ agreed that Mary was a sinner and consequently needed redemption from her sins.

The apocryphal literature on the other hand, at the end of the first century and early second century attests the existence of certain circles on the fringe of the Church which began to practise the veneration of Mary. Nevertheless, it is widely agreed among contemporary scholars that apocryphal

pp. 180-183; (c) The mystery behind Christ's birth and death. Ignatius, *Eph.* 18,2; 19,1 in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 165-166; *Trall.* 9,1 in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 199; 'Now the virginity of Mary and her giving birth were hidden from the rulers of this age, as was also the death of the Lord—three mysteries to be loudly proclaimed, yet which were accomplished in silence by God' (*Eph.* 19,1 in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 166).

¹⁵⁰Irenaeus, *Demonstratio*, 54 in *ANCL*, vol. IX, p. 183; *Adv. Haeresis*, III.21,6 in *ANCL*, vol. 5, p. 356.

¹⁵¹Clement, *Stromata*, 17 in *ANCL*, vol. IV, pp. 406-49.

¹⁵²Tertullian believed that the idea of Mary's perpetual virginity is docetic in its implications, and consequently he rejected the idea. See *De carne Christi*, 10f in *ANCL*, XV, p. 47; G.W.H. Lampe, 'Christian Theology in the Patristic Period' in Hubert Cunliffe-Jones, eds., *A History of Doctrine*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1978, p. 60.

¹⁵³'The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether man or animal.' The same 'spiritualized' hermeneutic is followed by those who claim the child-bearing without travail. Their text is Ezekiel 44:1-3: 'Then the man brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, the one facing the east, and it was shut. The Lord said to me', This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered through it. The prince himself is the only one who may sit inside the gateway to eat in the presence of the Lord. He is to enter by way of the portico of the gateway and go out the same way.' See P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, p. 161.

¹⁵⁴Origen, *Hom. in Luc.*, 14; *PG*, 13, 1801-1910.

¹⁵⁵Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem*, 4,19 in *ANCL*, VII, pp. 95-97; *De monogamia*, 8 in *ANCL*, XVIII, pp. 35-38; *De virginibus velandis*, 6 in *ANCL*, XVIII, pp. 164-165.

¹⁵⁶Origen, *Hom. in Luc.*, 7; *PG*, 13, 1801-1910; *Comm. in Matt.*, 10,17; *PG*, 13, 829-1800.

¹⁵⁷Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III,21,6.

¹⁵⁸Tertullian, *De carne Christi*, 7 in *ANCL*, VII, pp. 179-182; *De virg. vel.*, 6.

¹⁵⁹Origen, *Hom. in Luc.*, 17.

representations are neither mainstream to early Christianity nor an authoritative source of theological epistemology.¹⁶⁰

Whilst there is no clear evidence from the Pre-Nicene period concerning the apostolicity of the cult of Mary,¹⁶¹ two significant things which did occur are: first, the emergence of the cult of Mary on the fringe of the Church as recorded in the Apocrypha, and second, the development of a 'spiritualized' hermeneutic which allowed the Fathers to read into the text of Scripture their own opinions.¹⁶² These trends prepared the ground both for appeal to the non-biblical tradition as a source of theological knowledge and for the use of a 'spiritualized' hermeneutic as a means of overcoming the contradiction between either Scripture and Tradition or between the Fathers.

3.1.3.2 The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Whilst the growing influence in the fourth century in favour of an ascetic life and virginity¹⁶³ influenced the development of Marian themes within the Church, nevertheless the subject was still controversial. Thus the title *Theotokos* (God-bearer)¹⁶⁴ given to Mary by Alexander of Alexandria, whilst widely

¹⁶⁰In the *Ascension of Isaiah* there is the first affirmation of the fact that Mary was a virgin not only in conceiving Jesus but also in bearing him: 'her womb was found as it was before she became pregnant'(virginity *in pratu*), *Asc. Is.*, II, 8-14. The idea of supernatural birth involving no physical travail is found in the *Odes of Solomon (Od. Sol.)*, 19, 6-10. The *Protoevangelium of James*, written for Mary's glorification, describes her divinely ordained birth when her parents, Joachim and Anna, were old. At her dedication to the Temple her parents prayed the God would give her 'a name renowned for ever among all generations' (*Protev. Iac.* 6,2). This writing also affirms that Joseph was old when he was engaged to Mary, and being a widower he had had children from his previous marriage. Those children are referred to in Scripture as Jesus' brothers and sisters. Another point in the book is that Mary conceived Jesus without sexual intercourse with her physical nature remaining intact when she bore him. Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 492-493; I. Bria, 'Maica Domnului', in *Dicționar de Teologie Ortodoxă*, Ed. IMB al BOR, București, 1981, pp. 247-250.

¹⁶¹Graef argues: 'She appeared veiled, as it were, in some prophecies, while in the New Testament she emerged into the full light of the day in the first chapters of Luke, only to retire again into comparative darkness during the ministry of her Son and to merge with the figure of the Church in the Apocalypse. This changing pattern is repeated in the history of the first centuries of the Church' (H. Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, Sheed & Ward, London, 1985, p. 32). Graef explains this long silence about the worship of the Virgin Mary in the early church by pointing towards the mysterious cycle of this theme in the Scripture and in the life of the Church. She argues that in order to avoid an identity or comparison between Mary and the goddesses of the syncretistic religion of the pagan world of the first centuries, the Apostles and their successors avoided speaking about Mary and the Virgin Birth. However, the author contradicts herself in stressing the importance of the Apocrypha which demonstrates the importance of Mary in the life of the Early Church (see pp. 34-38). If Graef's view is correct, then it would imply that the true representatives of the early church's doctrine and practice are not the Apostles or their successors but the anonymous writers of the Apocrypha.

¹⁶²See the interpretation of Exodus 13:2 and Ezekiel 44:1-3.

¹⁶³J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 494.

¹⁶⁴The title was intended to express a Christological rather than a Mariological truth. See G.W.H. Lampe, 'Christian Theology', p. 128.

accepted was rejected in Antiochia.¹⁶⁵ Similarly, the title 'ever-virgin' was accepted by some whilst others were either silent (Cyril of Jerusalem) or opposed the idea (Epiphanius and Eunomius).¹⁶⁶ Even Basil, who criticized those who affirmed that the brothers of Jesus were Mary's children, acknowledged that their ideas were widespread and that such teachings were not incompatible with orthodoxy.¹⁶⁷ Further, Athanasius defended Mary's virginity *post partum*, whereas Chrysostom¹⁶⁸ and Gregory of Nyssa¹⁶⁹ adopted the view of Mary's virginity both in bearing the child and after his birth.

Concerning Mary's moral perfection, the Eastern Fathers followed Origen in declaring her guilty of human frailties.¹⁷⁰ Thus, Basil interpreted the words of Simeon¹⁷¹ in the Temple as referring to Mary's loss of faith at the crucifixion,¹⁷² and Chrysostom¹⁷³ considered that at Cana she received a well deserved rebuke from Jesus because of her desire to display authority over Him. Meanwhile in Syria there developed a strong movement in favour of Mary's moral perfection, free from every stain, like her Son.¹⁷⁴

Additionally, the parallel between Eve and Mary continued to develop¹⁷⁵ and Epiphanius suggested that Mary, not Eve deserves the title from Genesis 3:20: 'the mother of all living'. He also argued that the prophecy from Revelation 12:14 is referring to Mary.¹⁷⁶

Similarly, the Latin Fathers held contradictory views concerning Mary. Hilary, for example, regarded the birth of Jesus as a natural one, but claimed that Mary remained a virgin afterwards and that the 'brothers of Jesus' from the Gospels were Joseph's children from an earlier marriage. However, he argued that Mary did not have moral perfection, and therefore she too would have to face God's judgment.¹⁷⁷ Another Father, Zeno of Verona, contended that Mary preserved her virginity both in conceiving and

¹⁶⁵J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 494.

¹⁶⁶J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 494.

¹⁶⁷J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 495.

¹⁶⁸Chrysostom, *In Matt. hom.*, 5,2f in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. X, pp. 31-32; *In Gen. hom.*, 49,2; *PG*, 53-54.

¹⁶⁹Gregory of Nyssa, *vita Mos.*, 2,2; *PG*, 44, 297-430.

¹⁷⁰J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 495.

¹⁷¹'And a sword will pierce your own soul too' (Luke 2:35b).

¹⁷²Basil, *Ep.* 260,9 in *NPNF*, 2nd ed., vol. VIII, p. 299.

¹⁷³Chrysostom, *Hom. in Matt.*, 44,2 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. X, p. 280; *Hom. in Ioh.*, 21,2 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. XIV, pp. 73-76.

¹⁷⁴Ephraem, *Carm. Nisib.*, 27,8. Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 495.

¹⁷⁵Gregory of Nyssa, *Hom. in cant.*, 13; *PG*, 44, 755-1120; Chrysostom, *Expos. in Ps.*, 24,7; *PG*, 55.

¹⁷⁶Epiphanius denied Mary's virginity in bearing the child but proclaimed her 'the mother of all living' and, according to some speculations, his interpretation of the text in Rev. 12:14 cleared the ground for the later theory of bodily assumption. See Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 495.

¹⁷⁷Hilary, *Comm. in Matt.*, 1,3f; *PL*, 9, 917; *De trin.*, 10, 47 in *NPNF*, vol. IX, pp. 194-195; *Tract. in ps.*, 118.3,2; *PL*, 9, 231-890.

in bearing the child. Moreover, he developed the view that Mary represents the Church.¹⁷⁸ Jerome,¹⁷⁹ on his part, rejected Mary's virginity *in partu* but proclaimed her virginity *post partu*. Further, he argued that the scriptural references to 'Jesus' brothers' actually refer to his cousins because both Mary and Joseph spent their lives as virgins.¹⁸⁰ Ambrose considered Mary to be the perfect ideal of a virgin. He argued that in her role as the Mother of God she received a special grace that was associated with man's salvation. He also embraced the idea of kinship between Mary and the Church, both being virgins and mothers by the operation of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸¹ Whilst continuing Ambrose's view concerning Mary's permanent virginity, in his debate with Pelagius Augustine argued that although all men are born with original sin, Mary included, nevertheless she was delivered from its effect as a result of the grace given her in view of the Incarnation.¹⁸² However, the question concerning Mary's moral perfection and that of original sin remains a stumbling block between East and West to this day.¹⁸³

Despite these disagreements however, both East and West accepted the belief in Mary's mediatory role.¹⁸⁴ Thus Gregory of Nazianzus tells of the story of a virgin who prayed to Mary to assist her in the hour of peril.¹⁸⁵ Additionally, in a papyrus fragment from the fourth century or later, there is the following prayer addressed to Mary: 'Mother of God, [listen to] my petitions; do not disregard us in adversity, but rescue us from danger.'¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, by ascribing to her the name *Theotokos*, the Christological Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451)¹⁸⁷ gave one of the strongest arguments for those circles that were already worshipping Mary. The two Councils inspired people to dedicate churches to the Blessed Virgin, to

¹⁷⁸Zeno of Verona, *Tract.* 1.13,1; 2.8,2; 2.9,1. Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 496.

¹⁷⁹Jerome, in defending the perpetual virginity of Mary against Helvidius, asserted the superiority of virginity over marriage. See S.G. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church*, p. 184.

¹⁸⁰Jerome, *Adv. Helvid.*, 15; 18; 19; *PL*, 23, 183-206; *Dia. c. Pelag.*, 2,4; *PL*, 23, 495-590; *Comm. in Matt.*, 12,47; *PL*, 26, 115-218.

¹⁸¹Ambrose, *Expos. in Luc.*, 2,7; 2,9; 2,17; 2,57; 17; *PL*, 15, 1587-1850; *Hexaem.*, 5,65; *PL*, 14, 123-274; *De virg.*, II,6-15 in *NPNF*, 2nd ed., vol. X, pp. 380ff.

¹⁸²Augustine, *Serm.*, 186,1; 191,2. Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 82; *De nat. et grat.* 42 in *NPNF*, 1st series, V, p. 135.

¹⁸³K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', pp. 254-256.

¹⁸⁴Epiphanius wrote about 370 AD about a sect named the Collyridians who worshipped Mary. See J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 497.

¹⁸⁵Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 24,11; *PG*, 36, 1165.

¹⁸⁶Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 498.

¹⁸⁷Whilst the Councils as such were not concerned with the cult of Mary, the debates concerning the proper names ascribed to Mary constituted an important aspect. See S.G. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice*, pp 212-214, 215-221, 234-235. Theodore of Mopsuestia, for instance, criticized the title *Theotokos* considering that although it might suit the growing cult of Mary, from a technical perspective it was not correct. Instead he proposed other titles: *Christotokos*, *Theodokos* (God-receiver), or, if *Theotokos* was preferred, it must be balanced by *Anthropotokos*. See G.W.H. Lampe, 'Christian Theology', pp. 130-133; J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, pp. 241-242.

organize feasts in her honour and to introduce her name into the liturgy.¹⁸⁸ However, it was during the seventh and early eighth centuries that the Greek Marian devotion movement introduced new festivals into the Roman calendar including the Assumption, which initially celebrated only the passing of the soul of the Virgin Mary into God's presence without reference to her bodily Assumption.¹⁸⁹

Referring to the documents invoked to support such belief, Ware acknowledges that the tradition upon which the Marian festivals and dogmas are founded 'was never seriously questioned, though some of the apocryphal documents purporting to describe it were treated with suspicion.'¹⁹⁰ However, since the sixth century such documents have been constantly invoked by those who practise the cult of Mary's relics.¹⁹¹

3.1.4 From the Middle Ages to the Present Day: The development of Mariology from the Middle Ages until the present day has been a matter of controversy between the Eastern and Western churches. Thus the dogma of the Immaculate Conception declared by Pope Pius IX in 1854 and that of the Bodily Assumption proclaimed by Pope Pius XII in 1950 were not formally accepted by the Orthodox Church. The former is rejected on the grounds that it represents a false understanding of original sin¹⁹² and thus separates Mary from the rest of the descendants of Adam by placing her in a different class from all the saints of the Old Testament.¹⁹³ The latter, although not formally accepted by the Orthodox Church, is widely accepted by the Orthodox and is interpreted as an anticipation of the bodily glorification that will be experienced by all believers.¹⁹⁴ Thus the Orthodox

¹⁸⁸J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 498.

¹⁸⁹K. Ware, 'Christian Theology in the East 600-1453', in H. Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of Doctrine*, p. 234.

¹⁹⁰K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', p. 254.

¹⁹¹According to a legend, in 451 the Empress Pulcheria asked Bishop Juvenal of Jerusalem for the body of Mary. He replied that the Church did not possess it, since an old tradition affirmed that when the Apostles opened her tomb on the third day after her death they did not find her body but only the funeral clothes. Pulcheria asked for these clothes and Juvenal sent them in a sealed casket. Another legend says that Mary had entrusted her veil, on which some drops of milk had also fallen when she had fed Jesus, to a woman of her entourage. Finally, this veil was handed down to a Jewish woman who kept it in a casket and performed miracles with it. When two patricians heard of this they stole the casket with the veil and brought it to Constantinople. During an attack on the city by the Avari in 619 it was removed from the sanctuary; when the barbarians retreated after a few days, the veil was solemnly brought back to the sanctuary on 2 July by the Patriarch Sergius, who instituted a feast on the same day. Cf. H. Graef, *Mary*, pp. 138-139.

¹⁹²S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 117.

¹⁹³The Orthodox Church has never made any formal pronouncement on this matter. Orthodox individuals have made affirmations that seem quite close to the Catholic dogma, but since 1854 the great majority of the Orthodox have rejected the doctrine. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 263-264; Ion Bria, *Dictionar*, pp. 249-250.

¹⁹⁴T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 264-265. Bulgakov argues that, 'The Church believes that, dying a natural death, she was not subject to corruption, but, raised up by

Church celebrates the Feast of the 'Dormition' on 15 August to express its belief in the Assumption of the Mother of God.¹⁹⁵ However, the disagreements between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches regarding the Marian dogmas, the absence of evidence for Mariology in the Pre-Nicene period and the striking disagreements amongst the Fathers concerning Mary's perpetual virginity and moral perfection, do not provide indubitable argument concerning the apostolicity of the cult of Mary.¹⁹⁶ Additionally, some records invoked as patristic evidence for Mariology appear to be more legendary than historical.¹⁹⁷ It was this absence of clear evidence concerning the apostolicity of the cult of Mary that subsequently led to the tension between the Romanian Orthodox Church and Popescu. However, since Mariology is related to the cult of Saints, and the apostolicity of this practice was equally questioned, we turn now to this subject.

3.2 The Cult of the Saints

3.2.1 The Saints and the Departed within the Church: The belief in the role of the Saints as intercessors on behalf of believers was clearly affirmed by the Council of Nicaea II, 787.¹⁹⁸ Similarly, Bulgakov argues that,

The Saints are our intercessors and our protectors in the heavens and, in consequence, living and active members of the Church militant. Their blessed

her Son, she lives in her glorified body at the right hand of Christ in heaven' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 188).

¹⁹⁵T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 264; I. Bria, *Dictionar*, pp. 249-250.

¹⁹⁶See K. Borresen, 'Mary in Catholic Theology', in *Concilium*, 168 (1983), pp. 48-56; N. Missiotis, 'Mary in Orthodox Theology', in *Concilium*, 168 (1983), pp. 25-39.

¹⁹⁷St. Gregory of Tours (538-593) wrote that when Mary died in the presence of all the Apostles, the Lord Jesus Himself came with his angels and entrusted her soul to angel Michael to be taken into heaven. The Apostles placed her body in a tomb and guarded it, and again the Lord appeared unto them after He had revived the body of Mary, He commanded that it be taken in a cloud into heaven. See Gregory of Tours, *Eight Books of Miracles*, 1,4; *PL*, 71, 705. John of Damascus (645-749) had a different version of the story: the Apostles were instantly transported through the air to Jerusalem, and in the presence of the angelic choir Mary's soul was delivered into the hands of God. Her body was placed in a coffin in Gethsemane and in the presence of heavenly music that lasted for three days the Apostles watched over her coffin. Thomas arrived after three days and he wanted to worship Mary's body. When they opened the coffin the body was gone and only the grave wrappings were left behind. The disciples concluded that Jesus had taken her into glory prior to the universal resurrection. See John Damascene, *Second Homily on the Dormition of Mary*, 10,18 in W. Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, vol. 3, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, 1979, p. 350. Bria affirms that the story of Mary's bodily assumption is recorded in a book attributed to Bishop Meliton of Sardes. It relates about the Apostles surrounded the Virgin in her last moments and then took her corpse for burial in Jehoshaphat's Valley. There her body was raised up to heaven. I. Bria, *Dictionar*, pp. 247-248.

¹⁹⁸W. Niesel, *Reformed Symbolic*, p. 162.

presence in the Church manifests itself in their pictures and relics. They surround us with a cloud of prayer, a cloud of the glory of God.¹⁹⁹

Moreover, since Orthodox ecclesiology affirms that the Church includes both the living and the dead, it follows that the former also pray for the latter.²⁰⁰ However, since Popescu rejected both the mediatory role of the Saints and of the Church for the departed on the grounds that it is a novelty, the matter at hand concerns the origin of this practice.

3.2.2 The Origin of the Cult of Saints: Meyendorff argues that the cult of Saints can be traced back to the emergence of a spontaneous monasticism during the early part of the fourth century. This movement was influenced by both ascetic tendencies and the quest for supernatural realities in a society saturated with Neo-Platonic categories of thought.²⁰¹ Whilst the Church fought against Greek influences during the first three centuries of its existence, around the beginning of the fourth century Christianity adopted the metaphysical justification of the cult of idols²⁰² and applied it to the life of the Church.²⁰³ However, Meyendorff argues that in so doing the Church successfully purified all the concepts and practices borrowed from the Greek world,²⁰⁴ although, Harnack asserts that because pagan practices crept into the Church through a 'subterranean dimension' the Church not only failed to purify them but was actually invaded by paganism.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 119.

²⁰⁰T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 258-259.

²⁰¹J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 89. In the Greek-speaking world the images had a religious and cultic role invested with metaphysical functions, whilst Christianity considered idols to be 'demonic' and a symbol of paganism. J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, pp. 173-175; *Imperial Unity*, 1989, p. 91.

²⁰²The idol is a material symbol of a spiritual reality which serves as a means of access to the prototype. J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, p. 175.

²⁰³'A moment came between the third and the seventh century, when Christians adopted the pagan arguments' (P.J. Alexander, in 'Patriarch Nicephorus', pp. 24-30. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, p. 175).

²⁰⁴According to Meyendorff, this step represents a major shift in the life of the Church. Not only were the pagan practices not looked upon as dangerous but: 'Whatever in ancient Greek culture could validly be assumed by the new religion was taken over; and the new religion often gave new meaning to those elements of antiquity that it adopted' (J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, p. 175).

²⁰⁵This 'subterranean dimension' of Christianity, or 'second-class' Christianity, 'consisted in worship of angels, demigods and demons, reverence of pictures, relics and amulets, a more or less impotent enthusiasm for the sternest ascetism-therefore not infrequently strictly dualistic conceptions-and a scrupulous observance of certain things held to be sacred, words, signs, rites, ceremonies, places and times' (A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol 4, p. 304). Because this 'subterranean dimension' could not be institutionally controlled, in time such practices became widespread and influential, and eventually fused with *doctrina publica* which, in Harnack's theory, represents those teachings that are officially accepted by the Church.(A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol 4, p. 304). Further, Harnack explains the variety of local practices and teachings concerning the cult of Saints in the early period by pointing out that this fusion took place over a long period of time (between the 3rd and the 8th centuries) and that in different provinces the Christians assimilated the rites, superstitions and the tendencies of the local population.

For Bulgakov, the root of the cult of Saints has to be sought not in Scripture but in the 'foreshadow' of pagan practices fulfilled in the Incarnation.²⁰⁶ After the coming of Christ the 'foreshadow' of the pagan world became reality, because those who belong to Christ are deified. 'They became "gods by virtue of grace"; they became Christs in Jesus Christ.'²⁰⁷

Conversely, the Romanian Orthodox argue that the cult of Saints is entirely apostolic: the scriptural arguments put forward refer both to their life and death.²⁰⁸ In life: (a) they were honoured by God, who gave them special titles: His friends (John 15:14; James 2:23), temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), members of God's household (Eph. 2:19), members of the heavenly Jerusalem after death (Heb. 12:22), will judge the world with Jesus (Matt. 19:28; 1 Cor.6:2); (b) they received from God special spiritual gifts and power to work miracles: Moses worked miracle before Pharaoh (Ex. 4:7), crossed the Red Sea (Ex. 14:16-31), changed the bitter water at Marah into sweet water (Ex. 15:23-25), struck the rock at Massah to give water (Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:10-11); Elijah restored to life the son of the Widow at Zarephath (1 King 17:17-23); Elisha divided the waters of the Jordan (2 Kings 2:14), healed Naaman's leprosy (2 Kings 5:10), knew of Gehazi's deed (2 Kings 5:20-27), restored to life the Shunammite's son (2 Kings 4:32-36), and other miracles (2 Kings 4-6). Jesus gave special power to his disciples to heal the sick and cast out demons (Matt. 10:1; Mark 3:14-15; 6;7;13; Luke 9:1-6; 9; 10;17); (c) the true believers venerated the Saints while they were still alive because they saw in the saints the beloved friends of God; Elijah was venerated by Obadiah, King's Ahab servant (1 Kings 18:7); Elisha was venerated by the prophets at Jericho (2 Kings 2:15) and by the Shunammite (2 Kings 4:36-37); Paul and Silas were venerated by the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:29); Paul blessed the Philippians and asked them to bless him, too (Phil.2:17-18); James asked the Christians to bless those who lived a worthy life (Jam.1:12). After death: (a) the Saints continue to live around the throne of God and gives praises and pray to God (Mark 12:27; Luke

Thus 'the temple of Mithra became St. George's Church, the ancient Wotan became St. Michael, Poseidon-St. Nicholas; the different 'mothers of God', who were honoured with all sorts of sacred offerings-one preferred fruits, another animals-only show that Demeter, Venus, Juno, and countless other great mothers and holy or unholy virgins, had merged in the one mother. The provincial calendar and various 'Church years' conceal significant reminiscences from the old heathen times' (A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol 4, pp. 304-305).

²⁰⁶Sometimes veneration of saints is seen as approaching the pagan cult of heroes and demigods, even to be equivalent to pagan polytheism. The parallel is not at all as deceptive as it seems, however. Paganism, with all its superstitions and delusions, could contain important premonitions, 'foreshadowings', which for reasons of divine pedagogy and to construct the Old Testament church, could remain unknown even to it. This may be the case of veneration for 'demigods', who are truly gods by grace, who were known to the pagan world but unknown to Old Testament Judaism' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 119).

²⁰⁷S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 121.

²⁰⁸See D. Radu, 'Cinstirea Sfinților' in D. Radu, ed., *Îndrumări Misionare*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1986. p. 760; D. Staniloae, 'Sfințenia in Ortodoxie' in *Ortodoxia*, XXXII, 1 (1980), p. 33.

20:34-38; Rev. 4:10-11; 5:8-14); (b) being conscious, and maintaining their gifts and power, they know the needs of those on earth (Abraham knew the situation of the rich man's brothers, Luke 16:29-31); (c) the Saints pray to God and intercede for the salvation of the faithful (2 Mac. 15:12; Onias, after his death, continued to pray to God for the whole army of Israel); (d) the Saints take the prayers of the believers before God (Rev.5:8); (e) the prayer of the Saints have great power (James 5:16; Ps. 31).²⁰⁹

However, the striking contrast between the significant number of 'proof-texts' invoked by the Romanian Orthodox and the absence of such texts from the works of other Orthodox theologians²¹⁰ illustrates the disagreements within Orthodoxy concerning both the origin of the cult of Saints and the interpretation of the biblical texts put forward by Romanian scholars.²¹¹ Since these disagreements fail to provide indubitable evidence of apostolic origin for this tradition, we will explore patristic views on this subject.

3.2.3 Saints and the Departed in Patristic Literature: For methodological reasons we will examine the Pre-Nicene and the Post-Nicene periods separately.

3.2.3.1 The Pre-Nicene Fathers: Whilst frequently invoked as post-apostolic evidence of the cult of martyrs,²¹² *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* clearly denies such practice. Instead, it points to the mode in which a group of Christians gave careful consideration to the funeral of Polycarp²¹³ and to their spontaneous decision to gather at Polycarp's tomb on the day of his martyrdom,²¹⁴ in order both to celebrate his victory and to be encouraged by his example.²¹⁵ With Origen, however, these spontaneous commemoration

²⁰⁹M. Chialda, 'Cinstirea Sfinților', p. 808.

²¹⁰Bulgakov in his comment about the cult of Saints gives biblical reference only to underline the idea of 'Saint' and not to demonstrate that the cult of the Saints was practised by the Apostles. See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 119-128. Zernov, Meyendorff, and Ware, however, do not use biblical references at all. See N. Zernov, *Eastern Christendom*, pp. 232-235; J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 90-94; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 258-261.

²¹¹See S. Cosma, *Cuvinte ale Dreptei Credințe (Cateheze)*, pp. 321-327; E. Braniște, 'Despre Cinstirea Sfinților în Biserică', in *Ortodoxia*, 1 (1980), pp. 42-56; Patriarch Teoctist, *Învățătura de Credință*, pp. 167-173.

²¹²See P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, p. 148; S. Cosma, *Cuvinte*, p. 326.

²¹³See *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 18, in J. Stevenson, *A New Eusebius: Documents Illustrating the History of the Church to AD 337* (henceforth *NE*), SPCK (4th impression), London, 1992, p. 28; Eusebius, *H. Eccl.* iv,15 in *NPNF*, vol. I, pp. 188-192.

²¹⁴So much, then, for the Blessed Polycarp. Although he was, together with those from Philadelphia, the twelfth martyr in Smyrna, he alone is especially remembered by all, and is spoken in every place, even by the heathen. He was not only a famous teacher, but also an outstanding witness, whose martyrdom all desire to imitate, because he was so much in accord with the gospel of Christ' (*Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 19,1 in *NE*, p. 28).

²¹⁵When the centurion saw that contentiousness caused by the Jews, he confiscated the body, and according to their custom, burned it. Then, at last, we took up his bones, more precious than costly gems and finer than gold, and put them in a suitable place. The Lord will permit us, when we are able, to assemble there in joy and gladness; and to celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom, both in memory of those who have already

developed into an institutionalized celebration not only of the Saints²¹⁶ but of all those who had died in faith.²¹⁷ Moreover, Origen advanced the view that the Church in heaven assists the Church on earth with its prayers.²¹⁸

In the West, both Tertullian and Cyprian refer to the annual celebrations for the martyrs and the departed. Those celebrations were not considered intercessions on behalf of the soul of the martyr but only a mode of commemoration and of encouragement for those who underwent persecutions.²¹⁹ However, whilst the author of *2 Clement*, Clement of Rome and Cyprian of Carthage clearly rejected the belief both in the intercessory role of the Church for the departed²²⁰ and of the Saints for those left behind,²²¹ Tertullian accepted the view that the relationship between the departed and the ones left behind continues. Hence he concluded: first, that prayers for the departed should be offered at the anniversaries of his death,

engaged in the contest, and for the practice and training of those who have yet to fight' (*Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 17,3; 18,1 in *NE*, p. 28).

²¹⁶'It is right and proper that we should commemorate the saints, whether by offering public prayers, or by the benefit that we derive from our remembrance of them' (Origen, *in Rom.*, 12; *PG*, 14, 837-1292).

²¹⁷'Wherefore we commemorate not only the saints, but also with special devotion our own relatives and friends who died in the faith: and while we rejoice that they are in a place of refreshment, we ask for ourselves that we may continue faithful to the end. We call together the clergy, the laity, and the members of the religious orders to join in our Celebration, and we invite the poor and the needy, and feast the widows and orphans; it being our aim that our commemoration may be both a memorial of that falling asleep of the departed, and may also avail for ourselves as a sweet-smelling odour in the sight of God eternal' (Origen, *Commentary on the Book of Job*. Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 45).

²¹⁸See Origen, *Orat.* 31,5 in *GCS*, 3:375-380.

²¹⁹See Tertullian, *De corona militis* in *ANCL*, XV, pp. 333-335; Cyprian, *Epistle*, 34,3 in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, p. 99; *Epistle*, 37; 66 in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, pp 103-104; 231-235.

²²⁰'Let us, then, so long as we are in this world, repent whatever evils we may have done in the flesh, so that we may be saved by the Lord while yet we have time for repentance. For after we have departed from this world it will no longer be possible to confess, nor will there be then any opportunity to repent' (*2 Clement*, 8,2-3 in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 60). See also W.A. Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, vol. 1, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MI, 1970, p. 42. Similarly, Cyprian of Carthage affirms: 'When once you have departed this life, there is no longer any place for repentance, no way of making satisfaction. Here life is either lost or kept. Here, by the worship of God and by the fruit of faith, provision is made for eternal salvation' (Cyprian, *To Demetrian*, 25 in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, pp. 441-442).

²²¹When the Pagans, instigated by the Jews, watched the Christians to see if they would worship the relics [ashes] of Polycarp, the latter responded: 'Christ we worship as the Son of God: but the martyrs we love as disciples and imitators of the Lord; and rightly so, because of their unsurpassable devotion to their own King and Teacher. With them may we also become companions and fellow disciples' (*The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 17,3 in *NE*, p. 28). Similarly, setting before the eyes of the Corinthian Church the two apostles Peter and Paul, Clement does not encourage the believers to invoke them in prayer but to follow in their footsteps. See Clement of Rome, *Ep. to Corinthians*, v in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 10-11; J. Calvin, *A Treatise on Relics*, Johnstone and Hunter, Edinburgh, 1854, p. 5.

and second, remarriage was impossible because death does not bring to an end the family relationship.²²²

Additionally, apocryphal literature from the second and third centuries describes the emergence of the cult of the departed within certain circles on the fringe of the Church. These groups were influenced by a popular theology filled with visions, dreams, mysticism and pagan elements.²²³

3.2.3.2 The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: In the East, the death of Emperor Constantine (337) played a significant role in the emergence of

²²²Tertullian appears to have been more interested in the marital implication of death than in the cult of Saints. Thus he argues that remarriage would imply, on the one hand, bigamy, and on the other, divorce. 'If the second marriage has taken place, two wives beset the same husband, one in the spirit, the other in the flesh' (Tertullian, *De exhortatione castitas*, xi in *ANCL*, vol. XVIII, pp. 16-17). 'For indeed she prays for his soul, and asks for him refreshment meanwhile, and fellowship with him in the first resurrection, and makes her offerings for him on the anniversaries of his death. For if she does not do so, she had really divorced him, as far as in her lies' (Tertullian, *De Monogamia*, x in *ANCL*, vol. XVIII, pp. 40-42). However, this conclusion contradicts the writings of the Apostle Paul, who considers death the end of relationship and consequently it releases the one left behind to remarry (Rom. 7:1-3). In addition, Tertullian's conclusion blatantly contradicts the Orthodox view of marriage; a view which accepts divorce and remarriage up to three times in one's life and only refuses to perform a fourth remarriage. The Orthodox affirm that this practice is only a condescension of the Church towards human frailty and not a clear outcome of Orthodox belief regarding the relation between the living and the departed. See I. Bria, *Dicționar*, p. 129; I.D. Ivan, 'Taina Cununiei', in D. Radu, ed., *Indrumări Misionare*, pp. 586-599.

²²³In a legendary form the *Testament of Abraham* tells how Abraham, with Michael (an angel), agreed to pray for a dead person, and by the time they concluded their prayer the dead person had disappeared. At Abraham's question about the person, the angel responded: 'He has been saved by means of your righteous prayer, and lo! a bright angel has taken him and borne him to paradise.' See *Testament of Abraham*, Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying for the Dead*, Longmans, London, 1913, p. 41. This piece of literature is ascribed to an unknown Jewish Christian in Egypt in the second century. The second evidence is an epitaph of Aviricus, Bishop of Hierapolis: 'Let every friend who observeth this, pray for me.' Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 43. About the same time there is another piece of literature which reports prayer on behalf of the dead but very much in a legendary form: 'Falconilla was dead, and in a vision said to her (i.e. Tryphaena), 'Mother, you will have this stranger, Thecla, in my place, that she may pray for me, that I may pass to the abode of the righteous.'" Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 42. The next record is an apocryphal work (about 160-170 AD) which may be the first mention of the celebration of Eucharist at the tomb of the departed: 'Early next day came John with Andronicus and the brethren to the tomb, it being the third day after the death of Drusina, that we might break bread there. See *Acta Ioanis*, in E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 42. One other story is about a little boy, Dinocrates, who died. A few days later when his sister Perpetua was praying, she heard a voice speaking to her and she uttered the name of Dinocrates. Suddenly she felt that she ought to pray for her departed brother. That very night Perpetua had a vision of her brother, in distress, thirsty, dirty and pale. She began to pray earnestly for him and she could witness in her vision how the condition of her brother was being improved as a result of her prayer. Then Perpetua awoke and she concluded that her brother had been removed from the place of pain to a place of rest. See 'The Passion of the Holy Martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas', in *Acts of Perpetua* (About 300 AD), in E. Boggis, *Prayer*, pp. 61-64.

the cult of the Saints.²²⁴ The Church's spontaneous prayer for the departed monarch developed rapidly into a liturgical practice for all those who died in faith. However, for Cyril of Jerusalem (about AD 374) the departed fell into two categories: firstly, patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs who intercede for the living; and secondly, holy fathers, bishops and all others who need the petition of the living for the benefit of their soul.²²⁵ Additionally, Cyril introduced the idea that the Eucharist has a propitiatory role both for the living and the departed.²²⁶ Moreover, Athanasius²²⁷ and Gregory of Nazianzus²²⁸ argued that the Saints have efficacious access to God. Aerius, however, rejected such practice on the grounds that it was useless and pernicious. Further, he argued that if salvation could be secured by the multitude of prayers and offerings on behalf of the departed then no one need trouble to live a holy life. Epiphanius of Salamis refuted Aerius' view and proclaimed the mediatory role both of the Church for the departed and of the Saints for the living. However, whilst Cyril of Jerusalem argued that the Fathers and bishops need our prayers, Epiphanius affirmed that they also intercede for us.²²⁹ Further, Chrysostom expanded both the idea

²²⁴Eusebius of Caesarea described the ceremony: 'In the middle were the sacred ministers with a crowd of the populace and all the multitude of the faithful, and they performed the rites of the divine worship and prayer. The body of the blessed prince was there, raised up on a high catafalque, an object of respect from all. And all the people and those who were dedicated to God, shedding tears and wailing aloud, offered up their prayers to God for the deceased monarch' (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, iv, 71 in *NPNF*, vol. 1, p. 58).

²²⁵Cyril of Jerusalem (about AD 347) explains that during the liturgy, after the intercession for the living there immediately follows the intercession for the departed. 'Next we commemorate also those who have fallen asleep before us, firstly patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs, that in answer to their prayers and intercession God would accept our petition. Then we make mention of the holy fathers and bishops, and of all others from among ourselves who have fallen asleep, for we believe that the greatest benefit will accrue to the souls of those for whom we make our petition in the presence of the holy and awful sacrifice' (*Mystagogica*, v,9 in *NPNF*, vol. VII, p. 154).

²²⁶'We offer up for our sins Christ sacrificed, propitiating the good God both for them and for ourselves' (*Mystagogica*, v,10 in *NPNF*, vol. VII, p. 155).

²²⁷Athanasius gives a circular argument for the practice of prayer for the departed: 'If they gained no benefit therefrom, they would not be commemorated at the oblation' (Athanasius, *Questiones ad Antiochum*, 34. See *NPNF*, vol. IV, pp. 481-486; 579, 578).

²²⁸Gregory practised both the annual commemoration and the prayer for the departed. He composed in honour of his brother, who had died, a *Funeral Oration* in which he prayed to God to receive his brother's soul. Subsequently Gregory made the pledge that those who were left behind would commemorate him every year. 'This we will do-we who survive him-we will every year honour his memory and offer our commemorations...O Lord of life and death, steward and benefactor of our souls, who createst all things and preparest them in due time by the designing Word, even as thou thyself knowest in all thy wisdom and power of control, receive now Caesarius, the first-fruits of our pilgrimage' (Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio*, 7,10 in *NPNF*, vol. VII, p. 238).

²²⁹'But also prayer offered for them does avail, even though it may not remove the whole of their guilt. For when we are in the world we frequently commit sins, sometimes intentionally and sometimes unintentionally, and the very object of this is that the efficacy of such prayers may be made quite plain. For the righteous we offer our commemoration, and also for sinners: -for sinners, because we are asking God for mercy; for the righteous- fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, bishops, hermits, and the rest-to help us to distinguish the Lord Jesus Christ

that the Saints have efficacious access to God on behalf of the living,²³⁰ and of the mediatory role of the Church to the whole world, to both, the living and the dead.²³¹ Moreover, he argued that this practice is Apostolic²³² and inspired by the Holy Spirit.²³³ Additionally, Chrysostom borrowed from the pagan world the idea that the family should also participate (alongside the Church) in the act of intercession for the departed both by offering prayers and alms, and by dispatching the deceased's goods with him. Consequently, if the departed was a sinner he would obtain forgiveness, and if the departed was a righteous man his reward may be increased.²³⁴ Whilst, then, the contribution of subsequent Eastern Fathers (after Chrysostom) to the cult of Saints did not seriously influence the development of theological thought,²³⁵ it did contribute to the development of the rite.²³⁶

Meanwhile, in the West, Ambrose introduced the practice of prayers and offerings in order to commend the souls of the departed to God and to ask for their repose.²³⁷ Further, he contended that the departed continue to

from all human beings by the honour that is paid to him, and that we may render to him our worship' (Epiphanius, *Adversus Haeresis*, iii, 75; *PG*, 41-42).

²³⁰John Chrysostom, *Cat.*, 23,9. Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 490.

²³¹'What I have been saying affects the city. But why should I treat the city only? What manner of man then must he be who acts as God's ambassador for the whole world, and offers up prayer to God that he would be merciful to the sins of all, not only the living but also the departed?' (Chrysostom, *De Sacerdotio*, vi,4 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. IX, pp. 64-65). See also *Homily*, 31; 32 (*on St. Matthew*) in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. X, pp. 205-210.

²³²'Not in vain was this ordained by the Apostles-that the departed should be commemorated in the awful mysteries' (Chrysostom, *Homily 3 on the Epistle to the Philipians*, in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. XIII, pp. 193-197).

²³³'It is not in vain that the offerings are made for the departed; not in vain are our supplications and alms. All this the Holy Ghost ordained, as he wished that we should be benefited through one another's actions...It is not merely the deacon's voice that sings, 'For those who have fallen asleep in Christ and for those who are commemorating them': it is not the deacon who utters the words, but it is the Holy Ghost' (Chrysostom, *Homily 21 on the Acts of the Apostles*, in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. XIII, pp. 134-141).

²³⁴'For if barbarians are wont to burn men's goods together with their bodies, much more is it right for you to dispatch the deceased's goods with him: not with the object of reducing them to ashes, as in the former case, but in order that they may enhance the man's glory. And if the departed was a sinner, that is due to obtain forgiveness of his sins; if a righteous man, that his recompense and reward may be increased' (Chrysostom, *Homily 31 on St. Matthew*). This part of Chrysostom's teaching has not always been literally fulfilled. It became more and more a symbolic act of placing some personal objects of the deceased, or some coins. The same idea of the family's role in working on behalf of the departed sinner is present in *Homily 41 on 1 Corinthians*, in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. XII, pp. 249-254, and *Homily 21 on the Acts of the Apostles*.

²³⁵Cyril of Alexandria defended the practice by affirming the power of the mystic sacrifice over the power of death. See his 'Against those who say that there ought to be no offering for the dead' in *Fragmenta Dogmatica*. Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 59.

²³⁶Dionysius the Areopagite provides a description of the funeral rite which includes: the name of the departed on the list of the saints, the farewell and the prayer for his forgiveness. See *De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*, ch. 7, in *CW*, pp. 249-259.

²³⁷'To thee, O almighty God, I now commend his innocent soul; to thee I present my sacrifice. Graciously and kindly accept a brother's offering, the oblation of a priest.' This

participate in the events that affect their family left behind.²³⁸ Whilst refuting the teaching of Vigilantius against prayer for the dead, Jerome affirmed his belief in the efficacy of such practice.²³⁹ Concerned with the situation of the departed, their sins, the role of the Church and of the family,²⁴⁰ Augustine distinguished between the services performed by the family, but of no avail, and the services (prayers and sacrifices) offered by the Church which do help the departed. Moreover, he attempted to prevent the spreading of all kinds of practices on behalf of the departed, and consequently proposed as a 'rule of truth' intercession only for those who died in communion with the Body and the Blood of Christ.²⁴¹ Further Augustine explained that there are three categories of people: first, those who are very good and for whom alms serve as thanksgiving; second, those who are not very wicked and for whom alms serve as atonement; and third,

prayer was presented by Ambrose at the funeral of his brother Satyrus (about AD 379). Ambrose, *On the Decease of Satyrus*, i,80, in *NPNF*, vol. X, p. 173.

²³⁸The continuing relation between the departed and his family is underlined by Ambrose's letter to his friend Faustinus on the death of his sister. 'And so I think that she is not so much to be bewailed as to be followed by your prayers. She is not, I consider, to be saddened by your tears, but rather with offerings her soul is to be commended to the Lord' (Ambrose, *Epistle*, 39,4. Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 70). The participation of the departed in the sorrow of the living is suggested in the funeral oration delivered by Ambrose in the honour of the Emperor Valentinian II (about 395). In his discourse, Ambrose appealed to the Emperor's brother, Gratian, who had died nine years previously, to join them in the prayer and sacrifices for the repose of the departed Emperor. 'Offerye [Gratian] your holy mysteries to the gods, while we with dutiful regard pray for his repose. Perform your heavenly rites, while we accompany his souls with oblations. Together with me lift up your hands on high, O ye nations, that at least by such a duty we may make a return for his good deeds' (Ambrose, *De Orbitu Valentiniani Consolatio*, 80; *PL*, 16, 1357-1384). However, it seems that Ambrose was not sure of the effect of such practice because he said: 'Blessed are ye, both of you [Valentinian and Gratian]; and if my intercession will at all help you, no day shall pass without your being mentioned...' (Ambrose, *De Orbitu Valentiniani Consolatio*, 80). See also E. Boggis, *Prayer*, p. 71.

²³⁹See E. Boggis, *Prayer*, p. 49. Jerome in his letter *Against Vigilantius*; *PL*, 23, 495-590, describes the opposition raised by Vigilantius, a Gallician priest, against the practice of prayer for the dead. See also Jerome, *Letter CIX to Riparius*, in *NPNF*, vol. VII, 29; A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol 4, pp. 312-313.

²⁴⁰During the funeral of his mother, Monica (387), Augustine prayed for her sins. 'And so I beseech thee for my mothers sins... I know that she acted mercifully, and from her heart forgave her debtors their trespasses. Do you also forgive her trespasses, if she has indeed committed any during all the years since her baptism' (*Confessions*, ix, 13, in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. I, pp. 140-141). Augustine's grief and his early ideas about the situation of the departed can be found in his *Confessions*, ix,12-13.

²⁴¹Funeral display, number of services, expense lavished on burial, the building of costly tombs-all these in a measure afford consolation to the living, but they do not assist the dead. But beyond all doubt the dead are assisted by the prayers of holy Church, and by the saving sacrifice, and by alms, which are bestowed for the good of their souls, that the Lord may deal with them more mercifully than their sins deserve. For this has been handed down by the Fathers, and observed by the whole Church, that prayer should be made for those who have died in the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, when they are commemorated at the sacrifice in their own place, and that it should be mentioned that the sacrifice is offered for them' (Augustine, *Sermo*, 172,2. Cf. E. Boggis, *Praying*, p. 77).

those who are very wicked and for whom alms are of no help, yet they provide consolation to the living. And where alms avail, they have the effect of either making the pardon perfect or at least making the condemnation easier to bear.²⁴² However, due to the fact that he failed to provide a clear criterion for distinguishing between the three categories of people, Augustine exhorted the Church to intercede for all. Thus, whilst the Church has no knowledge about the condition of the departed, it performs many services for everybody with the sole comfort - maybe!²⁴³

The struggle to find an answer concerning the status of the departed continued after Augustine without significant progress. However, during the time of Gregory the Great (590-604), Augustine's idea of sacrifices that avail for those not very wicked took root and developed into the doctrine of purgatory.²⁴⁴

3.2.4 From the Middle Ages until the Present Time: Since the Council of Nicaea II (787) the belief in the intercessory role of the Church for the departed and of the Saints for the living has been generally accepted, both in the East and the West. Moreover, in spite of the theological differences between the two traditions concerning the nature of the relation between God and man (forensic or mystical), the Western concept of purgatory prevailed also in the East after the abortive union of Florence (1439).²⁴⁵ Moreover, at the Councils of Iassy (1642) and Jerusalem (1672) the doctrine of purgatory was formally accepted.²⁴⁶ However, after the

²⁴²See Augustine, *Enchiridion*, 110 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. III, p. 275. In this passage, Augustine cleared the ground for the later doctrine of purgatory, needed for those baptized but not very wicked, a doctrine accepted by most Orthodox at the Council of Florence (1438-39), but rejected afterwards.

²⁴³This being so, we must not think that the dead on whom we lavish our care, can derive any benefit except from our religious observances in the offering of Eucharist and prayers and alms. And yet these do not avail for all those for whom they are offered, but only for those for whom it was so ordained during their lifetime. But because we are not able to determine which ones these are, we ought to offer for all the regenerated without exception, who may or ought to derive such benefit. For it is better that there should be a superfluity of offerings made on behalf of those who are neither harmed nor helped by them, than that those who might be assisted should be without them' (Augustine, *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, 18,22; *PL*, 40, 591-610).

²⁴⁴J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, vol. 2, 279. 'It is now a long while that the deceased brother has been tortured in the fire. We ought to show him some loving-kindness, and as far as we can, assist his deliverance. So go, and starting from to-day, diligently offer sacrifice for him for thirty days, without omitting a single day on which the saving Host is not sacrifice for his pardon. And he went forthwith, and obeyed the instructions' (Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, iv; *PL*, 66, 125-126).

²⁴⁵The four doctrinal points of short-lived union between the two Churches (Rome and Byzantium) after the official break of 1054 were: the authority of the Pope, *filioque*, the time of epiclesis and purgatory. See J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, p. 278.

²⁴⁶The Council of Iassy ratified the Orthodox Confession by P. Moghila and the Council of Jerusalem ratified the Confession of Dositheus. Both Confessions proclaim the doctrine of purgatory. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 211; K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology in the East: the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries', in H. Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 309.

emergence of the Slavophile ecclesiology (Khomiakov), the Orthodox Church began to reject the Catholic categories and thus to return to its Byzantine roots.²⁴⁷ Yet, whilst affirming the belief in the mediatory role of the Church for the departed and of the Saints for the living, Orthodoxy is still divided concerning the condition of the departed and to whom the prayers should be addressed. Concerning the first aspect, Ware affirms that there are three major trends within Orthodoxy: one group argues that the faithful departed do not suffer at all; another admits that perhaps they suffer, but this suffering is 'purificatory' not 'expiatory'; and a third avoids detailed formulation about the life after death.²⁴⁸ Secondly, in its public worship, the Church usually prays only to those whom it has officially canonized, but under special circumstances a public cult may become established without any act of formal canonization. Additionally, in private an Orthodox believer is free to ask for the prayers of any departed, canonized or not.²⁴⁹

The cult of the Saints raises, however, two theological questions: firstly, concerning the situation of the soul after death, and secondly, the nature of the relationship between the living and the dead. In order to respond to the first question, the Orthodox Church introduces two concepts: the provisional and the final judgment.²⁵⁰

After death the soul is brought before God for a *provisional judgment* where the soul receives its reward or punishment, which is neither complete nor final since only the soul participates in it. Being a provisional state it has two consequences: first, the reward or the punishment is not experienced fully, and second, the soul could be delivered from hell through the prayers of the Church.²⁵¹ However, drawing from Augustine, Staniloae argues that the

²⁴⁷G.A. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology*, pp. 49-50; D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, pp. 181-182.

²⁴⁸See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 259. While the Orthodox Church rejects the concept of purgatory due to its judicial connotation, nevertheless it follows the same basic pattern of affirming the role of the Church in providing spiritual assistance for the departed. Or, borrowing E.R. Hardy's phrase, hell is for the Orthodox 'a hospital rather than a prison' (Cf. K. Ware, 'One Body in Christ: Death and the Communion of Saints', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 187).

²⁴⁹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 260.

²⁵⁰C. Cornițescu, 'Judecata Particulară' in D. Radu, ed., *Indumări Misionare*, pp. 865-877; See also Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'Orthodox Soteriology', in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias, eds., *Salvation in Christ: A Lutheran Orthodox Dialogue*, Fortress, Minneapolis, 1992; pp. 35-58 (here 54-56).

²⁵¹D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 3, p. 303. The Orthodox believe that through prayer it is possible to release someone from hell because that 'in the period between Christ's resurrection and his second coming the gates of hell stand open, and until the last judgement no one is yet irrevocably condemned to remain there for eternity' (K. Ware, 'One Body', p. 190). The idea of the progress of the soul after death has been further developed within the Orthodox tradition. Accordingly, each soul stands before God three times: on the third day, on the ninth and the on the fortieth day, when God pronounces the verdict. During the first three days the soul passes through the celestial tolls, between the third and the ninth it visits heaven, and between the ninth and the fortieth day it visits hell. Ware affirms that there are twenty-two toll houses, each concerned with a different type of sin. '...demonic customs officers inspect its spiritual luggage; scrolls are produced on which all our thoughts, words and actions are recorded'

Church does not know exactly who is in hell or in heaven because there exists a sort of scale of righteousness unknown to the Church. Yet, since prayers do help regardless of one's place (heaven or hell), the Church continues to pray for all the departed.²⁵²

The *final judgment* on the other hand will take place after the resurrection of the dead when both the reward and damnation will be complete and eternal. Nothing can change the sentence of God after that moment. With the final judgment history will be closed.²⁵³

Concerning the relation between the living and the dead, Ware argues that according to the Orthodox ecclesiology of *being in communion* the unity of the Church transcends both time and space and consequently it is not interrupted by death.²⁵⁴ However, Ware fails to explain both the nature of the contact with the departed and the condition of those who have died, that is, if they are conscious of all the prayers addressed to them.

As regards both our prayer for the departed and the saints' prayer for us, there are obvious limitations to our knowledge. We can all agree on the need for theological reserve. But such limitations do not constitute a valid reason from refraining from mutual intercession. On any level intercessory prayer remains a mystery...Nevertheless, from our personal experience we know that intercession between the living is effective, and we continue to practice it. The fact, then, that we do not know exactly how our prayers benefit the dead is not a reason for ceasing to pray for them. It is enough for us to know that they are still increasing in their love for God, and therefore need our support. Equally we cannot tell exactly how the saints become conscious of our prayers; but surely it is sufficient for us to reflect that they share 'the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. 2:16).²⁵⁵

The argument that the Saints share the mind of Christ suggests, then, that Christ mediates contact between the living and the Saints. Theologically, this contradicts the Orthodox belief that the Saints are intercessors

(K. Ware, 'One Body', p. 182). Therefore the prayers of the Church and the alms of the family are of importance, especially in these days. Moreover, by praying for the departed, the faithful not only maintain fellowship between the living and the dead within the Church, but also through prayer they are themselves helped in their own progress toward perfection. See D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 3, p. 275.

²⁵²In order to explain this situation, Staniloae introduces the concept of the 'scale of good and evil.' According to this view, there are people who were very wicked and, following the provisional judgement, they are at the bottom of hell. For those people there is no hope. Then, there are people in hell-according to Staniloae-who believe in Christ, though not enough according to the scale. Subsequently they can grow in faith through their own experience in hell and through the prayers of the Church and the Saints. Additionally, those who are at the lower levels of heaven can grow in faith to reach a higher level before the final judgement. See D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 3, pp. 323-332.

²⁵³D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 3, pp. 353-355.

²⁵⁴The Church is a meeting place for people, dead, alive and yet to be born, and love is the bond which unites them all. And the more one advances on the path of *theosis*, the more one becomes aware of one's membership in a community. Moreover, since the bond of love manifests itself, also through prayer, Ware argues that this mutual intercession continues after death. See K. Ware, 'One Body', pp. 188-189.

²⁵⁵K. Ware, 'One Body', p. 190.

between the living and Christ. However, the question concerning the relation between the living and the dead has yet another aspect: that which is related to the role of icons.

3.3 The Cult of Icons

3.3.1 The Place of Icons within the Church: In Orthodox tradition, doctrine and worship are inseparable; worship is, in a certain sense, doctrinal testimony, whilst dogmas are 'revealed and saving truths and realities intended to bring mankind into communion with God.'²⁵⁶ Within such a context, one of the hymns sung on the Sunday of Orthodoxy writes:

Advancing from ungodliness to the true faith, and illuminated with the light of knowledge, let us clap our hands and sing aloud, offering praise and thanksgiving to God: and with due honour let us venerate the holy icon of Christ, of all-pure Virgin and the saints, whether depicted on walls, on wooden panels or on holy vessels...For as Basil says, the honour shown to the icon passes to the prototype it represents. At the prayers of Thine undefiled Mother and of all the saints, we beseech Thee, Christ our God, to bestow upon us Thy great mercy.²⁵⁷

In addition to their liturgical and private use,²⁵⁸ Ware contends that icons have also a special role in theological epistemology because 'through icons the Orthodox receives a vision of the spiritual world.'²⁵⁹ Given the centrality of icons in the Orthodox Church, and their link with Mariology and the cult of Saints, we will explore the origin of this practice.

3.3.2 The Origin of Image Worship: Generally speaking, there are two major theories within the Orthodox Church concerning the origin of the cult of icons: historical and biblical. First, taking into account the findings of modern research, the adherents of the historical theory trace the origin of this practice to the Greco-Roman iconic culture, particularly, to the pagan

²⁵⁶C. Scouteris, 'Never as gods': icons and their veneration', in *Sobornost*, 6, 1 (1984), p. 6.

²⁵⁷The Doxasticon of Vespers', in *The Lenten Triodion*, (Tr. M. Mary and K. Ware), SPCK, London, 1978, p. 301. Cf. C. Scouteris, 'Never as gods', p. 7.

²⁵⁸Bulgakov asserts that icons are also used for private worship. 'In the 'golden ages' of Orthodoxy-in both Byzantium and Russia-icons filled the churches; they were put everywhere, in the houses, in the streets, in the squares, in the public buildings. A dwelling without icons often affects an Orthodox as empty. In travelling, when he visits a strange place, the Orthodox sometimes carries an icon, before which he says his prayer' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 139).

²⁵⁹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 214.

practice known as the cult of imperial image.²⁶⁰ However, Meyendorff,²⁶¹ Bulgakov²⁶² and Ware²⁶³ argue that the Church emptied and purified the pagan forms of their content before using them to communicate the Christian message. The transition of Christianity from an aniconic Jewish tradition to a Greco-Roman iconic culture was a gradual process,²⁶⁴ and only by the seventh century 'the style and the character of Christian art gradually modified the traditions inherited from Antiquity to acquire a different and typically Christian identity.'²⁶⁵

However, a group of Romanian Orthodox theologians affirm that the cult of images has biblical origin. The biblical support for their view is as follows: (a) the cherubim over the ark (Exodus 25:18-22), on the curtain in the tabernacle (Exodus 26:31) and in the Temple (2 Chronicles 3:10-14; 1 Kings 6:23-28; 33-35; Hebrews 9:5); (b) God does not prohibit images but idols (Exodus 20:3-5; Deuteronomy 4:15-20), therefore He commanded Moses and Solomon to make images; (c) Joshua worshipped the ark and, thus, implicitly the cherubim over the ark (Joshua 7:6); sacrifices brought before the ark were brought before the cherubim (1 Kings 3:15); the praise before the angels refers to the cherubim in the Temple (Ps. 137:1 corresponds with Ps. 138:1 in the Orthodox Bible); (d) the ceremonies in the Temple were performed before the cherubim (Exodus 27:20-21; 30: 1,6,8); (e) Jesus and

²⁶⁰The image of the emperor was regarded as an extension of the imperial presence, and the honours that were shown to the emperor were also rendered to his image (icon). The emperor's subjects burnt incense, candles before the image and also bowed to the ground in front of it. See K. Ware, 'Christian Theology in the East 600-1453', in H. Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 192.

²⁶¹Meyendorff acknowledges that the manufacture and worship of images in the Christian Church is not represent in continuity with the Old Testament teachings that prohibit 'graven images', but found expression 'in the language of the visual arts and with the techniques of imagery commonly practised within the Roman Empire' (A. Grabar, *Christian Iconography. A Study of Its Origins*, A.W. Mellon, Lectures in Fine Arts, 1961, Princeton, 1968, Introduction, p. XLIX. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 78).

²⁶²Bulgakov traces the roots of the worship of images to pre-Christian antiquity, to Greek or Egyptian culture, which was inherited by Christian Byzantium. S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 142.

²⁶³Ware asserts that once the Church accepted uncritically the cult of the imperial image following the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, the next step was the transfer of the practice of worshiping the image of the earthly ruler to worshiping the image of the heavenly King. K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', pp. 152,192.

²⁶⁴The cult of images did not emerge spontaneously in all the parts of the Empire but developed gradually within the wider context of the sixth and seventh centuries' quest for man's access to divine realities. More precisely, the issue was which material objects are a legitimate mediation of the divine. From the cult the of *holy man* in Syria, the belief in material mediation of divine realities expanded to the veneration of the Cross and to the worship of the image of Christ. In this context, Christian artists used the forms available in the Greco-Roman world in order to portray biblical themes and holy men. See P. Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in the Late Antiquity', in *JRS*, LXI (1971), pp. 80-101. J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 76; A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol 4, p. 309.

²⁶⁵J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 79. During the reign of Justinian and the period after him (550-650), the veneration of images became a widespread practice in the life of the Eastern Church. K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', p. 192.

the Apostles worshipped before the images in the Temple (Mark 11:17; 24:11); (f) the New Testament prohibit idolatry not the worship of images (Acts 17:29; 19:26, Ephesians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:21); (g) The New Testament enlarges the area of images to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Virgin, angels and the Saints, whilst the Old Testament restricted the sphere to cherubim only. However, in addition to the fact that for this last point the authors do not furnish biblical references, the assertion that the New Testament allows man to make images of God contradicts the iconodule view that it is impossible to describe or paint God the Father since He transcends every sensory experience.²⁶⁶

The differences between the two views concerning the origin of the cult of images, historical (Meyendorff, Ware, Bulgakov) and biblical (Chialda, Deheleanu, Cosma, Theoctist) raises again the question of the relation between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions.

3.3.3 The Iconoclast Controversy: Since the issue concerning both the origin and the theological use of images was addressed during the Iconoclastic controversy, and since the Second Council of Nicaea (787) defined Orthodox doctrine concerning images (icons) of Christ, Mary and the Saints, we will examine first these evidence brought forward during the controversy, and secondly, other patristic evidence.

3.3.3.1 Historical Context: The Iconoclast controversy lasted 120 years and falls into two periods. The first period started in 726 when Leo III began his attack on icons,²⁶⁷ and ended in 780 when Empress Irene

²⁶⁶For if we had made an icon of the invisible God we would have sinned: for it is impossible for that which is incorporeal, formless, invisible and uncircumscribed to be represented pictorially' (John of Damascus, *On Icons*, II,5,1; Mansi, 12, 963D; 13, 101A). See also M. Chialda, 'Cinstirea Sfintelor Icoane' in D. Radu, ed., *Indrumări Misionare*, pp. 839-840; P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 182-186; S. Cosma, *Cuvinte*, pp. 342-356; Patriarch Teoctist, ed., *Învățătura*, pp. 173-174.

²⁶⁷See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine: The Theology of the Icons at the Seventh Ecumenical Council*, E.J. Brill, New York, 1994. pp. 3-7; A.A. Vasiliev, 'The Iconoclastic Edict of the Caliph Yezid II, A.D. 721', in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers (DOP)*, 9, 10 (1956), pp. 23-47; R. Seeberg, *History of Doctrines*, vol. 1, p. 303; K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', p. 192; Germanus, *De Haeresibus et Synodis*; PG, 98, 80B. The attack on images reached its climax under Leo's son, Constantine V (741-775), who summoned a general council at Hieria (754) attended by 338 bishops. Constantine was both a skilful politician and an able theologian who attempted to construct a dogmatic platform for Iconoclasm under the authority of an Ecumenical Council. The Council declared that images revile the incarnation of Christ, since Christ can be painted only by Nestorian separation, or by a Eutychian confusion of the divine and human. The only authorized pictures of Christ are the bread and the wine in the Lord's Supper. Claiming to follow the authority of Scriptures (Jn.4:24; Deut:5-8; Rom.1:23,25) and the tradition of the Fathers, the Council decided that any cleric violating the prohibition should be removed from his office, any layman or monk so transgressing anathematized, in which case the person was accountable to the civil law as 'an opponent of the commandments of God, and an enemy of the dogmas of the Fathers'. Cf. R. Seeberg, *History of Doctrines*, vol. 1, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1977, pp. 305-306; A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 8-9.

suspended the persecution.²⁶⁸ The second campaign started by Leo V in 815 continued until 843, when under Empress Theodora the Iconodules won the final victory known as the 'the Triumph of Orthodoxy', which is celebrated on 'Orthodox Sunday', the first Sunday in Lent.²⁶⁹

Whilst there are significant disagreements among scholars concerning the origin of Iconoclasm,²⁷⁰ Pelikan argues that this controversy brought to the surface a 'conflict of deep-seated differences that went back to the earlier stages of patristic theology.'²⁷¹ In particular, the controversy is closely related to the question of authority, that is, the role of Scripture and Tradition in establishing doctrine. Both Councils (Hiereia 754 and Nicaea 787), which pronounced anathema on each other, made equal claim to representing the genuine Apostolic and patristic tradition of the Church. Consequently, we will explore the mode in which each party appealed to the authority of Scripture and Tradition in order to support its point of view.

3.3.3.2 Agreements and Disagreements: Alexander argues that 'at the root of image worship lay the concept that material objects can be the seat of divine power and that this power can be secured through physical contact with a sacred object.'²⁷² So far, both parties had believed in the cult of Mary and of the Saints,²⁷³ and in the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist.²⁷⁴ From here arose the question as to whether

²⁶⁸Constantine's fight against images was continued by his son, Leo IV (Chazarus, 775-780), but after his premature death the political situation changed. Leo's wife, Irene, assumed the regency and developed her own political strategy in relation to the iconodule party. Subsequently Irene summoned a synod at Nicaea in 787, which rejected the decision of the Synod of Hiereia and approved the veneration of images. Moreover, the Synod claimed that their decision was in total agreement with Scripture and the tradition of the Fathers. R. Seeberg, *History of Doctrines*, vol. 1, p. 306; A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 12-21.

²⁶⁹Leo V (813-820) held a Synod in 815 at St Sophia in Constantinople where he deposed the Iconodule Patriarch Nicephorus and cancelled all the decrees of Nicaea 787. Nevertheless, the second campaign proved less fierce than the first one. Only the worship (*proskynesis*) of icons was prohibited, whilst the images of Christ and of the Saints were left undisturbed in churches or homes. During the reign of Empress Theodora (842) the attack on images was brought to an end. Moreover, in 843 a Council in Constantinople renewed the decrees of Nicaea 787. Yet, in spite of the Iconodules' victory in Byzantium, the decisions of Nicaea 787 were not accepted by the Kingdom of Charlemagne, and it was not until the eleventh century that the authority of the Council of Nicaea 787 became generally accepted throughout the West. K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', pp. 194-195.

²⁷⁰See P. Crone, 'Islam, Judeo-Christianity and Byzantine Iconoclasm', in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 2 (1980), pp. 59-95; A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 1-2.

²⁷¹J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, p. 93.

²⁷²P. Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople: Ecclesiastical Policy and Image Worship in the Byzantine Empire*, Oxford, 1958, p. 5. See also J.A. McGuckin, 'The Theology of Images and the Legitimization of Power in Eighth Century Byzantium', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 1 (1993), 39-58.

²⁷³See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 28.

²⁷⁴Those assumptions pertained to what was believed in the devotional and sacramental life of the church, to what was taught in the preaching and theology of the church, and to

the principle of 'real presence' should be restricted only to the Eucharist or extended to other objects as well. This was the point of disagreement: the Iconodules argued that other material objects (such as images) were means of grace, whereas the Iconoclasts held a more restrictive view.²⁷⁵

3.3.3.3 The Iconoclast Evidence: To the Iconoclasts the cult of images was a novelty, and therefore a break with the original tradition which was aniconic.²⁷⁶ Consequently, they invoked both Scripture and Tradition in order to prove that the worship of images is a heresy.²⁷⁷ The biblical evidence put forward against the use of images was the following: 'You shall not make yourself an idol or any likeness' (Exod. 20:4); King Hezekiah's removal from the Temple of the bronze serpent which had stood there for eight hundred years (2 Chronicles 29); 'No man has ever seen God' (John 1:18); 'God is spirit and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth' (John 4:24); 'His voice you have heard, his form you have never seen' (John 5:37); 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed' (John 20:29); 'They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man; and they worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator' (Rom. 1:23,25); 'Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth we know him no more' (2 Cor.5:16); 'We walk by faith, not by sight'(2 Cor. 5:7); and 'Therefore faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the work of God.'²⁷⁸

Additionally, the patristic sources quoted by Iconoclasts are: the *Acts of John*, an apocryphal document labeled by the Iconodules as Manichaeian in origin;²⁷⁹ a fragment from a letter of St. Neilus to Olympiadorus, adapted in such way as to fit in with their views;²⁸⁰ passages from Athanasius,²⁸¹

what was confessed in the creeds and dogmas of the church' (J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, pp. 93-94).

²⁷⁵The paucity of accurate sources do not permit an exhaustive investigation of the Iconoclasts' belief in the deification of other material objects such as the water of baptism and the oil of christmation. Most of their original documents have been destroyed by the Iconodules, and consequently one has to rely on the Iconodules' records about the controversy. See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 68.

²⁷⁶It was considered by the Orthodox Church to be the mark of heretics to introduce innovations (such as the Montanist movement of the second and third centuries). See J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, p. 15.

²⁷⁷See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 3.

²⁷⁸J.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Florence and Venice, 1759-1798, Rep. Paris, 1910ff., vol. 12,951-1154, vol. 13,1-496. (Mansi, vols. 12 and 13). The biblical texts are quoted in 12,966 D; 13, 284 CD; 13, 285, E; 13, 285 BC. Cf. A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 24.

²⁷⁹In this text the Apostle John is presented as censuring the painting of his icon by his disciple Lycomedes: 'You have done wrong in making this...still living in a pagan fashion' (Mansi, 13, 168 E-169 B; 13, 173 C).

²⁸⁰Mansi 13, 36 AD.

²⁸¹*On the Incarnation of the Logos*; PG, 25, 29 A. Cf. Mansi, 13, 300 E.

Gregory of Nazianzus,²⁸² Chrysostom,²⁸³ Theodotus of Ancyra²⁸⁴ and Amphilochius of Iconium.²⁸⁵ However, Florovsky argues that most of these passages were taken out of context and generally speaking are irrelevant to the issue at hand.²⁸⁶ Further, Florovsky argues that the references 'which are of the importance and can substantiate a theological thesis' are from Eusebius and Epiphanius of Cyprus.²⁸⁷ In his *Ep. Constantia*²⁸⁸ Eusebius argued that it is impossible to produce an icon of Christ in either mode of existence: the eternal Logos or Servant. The former, the very 'form of God', is inaccessible to man, whilst the second, 'the form of Servant' which Christ assumed in his incarnation, after resurrection has 'mingled with the glory of his divinity, and the mortal has been swallowed up by life;' consequently it cannot be painted 'in lifeless colours and lines'.²⁸⁹ This argument was dismissed by the Iconodules on the grounds that it was propounded by an author of doubtful orthodoxy.²⁹⁰ The second reference is from Epiphanius' *Testament*:

And in this matter, my beloved children, keep it in mind not to set up icons in churches, or in cemeteries of the saints, but always have God in your hearts through remembrance. Do not even have icons in private houses. For it is not permissible for the Christian to let his eyes wander or indulge in reveries.²⁹¹

Additionally, Theodore of Studius affirmed that '...he who dares to make an icon or venerate it' is 'an enemy of the doctrine of the Fathers and an opponent of the commandments of God'²⁹² because the cult of image is a novelty, and, as such, none of the six Ecumenical Councils had sanctioned this practice.²⁹³

In addition to the evidence that the Council of Hieriea brought as support for their view, there are other patristic records which illustrate the existence of an aniconic tradition from the time of the early church until the

²⁸²*Poems*; PG, 37, 913. Cf. Mansi 13, 297 AD.

²⁸³Mansi, 13, 300 AB.

²⁸⁴Mansi 13, 310 E-312 A.

²⁸⁵Mansi 13,310 D.

²⁸⁶See G. Florovsky, 'Origen, Eusebius and the Iconoclastic Controversy, ' in *Church History*, 19 (1950), p. 77 (77-96).

²⁸⁷G. Florovsky, 'Origen, Eusebius', p. 77.

²⁸⁸Eusebius of Caesarea (about 327) received a letter from Constantia, the sister of the Emperor, asking him for a picture of Christ. In his response Eusebius rejected the use of images, and though he told Constantia that such pictures do exist, nevertheless he made it clear to her that those who manufacture and sell them are not Christians. Constantia thought that if there is one place where a genuine picture of Jesus and the Apostles might exist, that place must be Palestine. See H. Chadwick, *Early Church*, p. 280; Eusebius, *Ep. Constantia*.

²⁸⁹Eusebius, *Ep. Constantia*; PG, 20, 1545-1549.

²⁹⁰See G. Florovsky, 'Origen, Eusebius', pp. 77-96.

²⁹¹Mansi 13, 280 D; 382 C,

²⁹²Theodore of Studius, *Antir.*, 2; PG, 99, 381 B, 465 AB.

²⁹³'Why has nothing been said in the six councils about the icons?' Theodore of Studius, *Refutation of the New Heretics John, Ignatius, Sergius and Stephen*, PG 99, 465 AB.

controversy.²⁹⁴ This is reflected in the writings of Tertullian,²⁹⁵ Clement of Alexandria,²⁹⁶ Minucius Felix,²⁹⁷ Origen,²⁹⁸ Lactantius²⁹⁹ and the 36th canon of the Council of Elvira (about 305) in the Pre-Nicene period;³⁰⁰ and in

²⁹⁴Chadwick argues that the early church considered that the cult of images belonged to the demonic world of paganism. Further, the only group that are known to have had images of Christ during the second century were the radical Gnostics, the followers of the Carpocrates. See H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1967, p. 277.

²⁹⁵The first paintings within Christian circles appeared as funerary decoration in the catacombs, and their style is similar to those found in the pagan houses at Pompeii. When such practices eventually crept into the Church, Tertullian openly resisted those who manufactured images accusing them of idolatry: "The makers of idols are chosen for ecclesiastical orders! How wicked!" (Tertullian, *Ad. Nationes*, II, 11-16 in *ANCL*, vol. XI, pp. 489-503; *De Idolatria*, 7,1-3 in *ANCL*, vol. XI, p. 149). See also H. Chadwick, *Early Church*, p. 278. This is very much in line with Harnack's view that pagan practices penetrated the Church through a 'second-class' Christianity. See A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 4. p. 304.

²⁹⁶Clement of Alexandria affirmed that 'the image is only a dead matter shaped by the hand of the artisan. But we [Christians] have no tangible image made of tangible material, but an image that is perceived by the mind alone, the God who alone is truly God' (Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, III,11 in *ANCL*, vol. IV, pp. 311-331). However, Clement provided a list of subjects that can be portrayed on seals.

²⁹⁷The fact that Christians did not worship images during the first two centuries is also attested by Minucius Felix (218-235), who affirms that 'the Pagans reproached the Christians for having neither temples nor simulacres' (Cf. J. Calvin, *A Treatise on Relics*, p. 7).

²⁹⁸Origen considered that the absence of images from the Jewish religion prove the superiority of their religion over pagan worship and consequently described as madness the idea that images made by man can confer honour upon divine beings. See Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 4,31 in *ANCL*, vol. XXIII, pp. 192-194.

²⁹⁹Lactantius (about 250-317) refuted the arguments of those who adopted the Neo-Platonic view that images are symbols of the divine: 'What majesty, therefore or deity can they [images] have, which were in the power of man, that they should not be made, or that they should be made into some other thing, and are so even now? For they are liable to injury and might be carried off by theft, were it not that they are protected by the law and the guardianship of man. Does he therefore appear to be in the possession of his senses, who sacrifices to such deities?...But he who enslaves himself to earthly and humble things, plainly prefers to himself that which is below him. For since he is the workmanship of God, whereas an image is the workmanship of man, the human workmanship cannot be preferred to the divine' (Lactantius, *Epitome on the Divine Institutes*, I,25 in *ANCL*, vol. XXII, pp. 93; 106-107). Thus to the people's quest for divine realities Lactantius responded that worship to God alone brings about the true fulfilment of human nature. By worshipping anything, except God himself, a human being downgrades himself in idolatry. It is clear from his arguments that about that time the Church did not yet make a distinction between idol and icon. For them anything that was worshipped, except God, was *de facto* an idol.

³⁰⁰This Council represents the first organized attempt to stop the manufacture and the use of paintings in the Church: 'It seems good to us that there ought not to be pictures in the Church, nor should be that which is worshipped and adored be painted upon the walls' (Canon 36; Mansi, 2, 5-9). See also R. Seeberg, *Text-Book of History of Doctrines*, vol. 1. Baker Book, Grand Rapids, 1977, p. 303. However, the decision of the Council was short-lived, and subsequently during the fourth century the Church opened the door to the cultural influence of images. It appears that the use of images was no longer limited to the fringe of the Church but had made its way into imperial circles as well. See

the writings of Epiphanius of Salamis³⁰¹ and Augustine³⁰² in the Post-Nicene period.³⁰³

However, despite the fact that the Council of Hieria (754) failed to examine carefully both the aniconic and iconic patristic traditions, it affirmed:

Having examined these witnesses with much diligence and thought, and having understood them with the help of the all-holy Spirit, we too find on the vital doctrine of our salvation, namely on the economy of Christ, that the unlawful art of painters is blasphemous and contravenes the six holy and ecumenical councils called by God.³⁰⁴

And the Iconoclasts concluded their confession of faith with the following:

This is the faith of the Apostles; this is the faith of the Fathers; this is the faith of the orthodox; this is how all who adored God worshipped him.³⁰⁵

3.3.3.4 The Iconodules Evidence: The Iconodules declared that they were guarding 'without innovation' all the ecclesiastical traditions, both written and unwritten, 'one of which is also the production of pictorial representations.'³⁰⁶ Consequently they also invoked biblical and patristic evidence. Their biblical evidence was the following: 'For Jacob raised a stele to God, as a result of which he blessed him and promised him gifts beyond

C.J. Heffele, *A History of the Christian Councils*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, n.d.; H. Chadwick, *Early Church*, p. 280.

³⁰¹Epiphanius of Salamis (315-403) visited a church in Palestine and tore down a curtain in the church porch because it portrayed Jesus and some saints. Subsequently, he lodged a vehement protest with the bishop of Jerusalem about the presence of pictures in the church. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 39; H. Chadwick, *Early Church*, p. 281.

³⁰²Augustine (354-430) considered that even mental images about God should be avoided as inaccurate and erroneous. In his polemics against images he brings arguments from pagan culture in order to prove that representations of God in corporeal images are unworthy of His glory. Augustine's primary concern was to safeguard the glory of God and the fear of God against the mere anthropomorphism that brings God down to human level. Moreover, he rejected even the didactic use of images, arguing that those who want to instruct others in the knowledge of God should use other means, since by using images one downgrades the glory of God's divinity into material objects. See Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, IV,9,31 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. II, pp. 69; 81-82. 'We believe also that He sitteth at the right hand of the Father. This, however, is not to lead us to suppose that God the Father is, as it were, circumscribed by a human form, so that, when we think of Him, a right side or a left should suggest itself to the mind. Nor, again, when it is thus said in express terms that the Father sitteth, are we to fancy that this is done with bended knees; least we should fall into the profanity, in [dealing with] which an apostle execrates those who 'changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into the likeness of corruptible man.' For it is unlawful for a Christian to set up any such image for God in a temple' (Augustine, *On Faith and Creed*, 7,14, in *NPNF*, vol III, pp. 326-327). See also G. Kretschmar, 'The Reformation and the Theology of Images' in G. Limouris, *Icons Windows on Eternity*, WCC, Geneva, 1990, pp. 81-82.

³⁰³Such records which demonstrate the existence of a aniconic tradition are generally ignored by Orthodox scholars. See N. Kondakov, *The Russian Icon*, OUP, Oxford, 1927; L. Ouspensky and V. Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, Boston Book and Art Shop, Boston, 1952; A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*.

³⁰⁴Mansi 13, 240 C.

³⁰⁵Mansi 13, 353 A.

³⁰⁶Mansi 13, 377 BE.

those he had covenanted' (Gen. 28:18);³⁰⁷ the ark and the cherubim (Exod. 25:18-22) prove 'that objects made by human hands do exist for the service and glory of God';³⁰⁸ the bronze serpent (Numb. 21:9); the apostolic witness for the continuity of the iconographic tradition of the Old Testament. 'What was set forth for our instruction, the divine Apostle teaches' (cf. Rom 15:4);³⁰⁹ 'the Christian Church received [the paintings of icons] from the holy Apostles';³¹⁰ and the apostolic unwritten tradition.³¹¹

Additionally, the main patristic sources are: the analogy of the imperial image in the writings of Athanasius,³¹² Basil,³¹³ Epiphanius of Cyprus³¹⁴ and Anastasius I;³¹⁵ the acceptance of the portrayal of sacred persons and events in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa³¹⁶ and Cyril of Alexandria;³¹⁷ St. Neilus'(430) instructions for the decoration of church buildings;³¹⁸ the

³⁰⁷It appears that the quotation was edited. See Mansi 13, 8 A.

³⁰⁸Mansi 12, 962 C. See also 12,1067 D; 13,97 C.

³⁰⁹Therefore these holy and venerable icons and paintings are like a museum for our instruction and zeal and example, and were painted as such that we too might shaw to God the same example and struggle' (Mansi 13, 20 d).

³¹⁰Mansi 12, 1014 C. See also 1058 A; 1066 D; 1143 B.

³¹¹'Among the many unwritten traditions handed down to us, the making of icons had spread throughout the Church from the preaching of the Apostles' (Mansi 13, 268 D).

³¹²Therefore he who venerates the icon venerates the emperor represented in it' (Athanasius, *Third Discourse against the Arians*; PG, 26, 332 B). Cf. Mansi 13, 69 BC.

³¹³For the icon of the emperor is also called emperor but there are not two emperors; for neither is the power divided nor is the glory partitioned...for the honour rendered to the icon passes over to the prototype' (Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*; PG, 32, 149 C). Cf. Mansi 13, 69 E.

³¹⁴For the emperors are not two emperors through having an icon but are one emperor with his icon'(Epiphanius, *Panarion*; Mansi 12, 1967 D).

³¹⁵When the emperor is absent, his icon is venerated in the place of his person. But when he is present, it is absurd to abandon the prototype in order to venerate the image...When someone insults the icon of the emperor, he receives a just punishment exactly as if he had dishonoured the emperor himself...Similarly, if someone dishonours the type of a person, the insult is conveyed to the person himself of whom it is the type' (Anastasius I, *On the Sabbath*; PG, 89, 1405. Cf. Mansi 13, 56 A-57 A).

³¹⁶'He who looks at an icon made by craftsmanship through the use of colours does not let his gaze dwell on the colours of the panel but looks to the forms alone which the craftsman has displayed through the use of colours' (Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Songs of Songs*; PG, 44, 776 A. Cf. Mansi 12, 1066 BC).

³¹⁷'...it is not a different Abraham that is seen in different attitudes in different parts of the picture, but the same Abraham. Everywhere, the skill of the painters always accommodating the demands of the real course of events' (Cyril, *Letter to Acacius*; PG, 77, 217-220. Cf. Mansi 13, 12 E-13 A).

³¹⁸'In the sanctuary on the east wall of the divine precinct mark only a single cross...By the hand of an excellent paint fill the nave of the saints on very side with narrative scenes from the Old and New Testaments, so that those who are illiterate and cannot read the sacred Scriptures might through looking at the pictures be instructed in the noble deeds of those who have truly served God and might be stirred up to rival their celebrated and famous achievements' (St. Neilus, PG, 79, 580. Cf. Mansi 13, 36 AD).

educational role of images in the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus³¹⁹ and Gregory of Nyssa;³²⁰ the distinction between idols and icons in the writings of Stephen of Bozra (7th-8th cent.)³²¹ and John of Thessalonica (7th cent);³²² the evidence of the Councils;³²³ and examples of miracles from the period before Iconoclasm.³²⁴ In contrast to the Iconoclasts, the Iconodules were

³¹⁹Gregory mentions the case of a converted sinner whose icon inspired such awe even among prostitutes that it caused them to abandon their profession. See Gregory of Nazianzus, *On Virtue*; PG, 37, 737-738. Cf. Mansi 13, 13 BC.

³²⁰Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Divinity of the Son and the Spirit*; PG, 46, 572. Cf. Mansi 13, 9 D. Here Gregory mentions his personal experience of an icon portraying the sacrifice of Abraham and the emotions which it occasioned.

³²¹Refuting the Jewish view that the worship of icons amounts to idolatry, Stephen argues that the images of saints such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Elijah, Zachariah, the rest of the prophets and the martyrs are made in order to commemorate them and to glorify God who glorified them. 'Concerning icons, we have confidence that every work executed in the name of God is good and holy. But concerning idols and statues, away with them. For they are evil and perverse, both they and their makers. For an icon of a holy prophet is one thing but a statue or effigy of Kronos or Aphrodite or Helios or Selene is another. For since man was made in the image of God, he may be venerated. But since a serpent is an image of the devil, it is unclean and to be rejected. If you reject what has been made by human hands, tell me, O Jew, what is there on earth that is venerated which was not made by human hands? Was the ark not made by God and not made by human hands? And what of the sanctuary and the mercy seat and the cherubim and the golden jar which contain the manna...? If you call these things idols, what do you say to their veneration by Moses and Israel? Veneration is a symbol of honour. When we sinners venerate, we glorify God with divine worship and worthy veneration and fear him as our maker and provider, but we glorify the angels and servants of God in accordance with the honour of God as creatures of God and his servants' (Stephen of Bozra, *Against the Jews*. Cf. John of Damascus, *On the Holy Images*; PG, 94, 1376; Mansi 12, 1067-1070).

³²²'We make icons of mortal men, of the holy and embodied servants of God, in order to commemorate them and honour them and we do nothing unreasonable in painting them as they were in life. For we do not express ourselves through art, as you do, nor do we show bodily characteristics of incorporeal beings. And when we venerate them, we do not venerate the icons, as you yourself have said, but we glorify the personages represented pictorially, and then not as gods-God forbid-but as true servants and friends of God who have the ability to intercede for us...But since God the Father willed it and his only-begotten divine Logos came down from heaven and was made incarnate for our salvation by the Holy Spirit and the spotless Virgin and Theotokos, Mary, we depict his humanity not his incorporeal divinity' (John of Thessalonica, *Against the Greeks*. Cf. Mansi 13, 164 C-165 C).

³²³The 82nd canon of the Quinisext Council recommends not painting a lamb instead of Christ. See Mansi 12, 1079 BC, 1123 E-1126 A; 13, 40 E-41 A. The Iconodules also cited the 'Apostolic Council' of Antioch which decreed: 'Those who are being saved should no longer stray after idols but instead should make icons of the theandric, spotless stele of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Mansi 12, 1018 C).

³²⁴Ironically, the Iconodules drew their oldest historical references from Eusebius of Caesarea. The first one is the story of the woman with the haemorrhage who set up a statue of the Lord and of herself touching (in accordance with the Gospel narrative) the fringe of his statue. Between the two statues a herb grew up touching the feet of the Lord's statue, which was prophylactic against every disease. See Mansi 13, 268 D. Cf. Eusebius, *Ecc. Hist.* 7,18. The second example from Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* refers to the story of Jesus' responding to the letter of Abgar, king of Edessa by sending him a personal letter and 'a copy of his holy and glorious face.' That picture had worked

better armed with patristic evidence, and except for one passage from Simion Stylites,³²⁵ they offered numerous examples, particularly from the seventh and eighth centuries.³²⁶ However they also failed to examine critically both the iconic and the aniconic traditions. Yet they concluded:

...we ourselves, having examined the matter from the aspects of biblical evidences, scholarly investigation, logical argumentation and apodeictic proof, and having been instructed by the teachings of the Fathers, likewise have confessed and do confess and stipulate and insist and confirm³²⁷[that]...the making of icons is not an invention of painters but an approved institution and tradition of the catholic Church. And that which excels in antiquity is worthy of respect, according to the divine Basil. And the very antiquity of this practice and teaching of our Spirit-bearing Fathers bear witness, for they were glad to see icons in the sacred churches.³²⁸

And they too affirmed that they:

...have kept the tradition of the Apostles and Fathers and have confessed it and have not introduced any innovation or diminution into the custom that has prevailed piously amongst us. For what has been handed down in the catholic Church is susceptible neither to addition nor to subtraction.³²⁹

many miracles in the East. See Mansi 13, 189 E-192 C. The volume of stories concerning miracles worked by icons after the fourth century is impressive, although some of them seem to be legends rather than historical events. See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 45-49. Athanasius' view of the power of images to perform miracles is particularly interesting for understanding the development of this doctrine. Thus he affirmed that images are not simply visual aids but sacred objects because they contain special divine powers which can perform miracles. Asked to explain why the present images performed no miracles, Athanasius affirmed: 'Perhaps someone will say, why do not the images which we have work miracles? To which we answer, that as the apostle has said, signs are for those who do not believe, not for the believers. For they who approached that image were unbelievers therefore God gave them a sign through that image, to draw them to our Christian faith. But, an evil and adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign but no sign shall be given it' (*NPNF*, vol. IV, p. 540). Thus, according to Athanasius, the divine power seated in the image manifests itself only to non-Christians. However, once accredited, the idea that the images are loci of divine power developed into the doctrine of the mediatory role of icons.

³²⁵Simion developed Athanasius' view and argued that because the images or the relics of Saints possess divine power they have also a protective role. This view was widely accepted and subsequently each geographical area or city chose a certain saint as its patron. Similarly, in order to secure protection, images and relics were placed in churches and at the entrances of work shops or homes. This movement illustrates both the prominence and the vulnerability of the cult of Saints and icons. Once a certain saint was considered to be the patron of a certain place, it developed into a civic-religious patriotism. This fostered veneration of the respective saint in times of political and economic prosperity, but also a discrediting of the saint when the city or the place was destroyed. See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 4; J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, vol. 2, p. 104.

³²⁶A comprehensive list of the patristic evidence used by the Iconodules is offered by Giakalis, who does not, however, offer such a well-documented list of the Iconoclasts' evidence. See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 24-50.

³²⁷Mansi 12, 1086 B.

³²⁸Mansi 13, 252 BC.

³²⁹Mansi 13, 325 E-328 A.

In conclusion, whilst each party considered itself to represent the genuine continuity of the Apostolic and patristic traditions, in reality their arguments demonstrate that neither party shared a common criterion of distinguishing between them. Additionally, their approach to Scripture and Tradition was significantly influenced by their particular theological views concerning the distinction between icon and idol, and the relation between iconography and christology.³³⁰

3.3.3.5 Theological Issues: To the charges brought against the Iconodules at Hieria (754) that the worship of images is idolatry, the Council of Nicaea (787) argued that there is a distinction between: firstly, two kinds of 'manufactured objects'; and secondly, two kinds of worship. Firstly, God prohibited only such images representing animals, birds or other objects made out of gold, silver and wood, and which are worshipped as gods. There are, however, other objects which are approved by God because they are intended for His service and glory: these are the sacred objects in the Temple, the images of Christ, the Virgin Mary and the Saints.³³¹ Secondly, there is a distinction between *latreia*, which signifies the highest form of worship and adoration and which is to be rendered only to the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, and *proskynesis*, which means 'honour' or 'veneration' of a relative kind and which is due to created and sanctified beings.³³² Accordingly, the Council of Nicaea (787) stated that icons are to receive 'not the worship (*latreia*) that is due to God alone' but 'honourable veneration (*timetike proskynesis*),...such as is given to the sign of the precious and life giving Cross, the Book of the Holy Gospels, and to other holy objects.'³³³

The second theological aspect concerns the relation between iconography and christology. The Iconoclasts argued that in depicting Christ the Iconodules were guilty of Nestorianism because that they separated the two natures of Christ.³³⁴ This question, although not fully developed at Hieria, concerns the relation between essence (*ousia*) and person (*hypostasis*). In other words, in the absence of a hypostatic union such as the Incarnation, what is the nature of the relation between Christ and His icon?

³³⁰E.J. Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, AMS Press, New York, 1978, pp. 112.

³³¹See Mansi 12, 962 B-D; 12, 978 A, 1070 A; 13, 49 D, 376 B.

³³²'When we make obeisance (*proskynesis*) to the invisible God it is an expression of *latreia*; but when we make obeisance to the icons in the church-or for that matter, to the emperor or the local governor - we are ascribing to them, not *latreia*, but *time*, which is their due' (K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', p. 196. See also J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 33.

³³³K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', p. 196. The Iconodules' reference to the Cross is strategically placed here, because the Iconoclasts permitted the veneration of the Cross.

³³⁴'When, however, they [who worship images] are blamed for undertaking to depict the divine nature of Christ, which should not be depicted, they take refuge in the excuse: we represent only the flesh of Christ which we have seen and handled. But that is Nestorian error. For it should be considered that the flesh was also the flesh of God the Word, without any separation, perfectly assumed by the divine nature and made whole divine. How could it now be separated and represented apart?' (J.H. Leith, *Creeds*, p. 54).

The Iconodules responded by introducing the distinction between *ousia* and *hypostasis* on the one hand, and between the image and the prototype on the other. Consequently the Iconodules rejected the charge of Nestorianism on the grounds that the icon does not depict the nature (*ousia*) of Christ, but His person (*hypostasis*). It shows neither the human nor the divine nature of Christ nor both natures together, but Christ Himself, the indivisible person of the God-Man (*Theanthropos*) as He was seen by men from the moment of His incarnation.³³⁵ However, such an argument does not answer the question: in the Incarnation the divine and human natures were hypostatically united, and although the person of Christ cannot be confused with either nature, nevertheless His hypostasis does not exist in a 'disincarnated' mode of being, that is, separate from *ousia*. This leads us to the second issue which concerns the relation between the image(s) and the person of Christ, that is, between the image and the prototype.

The Iconodules drew heavily from Basil's analogy of the cult of imperial image³³⁶ in order to legitimate the worship of icons. Whilst Basil used this analogy against the Arians to prove that the Son is of the same substance (*ousia*) as the Father, it became clear that what is true of the relationship between the Father and the Son as the natural image of the Father is not true of the emperor and his image, because the image of the emperor is not natural but imitative.³³⁷ The problem was then to elucidate the relation between an imitative icon and its prototype. The Council of Nicaea II affirmed:

...the icon is one thing and the prototype another, and no sensible person will look for the properties of the prototype in the icon. For true reasoning recognises nothing in the icon other than participation by name in the subject of the icon, and not by substance.³³⁸

Consequently, the Iconodules founded their argument on the belief that the image has the capacity to participate in the hypostasis of the prototype: 'the

³³⁵The Iconodules argued that those who refuse to depict the incarnate Saviour actually affirm that Christ came on earth merely in outward-seeming appearance. See K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', pp. 198-199; Theodore of Studios, *Antirrheticus*, II, 48; *PG*, 99, 389 D. Mansi 12, 1143 D-1146 A; A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 101-105.

³³⁶Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*; *PG*, 32, 149 C.

³³⁷See John of Damascus *On Icons*, III. 18. Christ is the 'natural' icon of the Father (Col.1:15); and in this case there is complete identity of essence between the prototype (God the Father) and the icon (God the Son). Man is God's icon by 'imitation'; for he is made according to the image and likeness of the Father (Genesis 1:26); but man is not identical in essence with his Creator. The images are 'artistic' icons and there is no identity in essence with the original; for the *ousia* of the original is a living person, spirit, soul and body, whereas the *ousia* of images is a mosaic, fresco or wood and paint. Further, the Iconodules rejected the Iconoclasts' view that the only valid icon of Christ are the elements of the Eucharist. They argued that the elements of the Eucharist cannot be described as an 'icon of Christ' in either the second or the third meaning, for after the consecration the bread and the wine become 'the very Body and the very Blood of Christ', not just an icon of His Body and Blood. See K. Ware, 'Christian Theology', pp. 196-197.

³³⁸Mansi, 13,257 D, 244 B.

honour of the icon passes over to the prototype'.³³⁹ Moreover, the Iconodules argued that between the icons and their prototypes there is 'a relationship which creates a hypostatic identity between them in such a way that contact with the icon constitutes immediate contact with the prototype'.³⁴⁰ In other words, the icon represents a real bridge connecting the worshipper with the uncreated energies of Christ and of His saints.³⁴¹ Thus the theological justification of the cult of images is found ultimately in the teaching of the Eastern Fathers on deification.³⁴² The mode in which these theological views influenced the appeal of each party to Scripture and Tradition will be analysed in the following methodological, theological and sociological observations.

3.4 Observation

3.4.1 Methodological: Generally speaking both the Iconodules and the Iconoclasts agreed that the authentic criterion of genuine Christianity was fidelity to Apostolic and patristic traditions. The difficulty arose, however, from the fact that there is neither consensus nor continuity among the Fathers concerning the cult of Mary, the Saints and icons. In other words, Tradition is not a coherent body of teaching and practice which has been handed down by the Apostles, but rather a compound of various views and practices, sometimes contradictory. Hence the difficulty in selecting genuine Apostolic Tradition from such a variety of ecclesiastical traditions. Moreover, Bruce argues that even when the Church accepts a certain body of teaching as being of apostolic origin, such as the Bible, there is a further difficulty which concerns the interpretation of the text: divergent interpretations tend to produce religious division.³⁴³ Methodologically, then,

³³⁹Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*; PG, 32, 149 C. See also Athanasius, *Against the Arians*, III,5 in *NPNF*, vol. IV, pp. 395-396; John of Damascus, *Imag.* III, 56.

³⁴⁰A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 120.

³⁴¹Giakalis affirms that, 'The icon as a 'door' and as a 'self-manifested vision' proved to be a real bridge connecting the worshipper with the uncreated energies of Christ and of his saints, and an open road linking this world in a unique fashion with a reality transcending it. This being the case, it was completely natural that the icon should be called 'holy', that is to say, a permanent vehicle and stable channel of divine grace' (A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 121). Whatever is true of icons with respect to participation in the divine energies is equally true of relics of the saints. The Council of Nicaea 787 declared: 'We kiss the venerable relics in order to participate in their holiness.' See Mansi 13, 364 E.

³⁴²In the act of worship the person represented in the image is brought near to us, and because the consecrated images are overshadowed by the grace of the divine Spirit they are bearers of the divine. John of Damascus affirmed that because 'the Word made flesh has deified the flesh' in such a way that the flesh became a vehicle for the Spirit, the same process can be taught to apply also (though in a different way) to wood and paint. John of Damascus, *On Icons*, I.21, PG xciv, 1253B.

³⁴³F.F. Bruce, 'Scripture and Tradition in the New Testament', in F.F. Bruce and E.G. Rupp, eds., *Holy Book and Holy Tradition*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1968, p. 70.

the main issue concerns establishing a valid criterion of Apostolic Tradition. This criterion must provide an answer to both *how* and *why*: *how* referring to technical aspects; *why* referring to theological presuppositions behind the *how*. Since these aspects are related to the life of particular communities, such an endeavor has to maintain the space between *why* and *how* in order to provide for both freedom and relatedness. However, it appears that during the Iconoclastic controversy the preeminence of *why* over *how* led to an uncritical subjection of methodology to theological presuppositions. Thus the Iconodules presupposed the genuine tradition to be one in favour of the veneration of icons, whilst the Iconoclasts believed the aniconic tradition to be the true one.³⁴⁴ Consequently each party selected from Scripture and Tradition only those passages which upheld their view, whilst ignoring or dismissing other evidence on the grounds of wrong interpretation or of dubious or heretical origin.³⁴⁵ Moreover, Giakalis asserts that during the controversy each party edited or even took phrases out of their original context in order to prove its point of view.³⁴⁶ Subsequently each party proclaimed *its* ecclesiastical tradition to be identical with the Apostolic Tradition.

A contemporary example of such an approach can be seen in the Romanian Orthodox appeal to that biblical and patristic evidence which alone serves their purpose. Additionally, Romanian theologians have taken patristic evidence out of its initial context at best, and at worst have simply invented evidence in order to prove that the cult of Mary, the Saints and icons is both apostolic and patristic.³⁴⁷ However, the biblical approach of Romanian

³⁴⁴See Mansi 13, 353 A; 13, 252 BC; 13, 325 E-328 A.

³⁴⁵For the Iconodules' mode of selecting and interpreting the text see Mansi 13, 120 A; 13, 129 E-131 A, 185 C, 361 D, 474 D. For the Iconoclasts' approach to Scripture, see Mansi 13, 285 C, 352 E-353 A, 364 B. A typical example of such strategy is the Iconodules' dismissal of Eusebius's letter to Constantia on the grounds that his orthodoxy was doubtful, whilst the argument from Eusebius was accepted as valid when the latter mentioned the stories of the statue made by the woman with the haemorrhage and that of the image sent by Jesus himself to Abgar the king of Edessa. Mansi 12, 963 D; 13, 268 D; 13, 313 AD. See also E. Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm', in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 8 (1954), 117-121.

³⁴⁶See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 25, 26 n.21; 33 n.55; 34 nn. 61-63; 38 n.71. See also P. Van den Ven, 'La patristique et l'hagiographie au concile de Nicée de 787', in *Byzantium*, 25-27 (1955-57), 325-362.

³⁴⁷See Patriarch Teoctist, ed., *Invățătură* pp. 167-174; S. Cosma, *Cuvinte*, pp. 327-357. Deheleanu and Chialda argue that both Tertullian and Eusebius give evidence that the early church worshipped icons. The references indicated are Tertullian's *De Pudicitia*, c. 10, and Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 7.c, 18. See P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, p. 186. M. Chialda, 'Cinstirea Sfintelor Icoane' in D. Radu, ed., *Indrumări*, p. 840. In the first text, Tertullian clearly condemns the practice of depicting images on the sacramental chalice. Analysing a text from the 'Shepherd of Hermas', Tertullian asserts: 'But I would yield my ground to you, if the scripture of 'the Shepherd', which is the only one which favour adulterers, had deserved to find a place in the divine canon; if it had not been habitually judged by every council of churches, (even of your own) among apocryphal and false [writings]; itself adulterous, and hence a patroness of its comrades; from which in other respects, too, you derive initiation; to which, perchance, that 'Shepherd' will play the patron whom you depict upon your [sacramental] chalice, [depict, I say, as] himself withal a prostitute of the Christian sacrament, [and hence] worthily both the idol of

theologians illustrates the centrality of Scripture in contemporary theological debates within Romanian Orthodoxy. In particular, the growing movement founded by the three Orthodox priests (Cornilescu, Popescu and Trifa) who upheld the authority of Scripture in matters of religious faith and practice, constantly challenges the Orthodox Church to prove that its practice is biblical. Orthodox scholars from the Diaspora, however, confronted with the findings of modern historical-critical research, are consequently more open to admitting that certain aspects of tradition are of ecclesiastical origin. Such an approach to the development of doctrine has been welcomed lately by some Romanian Orthodox, such as Bria, who affirms that 'the attitude of the Church toward the cult of icons has been established in time'.³⁴⁸ As noted above, whilst some Fathers such as Tertullian, Origen and Eusebius were against the worship of images, others like St. Basil, Chrysostom and John Damascus were in favour of this practice.³⁴⁹ Such disagreements between the Fathers, however, do not represent a major problem for Bria since he believes that the genuine tradition is not necessarily proved by antiquity or universality, but by its correspondence with *consensus ecclesiae*.³⁵⁰ Such hermeneutic brings us to our next aspect; the role of theological presuppositions in establishing methodological approaches.

3.4.2 Theological: For the Orthodox Church, Tradition is not simply the great volume of teachings and practices inherited from the past, but primarily the key to interpreting them.³⁵¹ In other words, the heritage of the past is interpreted according to the faith of the Church. This aspect became clear in the Iconoclastic controversy.

The Iconoclasts believed that the Chalcedonian christology of one person and two natures cannot be extended to the iconic representation of Christ because *hypostasis* cannot subsist separately from *ousia*. Since the icon is not consubstantial with the prototype, the former is an idol. There is only one 'natural' icon of Christ, affirmed the Iconoclasts, and that is the Eucharist, which becomes the body of Christ.³⁵² This belief represented the

drunkenness, and the brize of adultery by which the chalice will quickly be followed' (Tertullian, *De pudicitia*, c.10. Cf. *ANCL*, vol. 18, pp. 81-83). In the second text, Eusebius does not refer at all to the subject of images. In this chapter, Eusebius continues his presentation of Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch (about 257-260), who taught that Christ was a mere man, though filled with divine power from his birth. He also denied the *hypostases* of Logos and Holy Spirit and considered them merely powers of God, like reason and mind in men. See *NPNF*, vol. I, p. 304.

³⁴⁸I. Bria, 'Icoană', in *Dicționar*, pp. 201-204. Bria represents the Romanian Orthodox Church in the World Council of Churches.

³⁴⁹I. Bria, 'Icoană', p. 201.

³⁵⁰The Eastern Churches built conciliarity around the tradition of the apostolic church, expressed by the synod of bishops of local churches and realised at the level of *consensus fidelium*. A conciliar tradition becomes true tradition in its living reception by the full body of Christ' (I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 54. See also p. 56).

³⁵¹See G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 50.

³⁵²See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 131-132.

Iconoclasts' main presupposition which influenced their search for biblical and patristic evidence.³⁵³

For the Iconodules this view was a denial of the doctrines of incarnation and of the deification of creation; consequently it had to be rejected as heresy.³⁵⁴ Alternatively, the Iconodules built their theology of icons on the distinction between essence (*ousia*) and person (*hypostasis*), and between natural and imitative representations. Giakalis asserts that,

In the case of natural iconic representation the prototype and its icon are distinguished only according to hypostasis. In the case of hypostatic or imitative representation, the icon is distinguished from its prototype by essence or nature and at the same time participates as icon in the hypostasis of the prototype, while remaining altogether unparticipative ' in the matter in which it is manifested.³⁵⁵

Whilst integrating the cult of images within the theology of deification, this approach, however, presents some theological difficulties. First, in addition to the ontological and Trinitarian implications related to the distinction of three aspects of God's being (*ousia*, *hypostasis* and *energeiai*) which were analysed in the first section, the distinction between natural and hypostatic iconic representation has significant implications for the theology of worship. Thus, whilst distinguishing between *latreia* (supreme worship) directed only towards the three Persons of the Trinity (including the human nature of Christ on account of the hypostatic union of the eternal Logos with the human nature), and *proskynesis* (relative worship, veneration) due to the icons of Christ, Mary and the Saints,³⁵⁶ the Iconodules argued that the honour paid to the image passes to the prototype. This implies that Christ receives two kinds of worship: first, *latreia* as the natural icon of God; and second, *proskynesis* through His icon(s). Whilst separating the divine *ousia* from *hypostasis*, the Iconodules linked the *hypostasis* of Christ to a created *ousia* (paint, wood or stone) and subsequently offered to His icon a relative worship (*proskynesis*) due to created beings.³⁵⁷ In other words, they bring Christ to the level of creation. However, when divine *ousia* and *hypostasis* are conceived together, true worship (*latreia*) is offered to God through 'the observance of the holy confession of faith in him, and in keeping with the most essential and capital mysteries and laws given by him.'³⁵⁸ However,

³⁵³A, Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 23.

³⁵⁴See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 74-92.

³⁵⁵A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 134. If the imitative icon participates only in the *hypostasis* and not in the nature of the prototype, all the wonder-working attributed to icons which bleed, weep or display other natural manifestations is lacking theological support. For a brief account of the miracles wrought by icons and invoked at Nicaea (787) see A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 46-49.

³⁵⁶See Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 134.

³⁵⁷A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 118.

³⁵⁸Mansi 13, 109 D. '...so too the worship offered to him by us is one, as has been handed down by the holy apostles and safeguarded: the sacrifice of praise which the divine apostles said is offered through Christ to God the Father, 'that is the fruit of our lips that acknowledges his name' (Heb. 13:15) and the sacred tradition handed down through the life-giving mysteries, which the prophet Malachi foretold (Mal. 1:11)...since we know for

despite the fact that the second mode of worship (*latreia*) avoids some of the theological problems posed by the cult of icons, the Orthodox believe that icons are essential for the theology of *theosis*.

This brings us to the second theological aspect which, in addition to the impersonal ring of the divine energies already discussed in the first section, concerns the belief that icons are vehicles of the uncreated energies.³⁵⁹ Responding to this question Giakalis distinguishes 'among several kinds of uncreated energies, the most important of them being the deifying, the sanctifying, and the creative.'³⁶⁰ Further, he argues that,

In the case of the prototypes of Christ and his saints we have deification (*theosis*) by nature (Christ) or by grace (the saints). Neither the icons of Christ nor of his saints, however, participate in the deifying energy, nor are they deified in themselves as if a result of this nor do they in consequence impart such energy to their worshippers but communicate only a sanctifying (purifying or illuminating) energy.³⁶¹

Giakalis explains neither why icons cannot participate in the deifying energies nor the ontological ground for such a distinction between different kinds of uncreated energies. However, according to his view, the deifying energies are not imparted to believers through 'contact/veneration with the icon'.³⁶² Yet Giakalis argues that the denial of veneration of icons means a rejection of the Church's doctrine of deification.³⁶³ A similar inconsistency comes to the surface when, on the one hand, he argues that sacred objects and sacraments cannot participate in the deifying energies,³⁶⁴ and on the other, that the Eucharist imparts deifying energies to those who are worthy.

The uncreated energy which deifies is supplied by grace from the Triadic God solely to angels and the saints; the energy which purifies, illuminates and sanctifies is supplied to the icons, and holy Cross, the sacred vessels, holy water, holy oils, etc., and is communicated from these and the Church's sacraments to those who are worthy, not to all in the same way and in the same degree, but in proportion to their spiritual state. Thus, for example, the body and blood of Christ in the divine Eucharist communicated under the sanctified forms of bread and wine operate in a purifying way in those of the

certain that there is no hope of salvation for us from any other source than from a devout confession of faith in the only true God who is venerated in Trinity' (Mansi 13, 120 A).

³⁵⁹See A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 121.

³⁶⁰A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 135.

³⁶¹A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 134.

³⁶²A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 127.

³⁶³A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 128.

³⁶⁴Giakalis affirms that the Orthodox believe in the deification of matter in the unique case of the body of Christ by reason of hypostatic union, and of the saints even before their resurrection by reason of their union by grace with the deifying energy of the Holy Trinity which is the *raison d'être* for the veneration of holy relics. 'They do not, however, accept the deification of the eucharistic bread as do the iconoclasts even though they do not doubt that it is the body of Christ, which is by nature the source of all uncreated divine energies, and that it communicates to the worthy a proportionate share of those energies' (A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, pp. 74-75).

faithful who are being cleansed, in an illuminating way in those who are being enlightened, and in a deifying way in those who are being deified.³⁶⁵

In ascribing specific offices (creating, purifying, illuminating, deifying) to different sorts of uncreated energies Giakalis runs the risk, on the one hand, of 'hypostatizing' the energies, and on the other, of overshadowing the person and the office of the Holy Spirit. In fact, he circumscribes the work of the Holy Spirit to the spiritual level of 'theoria';

...icons would not have been necessary if the mass of believers had managed to attain the spiritual level of 'theoria' i.e. the unceasing prayer of the Holy Spirit in the heart (Gal. 4:6) which follows the stage of the 'constant remembrance of God' and from time to time or on special occasions this spiritual level may be replaced by glorification or deification (*theosis*). There is no reason for those who have attained *theosis*, i.e. the immediate vision of the uncreated glory of Christ and his saints, to use images.³⁶⁶

Icons, then, help the mass of believers to ascend to that level of contemplation where the Holy Spirit in the heart can open, occasionally, the window towards glorification. Yet Giakalis does not draw the implication for the relationship between God and man of the fact that *latreia* presupposes aniconic mediation. However, the Iconodules' view that in their way towards deification human beings need the mediation of material objects in order to appropriate the divine grace (energies)³⁶⁷ has also had significant sociological implications.

3.4.3 Sociological: The tension between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions is particularly reflected in the relation between ecclesiastical structure and ecclesiastical tradition. Thus the emergence of the imperial church had a significant impact on the relation between local and universal.³⁶⁸ Whilst catholicity was previously understood in terms of the unity of faith expressed in different local traditions, in the imperial church it included also ecclesiastical practice. Consequently the local liturgical traditions³⁶⁹ were replaced initially by regional practices³⁷⁰ and finally by

³⁶⁵A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 125.

³⁶⁶A. Giakalis, *Images of the Divine*, p. 87.

³⁶⁷See C. Scouteris, 'Never as Gods', p. 15; John of Damascus, PG 94, 1245 BC, 1300 BC.

³⁶⁸Schmemmann affirms that before the emergence of the imperial church, each local church acted as the community of the people of God in all its fullness, whilst afterwards they became administrative subdivisions of a greater whole. The head of the eparchy became the representative of the central church authority concentrated in the hands of the patriarch of Constantinople and the patriarchal synod. See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 179.

³⁶⁹He affirms that almost a hundred anaphoras (eucharistic prayers) have come down to us from ancient times, each one expressing long liturgical experience. The main liturgical traditions are those of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome, Syria and Persia. See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 189.

³⁷⁰As the Church became more organised on a regional basis those aspects of tradition that were related primarily to liturgical practices became normative for the respective region (See M.W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 5-9). See also *Didache*, VI-X in *DCC*, pp. 64-66; Tertullian, *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, 41 in *ANCL*, vol. VII, pp. 49-50;

the liturgical tradition of Constantinople which embodied the theological concept of imperial authority. However, this process was not necessarily the result of a critical reflection but generally speaking, of supra-provincial authority of some major sees.³⁷¹ In particular, the preeminence of the liturgical tradition of Constantinople was influenced by the belief that everything surrounding the emperor is 'divine'.³⁷² The association between liturgy and 'divine realities' has been, subsequently reflected in both the building of churches in holy places of Christianity, upon the tombs and relics of the martyrs and holy men, and in the tendency to adorn them with biblical themes and with images of the Saints. Some of these themes were subsequently included in the liturgy and became thus part of the *lex orandi*.³⁷³

There was a similar shift in the area of theological tradition. The appeal to Apostolic tradition³⁷⁴ was replaced after the fourth century with the appeal to the tradition of the Fathers.³⁷⁵ Consequently the true doctrine was the one armed with the testimony of antiquity, that is, supported by the Fathers.³⁷⁶ However, this approach had at least three major implications: firstly, the appeal to the Fathers as doctrinal authorities led to forgeries;³⁷⁷

On the Soldier's Crown, 3,4 in ANCL, vol. XI, pp. 336-337; *On Baptism*, 17,18 in ANCL, vol. XI, pp. 250-254; *On Repentance*, 7,9 in ANCL, vol. XI, pp. 269-273.

³⁷¹The Council of Nicaea, for example, recognized that in some areas 'ancient customs' contradicted the newly established 'provincial' system and gave special privileges to some major sees. The shift from a plurality of local tradition to a unified imperial church is extensively presented by A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 184-602. A Social and Administrative Survey*, vol. 2, Blackwell, Oxford, 1964. See also H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *History of the Church. The Imperial Church from Constantine to the Early Middle Ages*, vol. 2, (Tr. by A. Biggs), The Seabury Press, New York, 1980; J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 68-90).

³⁷²A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 190.

³⁷³See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 20.

³⁷⁴Schmemmann asserts that referring to its tradition as 'apostolic' the pre-Constantinian church did not affirm that certain writings necessarily have apostolic authorship but that the proposed doctrine stemmed from the Apostles as part of the unchanging tradition of the Church. Such is the case with Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition*; *Apostolic Constitution*; and *Apostolic Canons*. See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 182-183.

³⁷⁵An important factor in this shift was the fact that the distance in time from the days of the Apostles was greater than in the days of Irenaeus, and consequently nobody could claim personal acquaintance with people that were close collaborators of the Apostles. Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp in Smyrna, and Polycarp had heard the Apostle John. See W.A. Jurgen, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, vol. 1, pp. 28,84; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 100-101.

³⁷⁶This approach made even more difficult the participation of the laity (corporate) to *episteme* and *praxis* due to the belief that only the Fathers (bishops) were the recipients of both the secret Apostolic Tradition and of the divine gift to interpret the Scriptures. Florovsky affirms that 'Only to hierarchy has it been given to teach 'with authority.' The hierarchs received this power to teach, not from the church people but from the High Priest, Jesus Christ, in the Sacrament of Orders.' G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 53.

³⁷⁷The disciples of Apollinarius, for example, practised fraud to a vast extent in order to rediscover the teaching of their master. Harnack believes that the practice had spread to

secondly, the shift from the authority of the Apostles to the authority of the Fathers led to the assumption that the two traditions (Apostolic and patristic) coincide;³⁷⁸ and thirdly, the leaders of the Church built up lists of authorities, communion with whom was considered to be *de facto* an outward sign of orthodoxy.³⁷⁹ Such a practice led to theological uniformity, traditionalism and stagnation.³⁸⁰

Byzantine theology began by summing up, overcoming contradictions, coordinating words and concepts. Therefore it was in Byzantium that the cycle of tradition was first outlined and the 'patristic testaments' defined which would remain forever the foundation of Orthodox theology.³⁸¹

Further, Schmemmann argues that once the 'rule of worship' and the 'rule of tradition' were completed, they became a system permitting almost no progress or change.³⁸² Consequently, conformity to the past became the norm of Byzantine theology. This trend is clearly illustrated by *De fide orthodoxa* of John of Damascus, in which almost nothing new was added to what had been already said by the Fathers.

This backward-looking tendency was fundamental to the stream of Byzantine religious thought which may be labeled 'official' or 'school' theology. Its basic assignment was to prove that everything had been decided, and that reference to the past was the sole guarantee of Orthodoxy.³⁸³

Whilst, on the one hand, this shift of the Byzantine church from a model of *general authority* to that of *specific authority* with its 'sacred deposit of faith',

other areas as well, and subsequently the Church has been invaded by all sorts of doctrines and practices. A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 3, p. 220.

³⁷⁸Florovsky affirms that it was this double reference-Apostles and Fathers-that warranted both the origin and the preservation of Tradition. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 101.

³⁷⁹Both Emperor Theodosius and the Fifth Ecumenical Council produced lists of 'Selected Fathers' considered to be the undisputed bearers of genuine tradition. The list of the Council included Athanasius, Hilary of Poitiers, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine, Chrysostom, Theophilus and Cyril of Alexandria, Leo the Great and Proclus. See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 183-184; Y.M.-J. Congar, *Tradition*, pp. 45-46.

³⁸⁰J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, pp. 20-22. Schmemmann asserts: 'The tradition of the holy Fathers, confirmation by their authority even if only outwardly by means of reference and quotations-sometimes even torn out of context-become a kind of guarantee of reliability...' (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 226).

³⁸¹See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 184.

³⁸²With Theodore of Studios and John of Damascus the liturgy was fixed in a definite pattern in almost complete theological dependence on the traditions of the Fathers. They produced the *Triodion* (the hymns and orders of service for the periods of Great Lent and Easter) and the *Typicon* (the service manual). See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 227-228. Additionally, since the peace of the Empire was closely linked with the unity of the Church, one major imperial concern was to defend the religious *status quo*. See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 28-38. However, this *status quo* was occasionally shaken by passionate controversies, sparked most of the time by heresies, and which challenged the Church to respond. Out of such confrontations stemmed the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils and some of the great theological writings of the Byzantine Fathers.

³⁸³A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 226.

'holy liturgy' and 'holy tradition' guarded undistorted by the hierarchy strengthens the institution, on the other, it also had a negative impact on the ecclesial community. Meyendorff asserts that the corporate worship of the early church was gradually replaced by a worship dominated by the sanctuary. Moreover, since the previous community of true believers was replaced by the community of citizens, most of whom were either christianized by force or at best 'only superficially baptized',³⁸⁴ the Church developed new methods of protecting the Christian mystery. Thus, if formerly the non baptized had been forbidden to enter the *ecclesia*, henceforth the laity were forbidden to enter the sanctuary.

The liturgy was gradually transformed into an 'office' chanted by the clergy in the 'presence' of the people. In sermons, theological works, and the symbolism of church art, from now on there would be much more emphasis on the terrifying mystery of the divine presence in the Church, on the dangers of an unworthy reception of the 'communion' in this mystery, and on the role of the clergy as mediators between the people and the Mystery.³⁸⁵

The mediatory office of the clergy was eventually enlarged to include also the Virgin Mary, the Saints, relics and other sacred objects. However, in the context of 'a perceptible coarsening of morals' and of a 'certain "barbarization" of the whole pattern of life',³⁸⁶ the shift towards the mediatory role of 'sacred objects' developed a religion in which not only that the form and the content were growing apart but in which the form was also becoming an end in itself.³⁸⁷

Once the Church adopted a 'universal' liturgy and an 'official' theology, with the preeminence of form over against content, not only was the Apostolic Tradition replaced by ecclesiastical tradition but also theological epistemology was subjected to Byzantine praxis. As Schmemmann observes:

'The "Byzantine rite" in the end became the only rite of the Orthodox Church.'³⁸⁸ Consequently, the role of *episteme* was reduced to that of setting

³⁸⁴J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 24-25.

³⁸⁵J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 25.

³⁸⁶A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 184.

³⁸⁷Schmemmann argues that any divergence between form and content, or the emergence of form as value and goal in itself, is paganism, and in this sense 'even Christian rites and sacred objects may themselves become a centre of pagan veneration' (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 186). Further, Schmemmann describes this Christianity of external forms: 'In 530 a Byzantine monk, Barsanuphius, attacked 'mechanical' religiosity... 'If you pass by relics, bow down once, twice, thrice...but that is enough. Cross yourself three times if you wish, but no more.' Other teachers attacked those who express their faith only by 'covering crosses and icons with kisses.'...If the Gospel is too long and the prayers dragged out longer than usual, they display signs of impatience and displeasure. Even during short services, Christians fill the time talking about business or condemning their neighbours. Others simply stand on the street so as to run into church at the last moment and 'take communion on the run'... But they are perfect Christians, for have they not kissed the icons of our Redeemer and saints?' (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 186-187).

³⁸⁸A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 190. Similarly, Meyendorff argues that this process of ecclesiastical uniformity in the imperial church was in fact the Byzantinization of the Orthodox Church, a process which can be 'observed in both the liturgical and the

up lists with quotations from the Fathers in order to prove that the Church's *praxis* was apostolic. Once *praxis* was accredited as apostolic it ceased to be subjected to the critical reflection of *episteme*, becoming instead the absolute norm for the latter.³⁸⁹ As a result, during the following centuries Orthodox thought underwent a process of 'ossification;' the Church did nothing else but commit itself to 'repeating accepted formulae and defending entrenched positions.'³⁹⁰

Whilst this traditionalism combined with the socio-political development of the Orthodox world provided a certain institutional stability, and it can be affirmed that the Orthodox Church 'have known no Middle Ages (in the western sense) and have undergone no Reformation or Counter-Reformation'³⁹¹ there were nevertheless other movements within Orthodoxy. The most significant among them were: westernization,³⁹² the 'Hesychast Renaissance',³⁹³ Slavophile theology (Russia),³⁹⁴ the Zoe movement in

devotional as well as in the canonical spheres' (J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 66). Further, he contends that this Byzantine rite was carried to the far corners of the Byzantine world and, with minor changes, it became *the* liturgy of the Orthodoxy. J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 67.

³⁸⁹A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 184.

³⁹⁰K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology in the Christian East: the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries', in H. Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 307. Due to a triumphalist approach to the doctrine of the Church as a sacred institution, Byzantine conservatism and traditionalism rejected any critical evaluation of the past, affirming instead that its faith and practice are entirely apostolic. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 205-206.

³⁹¹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 9.

³⁹²This tendency emerged after the fall of Constantinople (1453) when many Orthodox students went to study at Protestant or Catholic universities in Western countries. During this time Orthodox theologians incorporated either Catholic or Protestant categories in their theologies. The two main trends during this period are known as 'Protestantizer' and 'Latinizer.' The former is represented, primarily, by Cyril Lucaris who was significantly influenced by Calvinist theology. The latter trend is represented by Peter Moghila and Dositheus of Jerusalem who in refuting Lucaris adopted Catholic arguments. See T. Ware, *Eustratios Argenti: A Study of the Greek Church under Turkish Rule*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1964; A. Hadjiantoniou, *Protestant Patriarch: The Life of Cyril Lucaris, 1572-1638*, John Knox Press, Richmond, VA., 1961; K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology', pp. 307-309.

³⁹³During the last decades of the eighteenth century there was a significant interest in mystical theology. The chief work was the *Philokalia*, an anthology of ascetic and mystical texts, published at Venice in 1872. It was primarily a 'spiritual' rather than a theological movement; its members were interested in practicing the Jesus Prayer and frequent communion. The founders of the movement were St. Macarius Notaras, Metropolitan of Corinth (1731-1805), and St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (1748-1809). See K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology in the Christian East: the Eighteenth to Twentieth Centuries', in H. Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of the Christian Doctrines*, p. 455.

³⁹⁴Between 1850 and 1900 there was a significant development of Russian theological thought. Particularly the theology of *Sobornost*, which started with Khomiakov and continued with Soloviev and Philaret of Moscow, marked the revival of the patristic spirit in Russian theology which until that point had been dependent on Greek religious thought. See K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology', pp. 455-456; G. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology*, pp. 57-83.

Greece³⁹⁵ and the renewal movement within the Romanian Orthodox Church.

³⁹⁵Among different 'home missionary' movements in Greece, the oldest and the most influential is *Zoe*, also known as the 'Brotherhood of Theologians', founded in 1907 by Fr. Eusebius Matthopoulos. It is a semi-monastic organization; all members must be unmarried but there are no vows. They are engaged primarily in educational activities in which they strive to improve the level of religious commitment. Bible study and frequent communion are encouraged. See D.J. Constantelos, 'The Zoi Movement in Greece', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, III (1959), pp. 11-25; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 150-151.

Chapter 4

Popescu and the Authority of Tradition

O. Goga, former Prime Minister of Romania, wrote:

An extraordinary spiritual revolution is happening under our very eyes, here in the centre of Bucharest only a few paces from Calea Victoriei, a street more walked upon by sin than by virtue, where the invasion of every kind of foreign trader has obliterated any impulse of Romanian traditionalism. In the midst of this furnace of profane passions, not far from the wild shouts of the tradesman of every kind of ware, there exists a consciousness sensitive to the abstract realms, a flame which is kindled at the feet of Christ...The newspapers say of the reverend Father that a peculiar evolution of thought made him depart from the true dogma of the Eastern Church and that in his recent sermons and especially in certain ill-counseled changes of the Orthodox ritual, he has gone beyond the consecrated limits of the Church statutes and its Canon Law. Fr. Tudor, then, is being displayed as a rebel against the Church order and as a reformer who has abandoned the duties of his station. A few days ago the Council examined the matter and it seems that the Holy Synod will soon have to pronounce a verdict, weighing up the blunt claims of dogma and applying in all its severity the bi-millennial authority of the Canons.³⁹⁶

To the accusations brought against him, Popescu responded:

I am not, Your High Holiness, neither Catholic, nor Protestant, nor Adventist, or anything else but an Orthodox who took seriously the Scriptures.³⁹⁷

However, the differences between Popescu and the Romanian Orthodox Church, often described as a conflict between Scripture and Tradition, had deep implications for the development of Christianity in Romania during the following decades. Within three years this conflict led to the decision of the Holy Synod, on the one hand, to defrock Popescu, and on the other, to the decision of thousands of Orthodox believers to follow the defrocked priest.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶O. Goga, 'Fr. Popescu and his Flock: The Storm at the Stork's Nest', in *Țara Noastră*; No. 2, 13 January 1924, p. 1, (Tr. A. Scarfe in *RCL*, 1975, pp. 18-19). O. Goga was the Minister of Cults in the Romanian Government of 1920-1921, Prime Minister of Romania from 1937 to 1938) and a well-known writer.

³⁹⁷T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg a Mărturisirii de Credință a Preotului Tudor Popescu' in I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, SMR, Chicago, 1988, p. 133.

³⁹⁸'...the rebellion of Fr. Tudor is not being presented as a simple individual act; it has been made more complicated by a mass revolt of the parishioners who are standing by their spiritual pastor and expressing their opinion. The same multitude...is today forming a wall of protection around him. They are identifying with him, confessing their faith in the one who is being brought to answer by the Hierarchy. Indeed there is rebellion at Cuibul cu Barză [the Stork's Nest]: the faithful have refused a new priest, the doors of the place have been locked and it is said that the parishioners in their fervour are decided to follow their priest, even if it means building a new church' (O. Goga, 'The Storm at the Stork's Nest', in *RCL*, 1975, p. 19).

4.1 Historical Background

After the First World War (1914-1918) Romania became Greater Romania due to the union of Transylvania with Romania in 1919. The union was followed by a series of economic and political reforms under the ruling power of the Liberal Party.³⁹⁹ Alongside domestic, political and economic changes, the Liberal Party was in favour of integrating Romania into the Western European structure. However, as a reaction to Western influences there emerged a strong national-traditionalist movement rooted in the Orthodox religion.⁴⁰⁰ This movement considered that the whole of Romanian life, which was perverted by Western modernism, needed to be purified and restored to Romanian Orthodoxy. However, the religious vitality of the Orthodox Church was significantly diminished by its traditionalism, institutionalism and the moral corruption of the clergy.⁴⁰¹ The religious life in Romania was, however, significantly influenced, on the one hand by the rapid growth of Protestant Evangelical churches,⁴⁰² and on the other by the movement which originated within the Orthodox Church following Cornilescu's Bible translation into modern Romanian.⁴⁰³ One of the people that had been influenced by Cornilescu's work was the Orthodox priest Tudor Popescu.

4.2 Between Scripture and Tradition

Popescu was born into an Orthodox family in 1887.⁴⁰⁴ His father was an Orthodox priest and his grandfather a deacon.⁴⁰⁵ The family decided that Popescu would study theology in order to follow his father into the priesthood. Subsequently he began his theological training at the Orthodox Seminary at Curtea de Arges. Whilst in Seminary, he relates that the life was spiritually dry because the main emphasis was on ritual, and Scripture did not have a central place in the training programme of the priests. However, he enjoyed studying the writings of Chrysostom and Basil the Great.⁴⁰⁶ In 1907 Popescu moved to the Theological Seminary in Bucharest for further education, and in 1912, after graduation, he was consecrated

³⁹⁹V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 190-191.

⁴⁰⁰V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 205.

⁴⁰¹O. Goga, 'Răsvătirea de la 'Cuibul Cu Barză'', in *Țara Noastră*; No. 2 (13 January, 1924), p. 1; A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 60.

⁴⁰²The Protestant Evangelical churches experienced rapid growth due to the fact that many people who came home from war, being terrified by the horrors of the battleground, were looking for spiritual meaning in life. Others had heard the Gospel preached to them during the War by Protestant Evangelicals, and once home they became 'the pioneers of a new vibrant brand of Christianity.' See A. Popovici, *Istoria Bapțiștilor din Romania*, vol. 2, p. 12.

⁴⁰³A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing of the Orthodox Church in Romania', in *RCL*, 1975, p. 15.

⁴⁰⁴January 12, 1887, in Dumbrava village, Ploiești county.

⁴⁰⁵T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, p. 7.

⁴⁰⁶T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, p. 13.

priest at St. Stephen's Church (the Stork's Nest Church) in Bucharest.⁴⁰⁷ Within a short time, Popescu became one of the most outstanding priests in Bucharest.⁴⁰⁸ The quality of his Sunday homilies (sermons) and his moral reputation attracted many people to his Church. O. Goga wrote:

I was told that in the suburban church of 'Cuibul cu Barză' (the Stork's Nest) a silver-tongued priest was gathering together an ever increasing number of people concerned with religious problems. Such a novelty in this noisy whirlpool of a city seemed to me quite extraordinary, and it set me thinking. The following Sunday, unannounced, as a simple believer, not a Minister, I went to the church and entered it for the first time. From the start I was amazed to find the holy place overflowing with people who were a strange mixture of all classes of society. With difficulty I pushed my way through the crowd to take a place at the corner of the lectern on the right hand side of the iconostasis, from where I could observe the pious assembly...I do not know whether one would find elsewhere in Bucharest a man in a sheep-skin so caught up in religious mysticism as the man in front of me, nor in all churches in our land would I ever meet cheeks so flourished by the divine Word as those of a woman only three feet away from me.⁴⁰⁹

During this time Cornilescu joined Popescu's church and there subsequently developed a life-long friendship.⁴¹⁰ Moreover, following his religious experience in 1919 Cornilescu succeeded in converting Popescu to his ideas.⁴¹¹ Subsequently the two priests started a series of lectures and bible studies for those interested in their teachings. Thus they led a bible study programme in the Gospel of John every Thursday evening at Popescu's house. Due to the fact that within a short time the number of adherents grew to several hundreds, the two priests rented a school hall where they held their meetings every Tuesday and Thursday evening.⁴¹² However, after a few months, Popescu came to the conclusion that there were inconsistencies (contradictions) between his new belief and some aspects of the liturgy. This raised for Popescu the question concerning the relation between Scripture and Tradition.

⁴⁰⁷Initially Popescu was appointed priest at the Church Cărămidarii de Jos in București but, after a short period of time, he was transferred to St. Stephen's Church, known as the 'Stork's Nest Church'. See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, p. 18.

⁴⁰⁸The Romanian Minister of Cults called Popescu 'a silver-tongue priest'. See A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing', p. 18.

⁴⁰⁹O. Goga, 'Fr. Popescu and his Flock' in *Țara Noastră*, No. 2 (13 January 1924), in *RCL*, (Tr. A. Scarfe), (1975), p. 18.

⁴¹⁰A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 15-16.

⁴¹¹Initially, Cornilescu challenged his friend to study the biblical doctrine of salvation. After long debates between them, and in spite of the fact that Popescu totally rejected Cornilescu's view, he invited Cornilescu to present his teachings at the 'Stork's Nest' during the following Sundays. Challenged by both Cornilescu's views and the people's interest in such matters, Popescu decided to do some further reading and subsequently to use similar themes during his Sunday liturgy. A few months later, Popescu was converted to Cornilescu's ideas. See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 29-36; A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 48-49.

⁴¹²See A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, pp. 50-55.

4.3 Scripture, Tradition and the Church

Since the Romanian Orthodox Church follows the 'two-source' theory, it affirms that there is no contradiction between the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition.⁴¹³ However, in studying the Bible Popescu came to the conclusion that there is a striking contradiction between them concerning, for instance, the intercessory role of Mary and of the Saints.⁴¹⁴ He believed that such practice undermined the office of Christ and consequently should be rejected.⁴¹⁵ At the same time, however, he was committed to the Orthodox Church and did not want to break away. Consequently, whilst remaining true to his 'christocentric' soteriology,⁴¹⁶ Popescu decided to eliminate from the liturgy those parts that contain prayers addressed to Mary and the Saints.⁴¹⁷ At this point the priests and the hierarchy from Bucharest accused Popescu of breaking the canons of the Church, and subsequently asked the Church Consistory to depose him. Popescu presented his defence in two letters sent to the Metropolitan of Bucharest.⁴¹⁸ In his defense, Popescu raised three major points: the authority of Scripture over Tradition and Church; the sufficiency of Christ for Salvation; and the difference between the true tradition and false tradition.

4.3.1 The Authority of Scripture over Tradition and Church: Popescu believed Scripture to be the only authoritative deposit of God's revelation and thus the normative source of theological epistemology. Tradition has authority in so far as it follows the teaching of Scripture. Conversely, if Tradition contradicts Scripture the former has to be brought under the authority of the latter. Further, to the Orthodox view that only the Church has the authority to interpret the Scriptures, Popescu responded by affirming both the perspicuity of Scripture and the Church's duty to remain under the authority of the former.⁴¹⁹ Consequently Popescu refused to worship Mary and the Saints on the ground that such practice was unbiblical, invoking as support for his view the following biblical examples: Peter refused to accept the worship of Cornelius (Acts 10:25-26); and Paul and Barnabas did not allow the people of Lystra to worship them (Acts 14:11-15). Since the Apostles rejected such practices he argued that the Church has no authority to introduce practices which contradict the

⁴¹³D. Radu, 'Revelația Dumnezeiască: Sfânta Scriptură și Sfânta Tradiție', in D. Radu, ed., *Indrumări Misionare*, pp. 35-36.

⁴¹⁴A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 59.

⁴¹⁵T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', pp. 130-131.

⁴¹⁶Popescu affirms that he came to the conclusion that the work of Christ, particularly His death, is the only ground for salvation. Subsequently he rejected the traditional teachings concerning the soteriological role of the Church as institution as well as those concerning the intercessory role of Mary and the Saints. See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 29-52.

⁴¹⁷A. Maianu, *Life and Work*, p. 59.

⁴¹⁸The two papers are: 'Apărarea și Mărturisirea de Credință a Preotului Tudor Popescu', 23 December 1923; and 'Expunere pe Larg a Mărturisirii de Credință a Preotului Tudor Popescu', 15 January, 1924, in I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, pp. 116-136.

⁴¹⁹T. Popescu, 'Apărarea', pp. 118-121.

Scripture.⁴²⁰ In conclusion, Popescu affirmed that since the Church is under the authority of Scripture the latter represents the supreme test for judging the entire life and practice of the former: therefore any practice that contradicts Scripture should be rejected.⁴²¹

4.3.2 The Sufficiency of Christ. Popescu argued that Christ alone is the only mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5-6) and that His salvation is perfect (Heb.7:25). To believe in the intercessory role of the Saints is totally alien to the Gospel.⁴²² All the people that were saved in the book of Acts were saved by faith in Christ alone (Acts 4:13; 10:43; 13:38; 15:11; 16:30; 20:4). Further, Popescu pointed to Rev. 6:9-12 which speaks about the prayers of the Saints, but he argued that the text does not speak about the Saints as intercessors for believers or for sinners. Rather, the Saints ask God to bring judgment on earth.⁴²³ Moreover, Popescu could not reconcile the character of God with the Orthodox teaching that the Saints enjoy special favour with God and therefore can secure from God what a mere Christian cannot. Consequently Popescu drew the conclusion that belief in the Saints to secure forgiveness for someone is an offense to the character of God. He argued that there is no favoritism with God as there is within the corrupted 'byzantinism'.⁴²⁴ Additionally, the cult of Saints had negative ethical implications, because, on the one hand, the people rested in the merit of Saints and so were not concerned about their moral behaviour and, on the other, the clergy used this practice for financial gain.⁴²⁵

4.3.3 True and False Traditions: Popescu affirmed that the old Orthodox practice of venerating the Saints represents the true Tradition.

Concerning the worship of St. Virgin Mary and Saints, I accept the general Orthodox formula which says: worship God and venerate the Saints.⁴²⁶

This Tradition distinguishes between veneration and worship: *veneration* means respect for the Saint and a desire to follow his example, whilst *worship* is due to God alone. The false tradition is the one which practises the *worship* of Saints and Mary. According to Popescu's view such a practice was a novelty and therefore to be rejected.⁴²⁷ However, it appears that at this point Popescu was not well informed about the historical development of this doctrine and the decision of the Second Council of Nicaea (787). He assumed that at the beginning the Orthodox Church had had a different teaching about the cult of Saints and Mary than the present one. The absence of a historical-doctrinal perspective on the cult of Mary and the

420T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 119.

421T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 121.

422T. Popescu, 'Apărarea', p. 120.

423T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 121.

424T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 121.

425Popescu affirmed that many priests received taxes from believers for access to a wonder-working icon, or prayers presented by the priest to a certain Saint on their behalf. See T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', pp. 134-135.

426T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 132.

427T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 133.

Saints is clearly reflected in Popescu's argument. Thus he believed that 'Old Orthodoxy' was in total agreement with Scripture whilst contemporary Orthodoxy had introduced novelties.⁴²⁸

However, the Orthodox Church rejected Popescu's view as heresy and in 1924 he was defrocked.⁴²⁹ Subsequently Popescu left the Orthodox Church and started a new denomination called 'The Christian According to Scripture'; a movement which spread rapidly in all regions of Romania. According to Scarfe, in 1975 Popescu's group numbered about 120,000 believers.⁴³⁰

4.4 Reformation or Renewal

Țon considers that the movement that emerged from Popescu and Cornilescu's work can be considered as an attempt to reform the Orthodox Church.⁴³¹ However, such a view is in disagreement with Popescu's belief, namely, that he does not have in mind 'the reformation of the Romanian Church, but the reformation of each individual soul through the Gospel.'⁴³² Since Popescu perceived himself not as a reformer but primarily as an evangelist, he did not engage in theological dispute with the Orthodox Church in order to expose its theological 'errors' and to propose alternative solutions. His lack of interest in theological clarification is also illustrated by the fact that Popescu was willing to overlook those practices he considered to be non-biblical providing he would not be forced to follow them. Popescu wrote to the Romanian Metropolitan and acknowledged that he 'never preached that the people should not worship the Saints, or that the Saints do not pray for us. I never preached and I do not preach anything else but Christ crucified.'⁴³³ Accordingly, Popescu believed that the Orthodox Church had no other need beside a return of each individual to the Gospel. Hence the books he published were mainly volumes of sermons⁴³⁴ delivered at the 'Stork's Nest', and small commentaries and translations.⁴³⁵ Whilst

⁴²⁸T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', pp. 132-133.

⁴²⁹N. Colan, 'Tulburarea dela 'Cuibu cu barză', *Revista Teologică*, No. 2-3 (February-March 1924), 41-44.

⁴³⁰A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing', p. 17. The figures are not accurate, because after the Revolution of December 1989, when the Evangelical Alliance was founded, the Christians According to Scripture numbered about 30.000 members.

⁴³¹I. Țon, *Credința Adevărată*, p. 100.

⁴³²T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 133.

⁴³³T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 122.

⁴³⁴Fr. P. Marușca introduced Popescu's first volume of sermons, *Isus vă Chiamă*, in the Orthodox Theological Journal affirming that in contrast to other similar books which present 'our Saviour', Popescu speaks about 'my Saviour', and this paradigm shift could bring revival into the Orthodox Church. See P. Marușca, 'Mișcarea Literară', in *Revista Teologică*, 1 (Januarie 1923), 24-25.

⁴³⁵Among the books published by Popescu are two volumes of sermons: *Isus vă Chiamă* and *Veniți la Isus*. His booklets are: *Planul de Mintuire*; *Golgota*; *Din Betania la Golgota*. Translations from C H Spurgeon, *Fiți Tari în Domnul*; *Din Cuvintele lui Ion Plugarul*; *Eu Sînt Domnul*, *Doctorul Tău*; Thomas a Kempis, *Imitatio Christi*. Popescu's attraction

Cornilescu was more active in translation and publishing, neither of them developed a long-term strategy to influence the whole nation, preferring instead a pietist approach to a reformist one. D. Nanu, one of Popescu's followers, engaged in debate with Orthodox leaders, but it was more a sort of short-lived reaction than a careful theological reflection.⁴³⁶ There were, however, people who suggested that the conflict between Popescu and the Orthodox Church could be the beginning of a Reformation in Romania. For example, D. Theodorescu affirmed: 'Since the last few days we have a Romanian Luther.'⁴³⁷ However, such comments appear to reflect more the 'journalistic rhetoric' of the time than historical realities. Meanwhile, Popescu continued his itinerant preaching activity, and in spite of the fact that the Orthodox Church labeled Popescu's followers a 'sect' or 'heretics'⁴³⁸ and used its influence in the government to persecute them, the new movement spread rapidly throughout the country and was particularly effective in church planting.⁴³⁹

Thus, if Popescu was not a reformer in the classical sense of the word, nevertheless his story published in different versions by newspapers and journals did have a significant influence in Romania. N. Colan, the editor of the Orthodox Theological Journal, affirmed that 'there is no one single group in the whole country which did not present its own opinion about this significant issue.'⁴⁴⁰ Further, Colan argued that in spite of the fact that Popescu is the first Orthodox priest to deny the validity of the Church's dogmas, nevertheless it represents a major problem for the Orthodox Church.⁴⁴¹ In particular, the Orthodox Church was confronted with the fact that once people became aware of the conflict between Scripture and Tradition as represented in Popescu's story, they became interested in finding out what the Bible said about different religious issues. Moreover, many people who attended Popescu's meetings out of curiosity subsequently adopted his view.⁴⁴² However, once established as a separate group Popescu's movement ceased to have direct influence within the Orthodox Church.⁴⁴³ In 1923 there emerged, however, another movement within the

toward the devotional literary genre, can be easily observed, which shaped an attitude of non-involvement in the political, philosophical and theological problems of the world amongst his followers. For the literary activity of Popescu, see T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 134-137.

⁴³⁶In his article 'The Conflict Between Logic and Sophism, Between Gospel and Typicon', Nanu refuted the accusations of heresy brought against Popescu by G. Galaction, P. Mălăiești and Archimandrite Scriban. See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, p. 67.

⁴³⁷D. Theodorescu, 'A Romanian Luther', in *Cuvîntul Liber*, 1 (Januarie, 1924), p. 1.

⁴³⁸P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 64-66; I.P. David, *Călăuză*, pp. 152-153.

⁴³⁹T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 99-105.

⁴⁴⁰N. Colan, 'Tulburarea dela 'Cuibu cu Barză'', p. 37.

⁴⁴¹N. Colan, 'Tulburarea dela 'Cuibu cu barză'' p. 43.

⁴⁴²The Tudorist movement, the name given to the believers that followed Popescu began as a movement within the Orthodox Church without missionary support from outside. However, both Popescu and Cornilescu were influenced by Western theology through the books they had read. See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, p. 162.

⁴⁴³A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing', p. 17.

Orthodox Church called 'The Lord's Army', which refused to separate from the Orthodox Church, and thus it has maintained its direct influence within the Church until today.⁴⁴⁴

4.5 Towards a New Tradition

The new ecclesial communities established by Popescu had an informal character at the beginning. The believers met for Bible study, fellowship and prayer. Due to this *charismatic* approach everybody was free to participate in discussions and worship. As these local fellowships became established, the movement adopted the name 'The Christians according to Scripture',⁴⁴⁵ and Popescu introduced new rules of worship. For example, women were allowed neither to pray nor speak in public nor suggest songs during the meetings. Additionally, those who did not belong to Popescu's movement were not allowed to participate in their prayer meetings or at the Lord's Supper.⁴⁴⁶ Further, Popescu and his followers rejected the Orthodox sacraments (or mysteries) and subsequently decided to celebrate only the Lord's Supper and baptism as symbols. However, Popescu continued the practice of infant baptism in recognition of an act faith by the father on behalf of the child.⁴⁴⁷ Thus from *charismatic* communities the movement shifted towards an institutionalized ecclesiology marked by strict discipline and legalism.⁴⁴⁸ This in turn generated internal tensions, and eventually Popescu's group split over the issue of infant baptism and church organization.⁴⁴⁹ However, Popescu realized later the importance of Christian unity and in 1928 his group (the paedobaptists) were reconciled with those who split on the ground of their belief in adult baptism (called 'the Christians').⁴⁵⁰ Another step towards unity was made in 1939⁴⁵¹ when Popescu's group merged with the 'Christians after the Gospel', a Brethren

⁴⁴⁴ Scarfe places the beginning of 'The Lord's Army' ten years later than Popescu's movement. His information at this point is not accurate, and one has to compare Scarfe's article 'The Evangelical Wing of the Orthodox Church in Romania', in *RCL*, (1975), pp. 15-18, with another article, ALRC, 'The 'Lord's Army' Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 8, 4 (Winter, 1980), 314-317; T. Dorz, *Istoria unei Jertfe: Mărturii despre Inceputul și Primii 12 Ani ai 'Oastei Domnului*, manuscript; V. Isac, *O Lumină a Viitorului*, Ed. Traian Dorz, Cluj, 1992. A possible explanation for the discrepancies between Scarfe's records and the later 1980 *RCL* documents and Romanian documents is the fact that in the mid-70s when Scarfe did his research in Romania on behalf of Keston College, it was very difficult to meet Christian leaders who were knowledgeable of pre-Communist history without being arrested. Therefore it is possible that Scarfe gathered his information from secondary sources.

⁴⁴⁵ A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing', p. 16.

⁴⁴⁶ T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, 162.

⁴⁴⁷ T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, p. 162.

⁴⁴⁸ T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 163-164.

⁴⁴⁹ A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing', p. 16.

⁴⁵⁰ A. Scarfe, 'The Evangelical Wing', p. 16.

⁴⁵¹ See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, p. 161. Again there are discrepancies between the Romanian and Scarfe's records in 'The Evangelical Wing', p. 16, where the latter places the union with the 'Christians after the Gospel' in 1944.

movement that began at the end of the nineteenth century through the work of the Swiss Brethren.⁴⁵² In a letter addressed to all their churches on that occasion, Popescu expounded his view of unity in faith and the freedom of each local church to develop its particular form of worship.⁴⁵³ Although this step was not a return to the initial *charismatic* model, nevertheless it created more space for the local churches to adapt their style of worship to local culture.

4.6 Observations

4.6.1 Methodological: In contrast with both Orthodox approaches ('one-source' and 'two-source') to the question of the relation between Scripture and Tradition, for the first time in the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church Popescu adopted the view that Scripture is the only source of Apostolic Tradition. Whilst rejecting the claim that extra-biblical Tradition is Apostolic, or that it represents a useful epistemological tool, Popescu believed that by returning to Scripture his movement had rediscovered the model of the early apostolic church.⁴⁵⁴ However, due to the fact that this view was underlined by the belief that Popescu's teachings represented the authoritative interpretation of Scripture,⁴⁵⁵ his movement replaced, somewhat paradoxically, one ecclesiastical tradition with another, whilst following the same pattern which leads to traditionalism, legalism and theological stagnation.

The Orthodox Church on the other hand, underwent a short period of theological revival due to the fact that it used Scripture extensively in order to prove both the harmony between Scripture and Tradition and the apostolicity of the Orthodox faith.⁴⁵⁶ Moreover, by proposing a 'canon of tradition', Deheleanu affirms that in order to be accepted as genuine Apostolic Tradition any teaching or practice has to meet the following criteria: (a) It must not contradict itself or the indubitable Apostolic Tradition and Scripture; (b) It has been practiced by the apostolic churches and it has had uninterrupted and controllable continuity until the present day; (c) It has been accepted and practiced always by the whole (catholic) Church; (d) It must be in agreement with all, or at least with the absolute majority of the Church's Fathers and Teachers. Only under the above conditions one can be sure that the respective tradition is under the protection of the Holy Spirit; But 'when a tradition does not meet these conditions, it cannot be true and holy, and subsequently it cannot be

⁴⁵²See F.A. Tatford, *Red Glow Over Eastern Europe*, Echoes, Avon, 1986, p. 149.

⁴⁵³See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 158-166.

⁴⁵⁴T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 104-105.

⁴⁵⁵Popescu perceived himself as the final authority in settling theological disputes. See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 187-193.

⁴⁵⁶P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 117-129; V. Coman, *Scrieri de Teologie Liturgică și Pastorală*, Ed. Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române, Oradea, 1983, pp. 204-225.

accepted and practiced.⁴⁵⁷ Echoing the Vicentian canon (catholicity, antiquity and consensus), except for the last clause (d) which offers the same authority to both unanimity or absolute majority of the Fathers, Deheleanu attempts to offer a basis for a historical-critical evaluation of different traditions. In reality, however, the Orthodox Church never used it in that sense, preferring instead to follow the Byzantine model of 'spiritual' hermeneutic in order to explain away any contradiction between either Scripture and Tradition or the Fathers.⁴⁵⁸

However, in the last decade two major trends concerning the role of Tradition have emerged within Romanian Orthodoxy: the first, represented by Metropolitan Antonie, concerns the relation between Tradition and freedom within the Church;⁴⁵⁹ and the second, represented by Bria, concerns the distinction between the Apostolic and the Byzantine traditions.⁴⁶⁰ Although both trends are just beginning to take root, nevertheless they represent a significant attempt to overcome the traditionalism of the past. Thus Metropolitan Antonie affirms that Tradition represents the *spirit of truth* not the *rule of truth*. One of the problems of the past lies in the fact that by emphasising the *rule* the Church transformed its Tradition into a dead and oppressive set of norms. Consequently the Church needs to be freed from its *rule* of Tradition in order to enjoy *freedom* within Tradition.⁴⁶¹ Alternatively, Bria affirms that the Church needs to analyse its past critically in order to distinguish between the gospel and the institutionalized tradition of the Byzantine church.

No single theology or culture can claim to be the *centre* of Orthodoxy...However, the temptation to become a 'Byzantine' imperial Christianity reappeared at different times and in different forms...even though the majority of Orthodox churches today exist outside the area of Byzantine culture, there is still a tendency, even in inter-Orthodox conferences, to invoke the Byzantine tradition as a common theological reference...The church builds artificial bridges between traditional and contemporary times, between obedience to the gospel and the continuity of institutions, thus creating a discrepancy between symbol and reality, between monumental traditional image of the church and its historical human face as a 'people of God' who have gone through a liberating crisis.⁴⁶²

These models, however, do not question the authority role of the Church in relation to Scripture and Tradition. In other words, they remain in the same traditional line: the Church is infallible. The difference between these theologians and Popescu lies in the fact that the latter saw the Church under the authority of Scripture.⁴⁶³ This is the main reason why the Orthodox Church declared him a heretic and subsequently defrocked him,

⁴⁵⁷P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, p. 137.

⁴⁵⁸P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 103-141.

⁴⁵⁹Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Tradiție și Libertate în Spiritualitatea Ortodoxă*, Ed. Mitropoliei, Sibiu, 1983.

⁴⁶⁰I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 92-97.

⁴⁶¹Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Tradiție și Libertate*, pp. 18-34.

⁴⁶²I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 93,94, 96.

⁴⁶³T. Popescu, 'Apărarea', p. 119.

not simply because he eliminated certain parts from the liturgy. As N. Colan explains: 'Fr. Popescu did what not many would have done in his place. His Holiness does not recognize the authority of the Church.'⁴⁶⁴ From this point of view Popescu resembles much more Cyril Lucaris than contemporary theologians who propose reforms within the system instead of the reformation of the system itself.

4.6.2 Theological: Popescu's contribution to the development of theological thought in Romania is reflected particularly in the area of the authority of Scripture versus Church and Tradition, and of soteriology. Thus, whilst affirming that only Scripture contains the Apostolic Tradition and that it represents the supreme criterion for judging the entire life of the Church, Popescu questioned not only the authority of the non-biblical Tradition but also the authority of the Church based upon its claim to infallible knowledge of truth. Unfortunately, besides his letters of defense, Popescu did not elaborate his view concerning the relation between divine revelation, Scripture, Tradition and the ecclesial community. In the absence of such reflection, not only did he fail to evaluate critically the Orthodox paradigm, but his own approach to the relation between Scripture and the Church, although based on the perspicuity of Scripture, eventually shifted towards a new form of institutionalized hermeneutic. However, despite these shortcomings, Popescu's view of the authority and perspicuity of Scripture represents the first attempt from within the Romanian Orthodox Church to replace the oppressive traditionalism with the freedom of each person to encounter God through reading the Bible and hearing it preached.⁴⁶⁵

Further, Popescu's christological soteriology challenged the Orthodox view of ecclesiastical soteriology: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*.⁴⁶⁶ His non-institutionalized approach to soteriology was appealing to many Romanian Orthodox who were disappointed by both the institutionalized traditionalism and the widespread corruption amongst the clergy. However, in the absence of a synthesis between christology and pneumatology Popescu's view of salvation undermined human freedom to the point of it being almost totally swallowed up by sovereignty and the grace of God.⁴⁶⁷ The Orthodox Church responded by unveiling its belief in a *synergistic* view of salvation.⁴⁶⁸ Yet, since in Orthodoxy the encounter between God and human beings is mediated by the Church, the freedom of both the Spirit and human beings is circumscribed by the hierarchical-sacramental and the canonical boundaries of the institution. Within such a context the attempt of Metropolitan Antonie to replace the *rule* of Tradition by the *spirit* of

⁴⁶⁴N. Colan, 'Tulburarea dela 'Cuibu cu barză', p. 43.

⁴⁶⁵T. Popescu, 'Expunere pe Larg', p. 127.

⁴⁶⁶See H. Andrușoș, *Simbolica*, pp. 67-70.

⁴⁶⁷Both the objective and the subjective aspects of salvation are the work of the grace of God in Christ. Even when a human being accepts the grace of God, he does so because, somehow, the grace brought about this decision in man. See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 197-221.

⁴⁶⁸See P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 270-286.

Tradition represents a significant step towards a reconciliation between freedom and Tradition.

4.6.3 Sociological: Very much like Cornilescu, Popescu's impact on the development of religious life in Romania was primarily influenced by sociological factors. Thus, within the context of the religious and moral decline of the Romanian Orthodox Church,⁴⁶⁹ the news that an Orthodox priest questioned the apostolicity of the Church's tradition fostered the religious interest of many people in the new movement. Further, due to his own personal *charisma* in communication ('a silver-tongued priest') and in establishing non-hierarchical local communities, his movement managed to attract those who were looking for a more corporate and *charismatic* form of worship. Additionally, the wide press coverage concerning 'The Storm at the Stork's Nest' further contributed to the spread of Popescu's ideas throughout the country, arousing thus the interest of many people in attending Popescu's meetings.⁴⁷⁰

The Orthodox Church, however, used all the sociological resources already mentioned in Cornilescu's case to stop the movement from growing. Additionally, the Orthodox Church used its canonical authority and defrocked Popescu on 2 April, 1924.⁴⁷¹ According to N. Colan, the Synod took this decision not simply because Popescu introduced certain changes in the liturgy but primarily on the grounds that he violated the Church's dogma.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁹The Archimandrite I. Scriban describes the moral corruption of the Orthodox Church in 'Starea Bisericii', *Neamul Românesc Literar*, No. 3 (1st March, 1909), p. 4. According to Scriban the Orthodox Church is so dead and corrupted that it can be called a 'School of Perversity.' See also I. Scriban, in *Neamul Românesc Literar*, No. 138 (19 November, 1908). Yet, in spite of his concern about the corruption of the Orthodox Church, Scriban turned against Tudor Popescu when the latter suggested a biblical renewal of the Church.

⁴⁷⁰The Romanian press, however, was divided on this issue: some accused Popescu of being a foreign agent especially trained to undermine the national unity represented by the unity of the Orthodox Church, whilst others argued that the corrupted Orthodox hierarchy attempted to eliminate the power of the Gospel from the dead Church. See N. Colan, 'Tulburarea de la 'Cuibu cu barză'', pp. 37-38.

⁴⁷¹P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, p. 65.

⁴⁷²N. Colan, 'Tulburarea de la 'Cuibu cu barză'', pp. 42-43.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

During the twentieth century the Orthodox Church has struggled to reconcile two sets of polarities: firstly, between the belief that Orthodoxy represents the undistorted Apostolic Tradition and the existence of foreign elements within its tradition, and secondly, between the belief that through its Tradition the Church moves towards its eschatological self-realization (*theosis*) and the oppressive character of that Tradition.⁴⁷³

The first aspect concerns the origin, the content and the transmission of Tradition which has been dealt with primarily by conceiving the Church as a symbolic entity whose 'historical and sociological reality is irrelevant. The visible structure is seen as a symbolic representation disconnected from the life and salvation of the people of God.'⁴⁷⁴ Due to this dichotomy, while claiming to embody the Apostolic faith as it was transmitted throughout the centuries, the way in which Orthodoxy interprets the Tradition 'often gives little attention to the distinction between the content of faith and the process of its transmission.'⁴⁷⁵ Bria argues that this approach led not only to the displacement of local traditions (particular) by Byzantine universalism but also to a great discrepancy between symbolism and reality.⁴⁷⁶ However, Bria argues that the Orthodox Church can no longer follow the magisterial way, that is, idealizing the church whilst 'ignoring the people who carry the burden of tradition in different situations.'⁴⁷⁷ Consequently, there are theologians who advocate a historical-critical analysis of the past. Ware argues that, whilst reverencing the past, Orthodox are aware that,

Not everything received from the past is of equal value, nor is everything received from the past necessarily true...There is a difference between 'Tradition' and 'traditions': many traditions which the past has handed down are human and accidental-pious opinions (or worse), but not a true part of the one Tradition, the essential Christian message. It is necessary to question the past. In Byzantine and post-Byzantine times, Orthodox have not always been sufficiently critical in their attitude toward the past, and the result has

⁴⁷³See I. Bria, 'Living in the One Tradition', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 26, 2 (1974), pp. 224-233; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 190; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 9-11; Metropolitan Germanos of Thyateira, 'The Call to Unity', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 132-136; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 9, 205-207; J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, Sheed and Ward, New York, 1966, pp. 119-140.

⁴⁷⁴I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 43.

⁴⁷⁵I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 42.

⁴⁷⁶I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 42-45.

⁴⁷⁷I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 42.

frequently been stagnation. Today this uncritical attitude can no longer be maintained.⁴⁷⁸

Thus Ware acknowledges that in the absence of space between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions the Church experiences theological stagnation. It is interesting to observe, however, that according to Ware both the awareness of the solution to this crisis of Tradition spring not from the inner consciousness of the Church but from its encounter with the outside world:

Higher standards of scholarship, increasing contacts with western Christians, the inroads of secularism and atheism, have forced Orthodox in this present century to look more closely at their inheritance and to distinguish more carefully between Tradition and traditions. The task of discrimination is not always easy...Yet despite certain manifest handicaps, the Orthodox of today are perhaps in a better position to discriminate aright than their predecessors have been for many centuries; and often it is precisely their contact with the west which is helping them to see more and more clearly what is essential in their own inheritance.⁴⁷⁹

Similarly, while tracing the root of the present crisis of Tradition within Orthodoxy to the uncritical reception of the Byzantine tradition, Meyendorff argues that the distinction between the Holy Tradition and the 'relic of former times...out of date and even harmful to the mission of the Church...can be done only by persons who have received a sound training in theological principle, who are prepared to show genuine respect for tradition, and who are disposed at all times and in all things to be guided by the revealed Truth.'⁴⁸⁰ Bria affirms that this task should be on the agenda of the next Great Synod. However, the Synod has to overcome both the past imbalance between universal (Byzantine) and particular (local churches with their specific traditions), and the traditional structure and present reality of the Orthodox *pleroma*.⁴⁸¹ Additionally, whilst Florovsky, Meyendorff, Ware and Zizioulas believe that the recovery of the Holy Tradition could be done by a 'neo-patristic synthesis',⁴⁸² Bria, reflecting the Romanian reality, affirms that the Church should evaluate its present tradition, not only in the light of the patristic tradition but also in the light of the original tradition of the Church:

The Orthodox...is to go back again and again to the first Christian experience, to 'that which was from the beginning'(1 John 1:1). This is the point of reference to which the church must always return, because only by so doing can it gain insight into the heart of the initial apostolic experience, a precious

⁴⁷⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 205.

⁴⁷⁹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 205-206.

⁴⁸⁰J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 190-191.

⁴⁸¹Bria affirms that the emerging of Orthodox local churches in diaspora changed the traditional understanding of *pleroma*. Consequently, the deconstruction of Byzantine universalism has to coincide with the reconstruction of the new model of Tradition which, according to Bria, has to be polyphonic, that is, it has to reflect the variety of local traditions. I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 94-95.

⁴⁸²See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 171-208; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 205-207, 212, 233-244; J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity; 'Tradition and Traditions'*, in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, VI (1962), 118-127; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 105-113.

treasure which must be preserved, repeated and renewed. The history of the church is determined by a constant need to be consistent with its origin.⁴⁸³

The return to the origin does not mean enslavement to the past but a rediscovery of the apostolic model of relation between revelation and deification, thus placing Tradition into its original context. This brings us to the next aspect which concerns the relation between Tradition and freedom.

Ware affirms that fidelity to the past is not 'a barren "theology of repetition"' or a mechanical process of handing down what has been received, but a dynamic and living experience of the Holy Spirit in the present.⁴⁸⁴ As we have seen, however, whilst adopting such a 'theology of repetition' when the Byzantine tradition was crystallized, the Orthodox Church underwent a long period of theological stagnation.⁴⁸⁵ The negative impact of theological stagnation on deification is presented by Karmiris as follows:

Without a flourishing theology, it cannot be a Church that is worthy and capable of accomplishing its task of salvation among the Orthodox people, of beneficially influencing their development, and of retaining its rightful place among the other Christian churches.⁴⁸⁶

Consequently, in its progress towards eschatological self-realization, the Church depends on theological growth. Yet in order to experience such growth the Church has to restore the right balance between *episteme* and *praxis* within ecclesial community. As we have seen, such balance requires space between the Apostolic and ecclesial traditions. Whilst this issue has been addressed in the twentieth century by amongst others, Popescu, Konstantinidis, Ware, Clapsis, Meyendorff, Florovsky, Bria and Zizioulas, they disagree concerning the mode in which such space should be constructed. Popescu, for instance, identified the Apostolic Tradition with Scripture and consequently argued that Scripture alone represents the final authority for faith and conduct. However, due to the fact that he totally rejected the value of ecclesiastical tradition for theological epistemology and ecclesiastical practice, Popescu failed to offer space for both relatedness and critical reflection concerning the relation between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions. On the other hand, whilst Konstantinidis, Archbishop Michael, Ware, Meyendorff, Clapsis, Florovsky and Zizioulas advocate a patristic synthesis between Scripture and Tradition, they have difficulties in establishing both the content of the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and the space necessary for a critical evaluation of the relation between them. In an attempt to reconcile the two trends, Bria advocates the Church's return to its initial tradition whilst maintaining *consensus ecclesiae* as the criterion of truth. While this approach offers more space to both Scripture and ecclesiastical tradition, it also fails to establish a clear distinction between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions. Additionally, *consensus ecclesiae* is more a mystical than historical criterion

⁴⁸³I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 62.

⁴⁸⁴T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 206.

⁴⁸⁵See K. Ware, 'A Note on Theology', pp. 307-309.

⁴⁸⁶I.N. Karmiris, 'Contemporary Orthodox Theology and Its Task', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, XIII (1969), p. 12.

of truth. However, despite these problems, an important step has been made in acknowledging the need to create space for both a critical evaluation of the past and for further development of theological reflection. As Florovsky puts it:

...loyalty to tradition means not only *concord* with the past, but, in a certain sense, *freedom from the past*, as from outward formal criterion. Tradition is not only a protective, conservative principle; it is, primarily, the principle of growth and regeneration.⁴⁸⁷

Thus the authority of Tradition is understood not in terms of *specific authority* or *potentia*, but in terms of *enabling* authority, that is, to help the ecclesial community to attain *theosis*.

⁴⁸⁷G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 47.

Section III

Church and Authority

Chapter 1

Introduction

As the twentieth century began, each of the major churches of the divided Christendom was obliged, for reasons of its own, to address anew the doctrine of the church—its place in the mind of Christ, its essential message, its nature and identity, its mark of continuity, its authority and structure...¹

While the doctrine of the church has been part of the Christian confession ever since the Apostle's Creed,² ecclesiology as a doctrine has developed sporadically within the history of Christianity.³ It is the particular mark of the twentieth century to be called the century of ecclesiology: practically speaking, the doctrine of the church has become the *leitmotif* of this age.⁴ It appears, however, that three prominent factors have influenced the development of the doctrine of the church during this period: ecumenism, modernism and internal dynamic.

Firstly, the shift from an ecclesiology of expansion (mission) in which emphasis was laid upon denominationalism and distinctiveness⁵ towards

¹J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, vol. 5, in *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, (Paperback edition), 1991, p. 282

²'I believe in the Holy Church'. See J.H. Leith ed., *Creeds*, pp. 22-25.

³The initial credal formula 'I believe in the Holy Church' had been expanded into 'I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church' and formed the underlying ecclesiological foundations during the Patristic period. The later episodic development includes the issue of baptism of heretics, the authority of the bishops and patriarch and the schism between East and West in 1054. It was during the Protestant Reformation that the doctrine of the church became the subject of explicit theological concern, but during the following centuries (seventeenth and eighteenth) ecclesiology became relatively peripheral, with the exceptions of the vigorous debates generated by Jansenism, Puritanism and Pietism. The doctrine of the church, however, reawakened in the nineteenth century as a result of the emergence of the strong theological schools of Russian Orthodoxy (Khomiakov, Soloviev), the Tübingen school in German Catholicism (Mohler), German Lutheranism (W. Loehe), the Anglican Oxford Movement (H. Newman) and the Mercersburg theology in the Reformed Church of America (Schaff). See J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, p. 289.

⁴J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, p. 289.

⁵See H. Küng, 'A New Basic Model for Theology: Divergences and Convergences', in H. Küng and D. Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change in Theology*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1989, pp. 450ff; A.M. Allchin, *Participation in God*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 1988, p. 25.

an ecclesiology of integration and interdenominational cooperation represents, without doubt, one of the greatest achievements of the ecumenical movement ever since Edinburgh 1910 (Faith and Order) and Stockholm 1925 (Life and Work).⁶ However, since the ecumenical movement had to also address those issues that caused division within the Church, the initial quest for unity often took the form of apologetic debates. Consequently, each tradition (church) appealed to the past in order to legitimize its present, and eventually, to offer its own model as a valid solution to the quest for the unity of the Church.⁷ Whilst the intended unity is far from being realised, the ecumenical movement has been effective both in creating a platform for dialogue and in stimulating theological clarification and rapprochements between different traditions within Christendom. However, the crux of the ecumenical dialogue appears to be the question of authority.⁸

Secondly, the Church has also been confronted by Modernism, a confrontation which, among other things has questioned both the Church's claim to possess the truth⁹ and its role within society.¹⁰ Consequently the Church came under the close scrutiny of this secular society; its teachings were subjected to the same criteria of truth that operate in the scientific world.¹¹ In particular, the development of the social sciences, the rise of Rationalism and literary and historical criticism have forced the Church to

⁶See W. Walker eds., *A History*, pp. 686-694.

⁷The recapitulation of the entire doctrinal tradition from the preceding centuries became a priority task for each major church in the attempt to prove its continuity with the apostolic Church. Therefore the criteria of apostolic continuity have been reanalysed under the heading: Apostolic Scriptures, Apostolic Tradition and Apostolic Office. See J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, pp. 282-283. D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 221; C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1978, p. 9; R. Rouse and S.C. Neill, eds., *History of the Ecumenical Movement (1517-1948)*, vol. 1; H.E. Fey, ed., *A History of Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 2.

⁸Konstantinidis affirms that 'it is well known that from the Orthodox point of view the question of authority in the Church is not only considered as an absolutely critical point of dialogue, but it also stands out as a condition of entering into theological dialogue with them [Catholics and Protestants]' (C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', in T.F. Torrance, ed., *Theological Dialogue Between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, vol. 1, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1985, p. 74). See also Patriarch Pimen of Moscow, 'An Orthodox View of Contemporary Ecumenism', in C. Patelos ed., *The Orthodox Church*, p. 331).

⁹See M. Peterson, eds., *Reason and Religious Belief*, OUP, Oxford 1991; A. Plantinga and N. Wolterstorff, eds., *Faith and Rationality*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1983; J. Runzo, 'World Views and the Epistemic Foundation of Theism', in *Religious Studies*, 25 (1989), pp. 31-51.

¹⁰C.E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, p. 2. See also T.F. Torrance, *Belief in Science and in Christian Life: The Relevance of Michael Polanyi's Thought for Christian Faith and Life*, The Handel Press, Edinburgh, 1980.

¹¹A. Walker, *Enemy Territory: The Christian Struggle for the Modern World*, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1987, pp. 190-216.

formulate the essential meaning of the Christian Tradition and also its relation, whether positive or negative, to contemporary thought.¹²

Thirdly, the internal dynamics characterised by the emergence of separatist, reforming or renewal groups have influenced the doctrine of the church from yet another perspective: namely, the relevance of the Church's teachings and praxis for its own members.¹³

¹²The insights and the methods of the social sciences have been applied to the study of Christian communities and the findings of those studies have played a significant role in the reinterpretation of schism, the nature of the Church and the meaning of its unity. See H.R. Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry*, Doubleday, New York, 1956, pp. 17-27; *Christ and Culture*, New York, 1951; A. Walker, ed., *Different Gospels*, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1988, p. 4; P. Berger, *Facing up to Modernity*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1979.

¹³Within the Catholic Church the movements that emerged from the theological controversies over infallibility and authority are very significant. See H. Küng, *The Church-Maintained in Truth*, SCM Press, London, 1980, pp. 75-87. Within the Protestant churches the emergence of the conservative evangelical movement in the 1970s with its emphasis on the Bible, mission and evangelism reached a climax at the International Congress on World Evangelisation, Lausanne 1974. The Congress adopted the 'Lausanne Covenant' which affirms 'The divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written Word of God without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice' (J.D. Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, World Wide Publications, Minneapolis, 1975, pp. 3-9). The issues raised at Lausanne 1974 had a strong impact on the World Council of Churches because some of the latter's members were also involved at Lausanne. Subsequently the encounter between 'Conservative', 'Liberal' and 'Liberation' theologies took a more dynamic aspect. See D. McGavran, ed., *The Conciliar-Evangelical Debate: The Crucial Documents, 1964-1976*, South Pasadena, CA., 1977; C. R. Padilla, ed., *The New Face of Evangelism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant*, London, 1966. Another aspect of the dynamic of internal movements is the rapid growth of the Pentecostal denominations and the Charismatic Movement, which spread rapidly within Episcopal, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, Catholic and Presbyterian churches. See A.C. Piepkorn, *Profiles in Belief: The Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada*, vol. 3, San Francisco, 1979. Special attention was given to the place of worship in the life of the Church leading to the exploitation of the 'ways of worship' not only for ecumenical purposes but also for a redefinition of the Church as 'the worshipping community.' J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, p. 295. Within the Orthodox Church, besides the tension brought about by the Uniate Church, there are other separatist groups of the Old Believers in Russia (*popovtsi*, who accept priests but derive their own episcopate from a Greek bishop, and *bezpopovsti*, the 'priestless ones', who hold that apostasy has destroyed the orders of the Church and limit themselves to such rites that laymen could administer) and the Duckhobors (a variety of extreme groups, some of whom picked up pagan practices). Further, there were long lasting tensions between the 'Tichonite' Church in the USSR, which co-operated with the Communist régime, the Regenerated Church organized in opposition to the Patriarch Tikhon, and the Karlovici Synod in exile which did not recognise the hierarchical authority of either of these two churches in Russia. In addition, Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris broke off relations with Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow with the former becoming the exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the Russian Orthodox in Western Europe. In Greece the internal dynamic revolved around the 'Zoe' Brotherhood, which attempted to form an 'elite' of preachers for the Orthodox local Churches, and the movement that emerged from the ministry of Apostolos Makrakis, who was eventually condemned by the Holy Synod. See W.A. Visser' T Hooft, *Anglo-Catholicism and Orthodoxy*, Student Christian Movement, London, 1933, pp. 79-84; George A. Maloney, S.J., *A History of*

One particular aspect which has been challenged in this multi-faceted encounter between Christianity and the-above mentioned factors concerns the role of the Church in establishing a dynamic relation between *episteme* and *praxis*. In other words, if *episteme* is concerned with identifying the truth ('ultimate reality') and *praxis* with the way in which that truth becomes normative, *ecclesia* represents that community which, being more or less institutionalized, exercises authority in maintaining the balance between them. However, this raises the question concerning the Church's credentials to exercise such authority.

Whilst in the Western world it appears to be impossible to give a clear answer to this question due to the fact that the views of scholars vary not only from one tradition to another but even within the same tradition,¹⁴ the Orthodox Church claims to speak with one voice due to the fact that, regardless of 'temporal circumstances...Orthodox Christians live in the same ecclesial and spiritual worlds.'¹⁵ Thus, affirming the apostolicity of their Church,¹⁶ the Orthodox contend that the authority of the Church lies in its christological and pneumatological constitution, that is, in the Church being at the same time both the 'Body of Christ' and the 'Temple of the Spirit'.¹⁷ In other words, the Church's authority to maintain the balance between *episteme* and *praxis* is determined by the relations between Christ and the Church on the one hand, and between the Church and the Spirit on the other. Methodologically, these relations will be investigated from the perspective of space between the 'Head' and the 'Body', and between the 'Spirit' and the 'institution'. The mode in which this space is conceived can lead not only to relatedness and freedom between the divine and human spheres but also to separation or fusion. If the space is too big it leads to separation and the Church becomes only a social-historical institution, whereas if the space is too small it leads to merging and the Church running the risk of undertaking the prerogatives of Christ and the Spirit. This latter aspect has been particularly challenged within Romanian Orthodoxy by the emergence of 'The Lord's Army.' However, before we examine the contribution of 'The Lord's Army' to the understanding of Church authority, we will outline the christological and pneumatological implications of ecclesiastical authority.

Orthodox Theology Since 1453, pp. 56-87; 190-193; W. Walker, *A History*, pp. 677-678. Within the Orthodox Church in Romania there is a dynamic renewal group called 'The Lord's Army.' See P.I. David, *Călăuză*, pp. 165-186.

¹⁴See P. Hodgson and R. Williams, 'The Church', in P. Hodgson and R. King, eds., *Christian Theology*, pp. 223-246.

¹⁵T. Hopko, 'God and Gender: Articulating the Orthodox View.' in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 2-3 (1993), p. 141.

¹⁶'There can be only one Church founded by our Lord, and in that Church there can be but one single Faith. This one Church is the Orthodox Church; the one Faith is the whole Orthodox doctrine' (F. Gavin, *Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought*, Morehouse Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis., 1923, pp. 259-263).

¹⁷Zizioulas asserts that the Church is *in-stituted* by Christ and *con-stituted* by the Spirit. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 140.

Chapter 2

Orthodox Ecclesiology: The Nature of the Church

The Orthodox Church in all humility believes itself to be the 'one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church', of which the Creed speaks: such is the fundamental conviction which guides Orthodox in their relations with other Christians.¹⁸

Consequently the Orthodox Church attempts to demonstrate that its faith and practice express the infallible embodiment of the divine truth. As Bulgakov puts it: 'The Church, truth, infallibility, these are synonymous.'¹⁹ This brings us to the question of Orthodox ecclesiology.

2.1 Historical Background

Compared with the Western Church, the Eastern Church knows only relatively feeble development in ecclesiology.²⁰ Not only did the Greek Fathers and the Ecumenical Councils produce no systematic presentation of the doctrine of the church, but Zizioulas affirms that 'during the patristic period, there was scarcely mention of the being of the Church.'²¹ One implication of this fact, as Florovsky points out, is the impossibility of finding an Orthodox definition of the Church that could claim any doctrinal authority.²² Consequently, Jay asserts that the Church is 'a fact that is lived

¹⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 315.

¹⁹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 64.

²⁰Kelly is of the opinion that Eastern ecclesiology remained immature and archaic, having more a popular form. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, p. 401. See also V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 9-25; C.S. Calian, *Icon and Pulpit*, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1968, p. 46.

²¹J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 15. This is one of the aspects that Harnack underlines pointing out that even John of Damascus in his treatise *On the Orthodox Faith* failed to develop an Eastern Orthodox ecclesiology. See A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 3, p. 235; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 79. In Greek Patristic literature, there are, however, writings that use a language of imagery to describe the Church as a divine-human mystery. Among these are the 'Mystagogies' (mystical interpretations of the Church), commentaries on the liturgy and symbolical descriptions of different parts of the building. See Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*, PG 91, 658-718; I. Briia, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 1.

²²See G. Florovsky, *The Universal Church in God's Design*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1948, p. 43. This is not an exclusively Orthodox problem because, generally speaking, there are disagreements among theologians from different backgrounds concerning the possibility of an adequate definition of the Church. The discussion revolves very much around the issue of whether a being with both 'natural' and 'supernatural' essence can be properly expressed in words. See Y. Congar, 'The Church: The People of God' in *Concilium* 1 (1965), pp. 1, 7-19; A. Dulles, *Models of the Church: A Critical Assessment of the Church in All Its Aspects*, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, 1976, pp. 14-15; M.D. Koster, 'Ekklesiologie

rather than theologized or dogmatized.²³ Similarly, Bulgakov affirms that one recognizes the Church not by definition but by experience.²⁴

However, in the last few decades of the twentieth century a large number of books have been published which illustrate the emergence of a vigorous theology of the church within Orthodoxy. Three major trends are particularly influential. Firstly, there is a trend which attempts to establish the identity of Orthodox ecclesiology in contrast to Catholicism and Protestantism.²⁵ Consequently it emphasises certain distinctive features of Orthodoxy, including iconography, the transfiguration of creation, a spirituality of *kenosis* and *theosis*, a personalist view of society and the ecclesiology of *sobornost*.²⁶ Secondly, there is another movement which explores both the internal and external factors which have generated the contemporary crisis of the Orthodox Church.²⁷ The third group emphasises the role of trinitarian theology as the ground for a new approach to the ontology of the Church. The contribution of this group to contemporary theology, particularly its role in the shift from a christological to a trinitarian ecclesiology,²⁸ is openly

im Werden', in *Volk Gottes im Werden: Gesammelte Studien*, Eds. H.-D. Langer and O.H. Pesch, Mainz, 1971, pp. 245-253.

²³Orthodox writers have produced nothing comparable with the ecclesiological treatises of the Western theologians. It is interesting to observe that John Damascene in his treatise *On the Orthodox Faith* has no chapter on the Church. See Y. Congar, *L'Ecclesologie du haut Moyen-Age*, Les Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1968, pp. 324-325; E.G. Jay, *The Church: Its Changing Image Through Twenty Centuries*, vol. 1, SPCK, London, 1977, p. 148.

²⁴S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 3; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 79; V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 174-175; B. Hagglund, *History of Theology*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Luis, 1966, pp. 107-108.

²⁵Some of the best known approaches to Orthodox ecclesiology include: the 'ecclesiology of Sobornost' of Bulgakov, Zernov, Florovsky and Staniloae; the 'eucharistic ecclesiology' of AfanasiEFF and Zizioulas; the 'pneumatological ecclesiology' of Nissiotis and the 'ecclesiology of communion' of Clement. See I. Bria, 'Living in the One Tradition', in *The Ecumenical Review*, 26:2 (April 1974), pp. 224-233; V.T. Istavridis, 'The Orthodox Churches in the Ecumenical Movement, 1948-1968' in H.E. Fey, ed., *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol 2, SPCK, London 1970, pp. 287- 309; *The Orthodox Church and the Churches of the Reformation*, WCC, Geneva, 1975; M. Asad, ed., 'Tradition and Renewal in Orthodox Education' (consultation report published by the WCC, 1977); C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement: Documents and Statements 1902-1975*, WCC, Geneva, 1978; G. Tsetsis. ed., *An Orthodox Approach to Diakonia*, WCC, Geneva, 1978; *Orthodox Thought: Reports of Orthodox Consultations Organized by the WCC, 1975-1982*, WCC, Geneva, 1983; I. Bria, ed., *Go Forth in Peace: Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, WCC, Geneva, 1986; O. Clement, *Deux Passeurs: Vladimir Lossky et Paul Evdokimov*, Labour et Fides, Geneva, 1985; G. Limouris, ed., *Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation: Orthodox Insight*, WCC, Geneva, 1990; *Icons: Windows on Eternity*, WCC, Geneva, 1990.

²⁶I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 2.

²⁷Bria points toward a more critical attitude undertaken at several theological centres, including Thessaloniky (Greece), Holy Cross (Brooklyn, Massachusetts, USA), St. Vladimir (New York) and New Valamo (Finland). See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 2.

²⁸The renewed interest in Trinitarian theology has been observed among all the major churches during the first part of the twentieth century: Protestant, K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1975 (first ed. 1932), vol 1, Part 1, Ch.2; Catholic, K. Rahner, *The Trinity*, London, Burns and Oates, 1970; Orthodox, V. Lossky, *The*

acknowledged by Western scholars.²⁹ However, it has to be pointed out that the simple rediscovery of the doctrine of Trinity does not in itself resolve the problem of ecclesiology. C.E. Gunton, for instance, argues that the Eastern Fathers failed to carry through their theology of the Trinity by developing a theology of community, conforming instead 'their views to those of the world around, with baneful consequences.'³⁰ Similarly, Nissiotis affirms that the Orthodox tradition has 'excellent theological models of a very profound ecclesiology but fails to use them, fails to put them to work.'³¹

In conclusion, one can observe that within traditional Orthodoxy there is neither an 'officially accepted' definition of the Church nor a universally accepted ecclesiological model. Therefore this section interacts with those views and authors that are relevant for the Romanian Orthodox approach.

2.2 A Theandric Being-The Body of Christ

2.2.1 Description: Orthodox theologians underline the fact that the Church is not a purely 'earthly' institution to be studied as a social group, or as a simple historical reality.³² Rather it is a 'human-divine' being which,

Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, James Clarke, London 1957. More recently there have been treatises representing the trinitarian theologies of the main churches of Christendom: Roman Catholic, W. Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ*, SCM Press, London, 1984; W.J. Hill, *The Three-Personed God: The Trinity as the Mystery of Salvation*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, 1982; Orthodox, J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 1985; Lutheran, R.W. Jenson, *The Triune Identity*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1982; Reformed, J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, SCM Press, London, 1981; Anglican, D. Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, Duckworth, London, 1985.

²⁹See C.E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1990, p. 1-16. Following the decline of Augustinian theology, with all its implications for ecclesiology, many Western theologians have turned to the Greek patristic tradition, particularly to their doctrine of the Trinity. See C.E. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today. A Study of Continuities in Christology*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1983, pp. 1-8; 'The Church on Earth: The Roots of Community', in C.E. Gunton and D.W. Hardy, eds., *On Being the Church*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1989, pp. 48-81.

³⁰See C.E. Gunton 'The Church on Earth', pp. 50-53. There are aspects of Orthodox ecclesiology which reflect non-Christian ontologies. C.E. Gunton mentions two such rival ontologies that filled the vacuum created by the failure of the Church to implement into its ecclesiology the doctrine of the Trinity: the first is the Neo-Platonic doctrine of reality as graded hierarchy, and the second is the legal-political approach introduced mainly by Cyprian.

³¹N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Theology of the Church and Its Accomplishment', in *The Ecumenical Review*, 29, 1, (1977) pp. 63-76 (here 75).

³²Orthodox scholars reject the idea of the Church as a 'perfect society' developed since the Middle Ages, especially by the Roman Catholic Church. Thus Bellarmine affirms that the Church is a society 'as visible and palpable as the community of the Roman people, or the Kingdom of France, or the Republic of Venice.' See Robert Bellarmine, *De controversiis*, tom. 2, liber 3, *De ecclesia militante*, cap. 2, Giuliano, Naples, 1857, vol.2, p. 75; B.C. Butler, *The Idea of the Church*, Newman, Westminster, Md., 1962, p. 39.

although not exactly definable, nevertheless can be described.³³ In the Byzantine tradition, for instance, the Church is:

...a sacramental communion with God in Christ and the Spirit, whose membership-the entire Body of Christ-is not limited to the earthly *oikoumene* ("inhabited earth") where law governs society, but includes the host of angels and saints, as well as the divine head.³⁴

This sacramental communion, affirms Bulgakov, has a visible part and an invisible one: the visible part is the historical church whereas the invisible is the universal church.³⁵ Alternatively, other Orthodox scholars reject this combination of Roman Catholic and Neo-Platonic categories³⁶ and print out that there is but one Church, visible and invisible. The distinction is made simply from a human point of view.

The Church, the Body of Christ, manifests forth and fulfills itself in time, without changing its essential unity or inward life of grace. And therefore, when we speak of 'the Church visible and invisible', we so speak only in relation to man.³⁷

Whilst avoiding a dualistic image, this view 'spiritualizes' the Church as a changeless being³⁸ thus running the 'danger of historically disincarnating the Church.'³⁹ Other Orthodox scholars, however, argue that a correct

³³V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 174-175. If the Church is a *theandric* being, the epistemic approach has to be appropriate for this task. The approach that seems to receive wide support among theologians is the method of analogy (images) and description. It appears that the idea of some kind of description of the Church that would lay down foundations for further reflection on the Church is gaining more and more support with scholars. Among the metaphors taken into account 'the People of God', 'the Body of Christ', 'the Mystical Body of Christ' and 'the Bride' are further explored. See H. Rikhof, *The Concept of Church*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1981, p. 220.

³⁴J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 79.

³⁵S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 5-6.

³⁶This approach goes back to Clement of Alexandria and Origen who distinguished between the 'church on earth' (historical, empirical, observable) and the 'church on high' (the mystical, spiritual body of Christ which exists in heaven), and which was theologically developed by Augustine who described the *visible* and *invisible* church. See Origen, *On First Principles*, Preface, 2, G.W. Butterworth, ed., Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1936, pp. XL, XLI; *Hom. on Ex.* 9,3; *PG*, 12, 297-396; *Hom. on Jeremiah* 20,3; *PG*, 13, 255-606; Augustine, *On Baptism* 3,18,26 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. IV, pp. 443-444; *City of God* 10,6 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. II, pp. 183-184; *On Rebuke and Grace*, 9;22 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. V, pp. 474, 480; *On the Gift of Perseverance* 2 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. V, pp. 525-552. Bulgakov is of the opinion that the Church existed even in Paradise, before the Fall, and it continues to exist throughout the Old Testament and even in the darkness of paganism as a 'pagan sterile church'. S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 5-7. For a comparison with Origen's Platonism, see W.H.C. Friend, *The Rise of Christianity*, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1984, pp. 376-384; G. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology*, pp. 62-65; T. Hopko, 'Foreword', in S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. XII.

³⁷A. Khomiakov, *The Church is One*, section I. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 247.

³⁸Cyril of Alexandria, *In Isaiam* V.I,52.

³⁹J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 20.

approach to ecclesiology has to include both the mystical and historical aspects of the Church, as well as establishing the link between them.⁴⁰

2.2.2 The Body of Christ: The key towards an understanding of the Orthodox view of the Church is the synergistic concept 'divine-human', or 'theandric', developed by analogy with the Christological definition of Chalcedon.⁴¹ The Church, as a divine-human being, belongs to the history of salvation as the fifth event after Christ's Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension into heaven.⁴² Therefore the Orthodox speak about the Church as the body of Christ.⁴³ As Staniloae puts it: 'the Church is Christ, understood as Christ extended into humanity.'⁴⁴ This thought is deeply rooted in patristic tradition, especially in the writings of Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine and Anastasius of Antioch.⁴⁵

(God) assumed our whole race in a single individual, having become the first-fruits of our nature....For his purpose was to raise up in its totality what has fallen. Now what had fallen was our whole human race. Therefore he mingled himself completely with Adam, Life itself with the dead, in order to save him. He penetrated into the totality of him to whom he was united, like the soul of the great body, vivifying it throughout, communicating life to it wholly in all its perceptive faculties. This is why mankind is called 'the body of Christ and his members in particular' (1 Cor. 12:27)-the body of the Christ who both diffuses himself equally in all together, and dwells individually in each one according to the measure of his faith.⁴⁶

Between Christ and the Church there is the closest possible bond; Christ 'mingled' himself totally with men in so far that it is impossible to distinguish between them. In fact Andruţos affirms that the Church is 'the centre and the organ of Christ's redeeming work;...it is nothing else than the continuation and extension of His prophetic, priestly, and kingly power.... The Church and its Founder are inextricably bound together.... The Church is Christ with us.'⁴⁷ And as such, continues Andruţos, the Church has the same authority as its Founder.⁴⁸ Moreover, founded upon the mystery of God

⁴⁰See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 80; I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 42.

⁴¹See J. Breck, 'Reflection on the 'Problem' of Chalcedonian Christology', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 33 (1989), pp. 147-157; A.T. Hanson, 'Two Consciousness: The Modern Version of Chalcedon', in *SJT*, vol 37, pp. 471-483; G. Havrilak, 'Chalcedon and Orthodoxy: Christology Today', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 33 (1989), pp. 127-145; J. Moulder, 'Is Chalcedonian Christology Coherent?', in *Modern Theology*, 2:4 (July 1986), pp. 285-305; W. Walker, eds, *A History*, pp. 162-172; P. Gregorios, eds., *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite? Toward Convergence in Orthodox Christology*, WCC, Geneva, 1981.

⁴²D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, vol 2, p. 195.

⁴³E.G. Jay, *The Church*, p. 150.

⁴⁴D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 2, pp. 208-209.

⁴⁵E.G. Jay, *The Church*, p. 150.

⁴⁶Anastasius of Antioch (d. 599), *De nostris dogmatibus veritatis, Oratio III*; PG, 98, 383f.

⁴⁷C. Andruţos, *Dogmatic Theology*, Athens, 1907, pp. 262-265. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 245.

⁴⁸H. Andruţos, *Simbolica*, (Tr. I. Moisescu), Editura Centrului Mitropolitan al Olteniei, Craiova, 1955, p. 66.

Himself, and God's being as communion, the Church is also a reflection of the Holy Trinity and the life of God, which is love and communion.⁴⁹ Communicated to the Church through the work of the Son and the Spirit,⁵⁰ God's love expands to the entire creation in order to bring it to communion with God.⁵¹ In other words, the Church is also the organ of the Holy Spirit in mediating the saving energies of Christ, that is, in leading the whole creation to *theosis*.⁵²

Orthodoxy regards *theosis*⁵³ as being first and foremost the result of the work of the Holy Spirit. Lossky writes, 'The Son has become like us by the incarnation; we become like Him by deification, by partaking of the divinity of the Holy Spirit.'⁵⁴ Similarly, Stavropoulos affirms that *theosis* is offered by Christ, but realised only through the Holy Spirit: 'Only in the Holy Spirit will we reach the point of becoming gods, the likeness of God'.⁵⁵ In other words, Christ has achieved our salvation and deification in an objective way whilst the Spirit applies it in a subjective way through the agency of the

⁴⁹A. Keshishian, 'The Assembly Theme: More Orthodox Perspectives' in *The Ecumenical Review*, 3-4 (July-October, 1990), p. 197; Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'East Meets West', p. 9.

⁵⁰Lossky argues that this love is communicated to the Church through the 'two economies' of the Son and the Spirit. The economy of the Son achieves salvation (or redemption) in our nature, whereas the economy of the Spirit brings deification (*theosis*) to our person. See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 174-195. Zizioulas criticizes Lossky's sharp distinction between the 'two economies' and proposes a new synthesis between christology and pneumatology. Accordingly, 'the economy...insofar as it assumed history and has history, is *only one* and that is the *Christ event*' (Z. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 130). The work of the Holy Spirit is just the opposite: 'The Spirit is *beyond* history, and when he acts in history he does so in order to bring into history the last days, the eschaton' (J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 130). In other words, Christ is the One who *institutes* the Church, whereas the Spirit is the One who *constitutes* the Church as a *communion* and an *eschatological community*. See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 140.

⁵¹The Orthodox Church follows the patristic trinitarian view according to which the Father is the 'primordial cause' of creation, the Son is the 'creative cause' and the Holy Spirit is the 'perfecting cause' of creation. In other words, the world is created and destined for to the life of *theosis*, that is life in communion with God. See Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'East Meets West', p. 6.

⁵²Mediating salvation to the world on behalf of its founder, Christ, the church sanctifies and transfigures the world, leading it to a life of *theosis* in communion with God, and leading it to God's holy kingdom, of which the church is a partial manifestation, epiphany, and inauguration' (Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'Orthodox Soteriology', in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias, eds., *Salvation in Christ: A Lutheran-Orthodox Dialogue*, Augsburg Fortress, Minnesota, 1992, p. 52).

⁵³'God became man so that man might become God.' Athanasius *De Incarnatione* 54. For a clear account of the doctrine of *theosis* in its Eastern Orthodox form, see G.I. Mantzaridis, *The Deification of Man: St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Tradition*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1984.

⁵⁴V. Lossky, *In the Image*, p. 109.

⁵⁵Archimandrite Christophoros Stavropoulos, *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, (Tr. S. Harakas), Light and Life Publishing Co., Minneapolis, 1976, p. 29.

Church to our persons.⁵⁶ However, Meyendorff argues that 'it is not the Church which through the medium of its institutions, bestows the Holy Spirit, but it is the Spirit which validates every aspect of the Church's life, including the institutions.'⁵⁷ Thus, one can be confident that one does receive grace by means of the sacrament, precisely because it is through the Church that the Spirit works.

The Church is God's temple, a sacred enclosure, a house of prayer, a gathering of the People, body of Christ, his Name, Bride of Christ, which calls the people to penitence and prayer; purified by the water of holy baptism and washed by his precious blood, adorned as a bride and sealed with the ointments of the Holy Spirit...The Church is an earthly heaven wherein the heavenly God dwells and walks; it is an anti-type of the crucifixion, the burial and the resurrection of Christ...The Church is a divine house where the mystical living sacrifice is celebrated... and its precious stones are the divine dogmas taught by the Lord to his disciples.⁵⁸

However, since the Church is a divine-human being, the question which arises concerns not only the link between these two aspects but also the distinction between them. In other words, can one predicate to the human aspect of the Church whatever is true about its divine element? These aspects will be analysed in the following methodological, theological and sociological observations.

2.3 Observations

2.3.1 Methodological: The first observation related to Orthodox ecclesiology refers to the use of images in order both to safeguard the mystical character of the Church and to rule out any tendency to reduce it to a simple historical institution.⁵⁹ However, due to the fact that little has been done by Orthodox scholars⁶⁰ in the area of hermeneutics⁶¹ in general and linguistics in particular,⁶² the critical reflection that leads to a more

⁵⁶Bishop Maximos Aghiourgousis, 'Orthodox Soteriology' in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias, eds., *Salvation in Christ*, p. 48.

⁵⁷J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 28.

⁵⁸*Historia ekklesiastike kai mystike theoria*, (Intro.), a work attributed to Germanus (634-733), Patriarch of Constantinople, in PG 98, 383f. See also D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 2, p. 208.

⁵⁹A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 16.

⁶⁰See 'Consultation on 'Education in the Orthodox Church,' Utrecht, Holland, 1972, in C. Patelos ed., *Orthodox Church*, pp. 101-102; H.S. Alivistos, 'Orthodoxy, Protestantism and the World Council of Churches', in C. Patelos, ed., *Orthodox Church*, pp. 199-208.

⁶¹Bria argues that one of the reasons why the Orthodox Church feels marginalized within the WCC is the fact that the Orthodox members are not familiar with the theological framework and methodology used by the WCC. See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 46.

⁶²In recent years some Orthodox authors have tried to overcome this problem. See C. Scouteris, 'Image, Symbol and Language in Relation to the Holy Trinity', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 36:3 (1992), pp. 257-267.

accurate discrimination between a valid and invalid application of images⁶³ is, to a large degree, absent from Orthodox writings.⁶⁴ Thus, whilst the New Testament contains, for example, dozens of images of the Church⁶⁵ (such as the bride of Christ, a building, a plant, a priesthood, a race, a temple, the people of God, etc.), it appears that Orthodox ecclesiology prefers the figure of the Church as the body of Christ. Paradoxically, however, the concept of 'the body of Christ' has not been carefully studied from an exegetical point of view within the Orthodox tradition.⁶⁶ Ware, for example, speaks in one place

⁶³See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 20; W.G. Jeanrond, *Text and Interpretation as Categories of Theological Thinking*, (Tr. T. Wilson), Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1988.

⁶⁴There are recent attempts amongst Orthodox theologians to give more careful reflection to the use of images in Orthodox theology. See S.A. Harvey, 'Feminine Imagery for the Divine: the Holy Spirit, the Odes of Solomon, and Early Syriac Tradition', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 2-3 (1993), pp. 111-140; T. Hopko, 'God and Gender: Articulating the Orthodox View', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 2-3 (1993), pp. 141-182; V. Harrison, 'The Fatherhood of God in Orthodox Theology', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 2-3 (1993), pp. 183-212.

⁶⁵P. Minear lists some ninety-six such images. See P. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1960.

⁶⁶For Paul the figure 'the body of Christ' seems to be at the root of his Christology. Thus for him the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ were not merely historical events but also cosmic events. Consequently, Christ's disciples must suffer with Christ, die with Christ (in baptism) and rise with Christ in order to reproduce in some sense Christ's life in their life. Using the figure 'the body of Christ' or 'members of his body', the Apostle Paul described the Christian as someone who is 'in Christ.' Bultmann calls the phrase 'the body of Christ' 'an ecclesiological formula.' Both Bultmann and Kummel believe that the concept of dying and rising with Christ was borrowed by the early Christians from the mystery religions. Moreover, Bultmann compares 1 Corinthians and Romans, where Paul uses the figure 'the body of Christ' to refer to the whole body, with Colossians and Ephesians, where Christ is the head and the Church is only the body. See R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, SCM Press, London, vol I, 1952, pp. 192, 302-308; W.G. Kummel, *Theology of the New Testament*, SCM Press, London, 1974, p. 210. Richardson argues that this thought might have come to Paul from the apocalyptic tradition of Judaism and expressed Paul's conception of the Church as the newly created humanity in Christ from an eschatological perspective. See A. Richardson, *Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament*, SCM Press, London, 1958, pp. 286-290. There is, however, another tradition of exegesis that takes the concept of the Church as 'the body of Christ' in a literal sense. According to this tradition Christians 'are members of that body which was nailed to the cross, laid in the tomb, and raised to life on the third day.' See L. Thornton, *Common Life in the Body of Christ*, Dacre Press, 1941, p. 298; E. Mersch, *The Whole Christ*, Dobson Books, 1949. Further, Robinson argues that the members of the Church literally constitute Christ's risen body. See J.A.T. Robinson, *The Body*, SCM Press, London, 1952. Ridderbos refutes this theory by pointing out that in this case it was the Church who appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road. Further, to Richardson's point that in 1 Cor. 10:16-17 the bread is made the body of Christ, which we eat and so become the body of Christ, Ridderbos replied that: (1) 'body' and 'blood' in this text are not a general description of Christ but indicate his sacrificial death and our share in that death by eating and drinking; (2) the Church cannot be identified with the sacrificial death of Christ, but the unity of the Church is manifested in sharing in eating and drinking; (3) the concept 'body of Christ' must be regarded as a metaphor; (4) both sacraments represent the unity achieved by Christ's death. Moreover, the metaphor must not be pressed in Col. 2:19 and Eph. 4:15-16 because 'Christ cannot be thought of as a subordinate part of his own body which is involved in the process of growth towards

about the 'body of Christ' in two different senses: firstly, the eucharistic body of Christ, and secondly, the Church as the body of Christ.⁶⁷ The relation between the two is a causal one: '*Because we eat from the one loaf, therefore we are made one body in Christ.*'⁶⁸ In order to support his view, Ware quotes from G. Galitis:

...communion...makes us according to Paul one body, the Body of Christ. And this Body of Christ...is the Church. Consequently, participating in the Body of Christ, that is in the Church, and partaking of...the Body of Christ through the Eucharist are two ways of same thing...Thus the Eucharist is the *Sacrament of the Church itself*. It is through this Sacrament that the Church realizes itself, that the Body of Christ is built and held together.⁶⁹

However, if the eucharistic body of Christ and the ecclesial body of Christ are one and the same thing, then the logic of the discourse is absurd. The Church eats the Church in order to build up the Church. Elsewhere, Ware makes an attempt to distinguish between the three senses of the concept 'body of Christ': incarnated Christ, the ecclesial body of Christ and the eucharistic body of Christ. First, the distinction between the incarnated Christ and the ecclesial body of Christ:

The dogma of Chalcedon must be applied to the Church as well as to Christ. Just as Christ the God-Man has two natures, divine and human, so in the Church there is a synergy or cooperation between the divine and the human. Yet between Christ's humanity and that of the Church there is this obvious difference, that the one is perfect and sinless, while the other is not yet fully so. Only a part of the humanity of the Church-the saints in heaven-has attained perfection, while here on earth the Church's members often misuse their freedom.⁷⁰

This explanation indeed attempts to differentiate between the incarnated Christ and the ecclesial Body of Christ. In order to defend his view that the Church is the body of Christ, Ware uses a Platonic image of the Church with two distinct entities: the invisible perfect and the visible imperfect. However, in reality Ware identifies the Church with its changeless nature:

...the sin of man cannot affect the essential nature of the Church. We must not say that because Christians on earth sin and are imperfect, therefore the Church sins and is imperfect; for the Church, even on earth, is a thing of heaven, and cannot sin. Saint Ephraim of Syria rightly spoke of 'the Church of the penitents, the Church of those who perish', but this Church is at the same time the icon of the Trinity. How is it that the members of the Church are sinners, and yet they belong to the communion of saints?⁷¹

adulthood, and which as part of the body must itself consequently be 'in Christ.'" See H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, SPCK, London, 1977, pp. 366-380.

⁶⁷K. Ware, 'Church and Eucharist, Communion and Intercommunion', in *Sobornost*, 7:7 (1978), 550-565 (here 555-556).

⁶⁸K. Ware, 'Church and Eucharist', p. 553.

⁶⁹G. Galitis, *The Problem of Intercommunion from an Orthodox Point of View: A Biblical and Ecclesiological Study*, Athens, 1968, pp. 14-16. Cf. K. Ware, 'Church and Eucharist', p. 553.

⁷⁰T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 248.

⁷¹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 248.

In order to answer this question, Ware quotes Meyendorff:

'The mystery of the Church consists in the very fact that *together* sinners become *something different* from what they are as individuals; this 'something different' is the Body of Christ.'⁷²

Consequently, in affirming that the nature of the Church is not affected by the life of its members, Ware and Meyendorff follow a Platonic approach in which the invisible essence of the Church subsists independently of its particular visible mode(s) of expression. The argument that in some mysterious way sinners *in communion* become saints suggests that the divine element 'so overwhelmed humanity that it became a mere cipher.'⁷³ As Bria argues:

The key issues facing Eastern Christianity today are linked with the tension between a defensive and magisterial way of presenting the church as a symbolic, mystical reality, and the history, life and mission of the concrete communities that form the visible church. We cannot idealize the church by ignoring the people who carry the burden of tradition in different situations. We must reflect on what people are actually doing to identify what is emerging in contemporary Christianity.⁷⁴

And further,

A deeper comprehension of holiness, repentance and sin in the institutional life of the church is needed. The view that the objective holiness of the church cannot be spoiled by the sin of Christians fails to take account of ambiguities in the life of the church-the sinful duality of human history.⁷⁵

However, the view that the Church is a perfect sinless being, totally separated from the sinful life of its members, still dominates Orthodox ecclesiology and constitutes the main argument for the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church.⁷⁶ As Meyendorff puts it:

...the mystery of the church consists precisely in the fact that sinners, coming together, form the *infallible Church*. They constitute the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Spirit, and the Column and Foundation of Truth. No analogy can possibly be drawn between individual member, who is a sinner, and the Church, the Body of Christ.⁷⁷

Secondly, the relation between the incarnated Christ and the eucharistic Body of Christ is described by Ware using the words of the Orthodox Liturgy:

⁷²J. Meyendorff, 'What Holds the Church Together', in *Ecumenical Review*, vol XII, 1960, p. 298. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 248-249. Similarly, in his *Catholicity and the Church*, Meyendorff affirms that 'she [the Church] is what the Holy Spirit makes her to be. In her being she is not man-made. Human beings and human communities can rebel against her, but they cannot change her being' (J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 10).

⁷³The position held by classic Apollinarianism. See C.E. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today*, p. 92.

⁷⁴I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 42.

⁷⁵I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 95.

⁷⁶See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 221.

⁷⁷J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 221.

'Thine of Thine own we offer to Thee, in all and for all.'⁷⁸ Ware interprets the line from the Liturgy as follows:

(1) We offer *Thine of Thine own*. At the Eucharist, the sacrifice offered is Christ himself, and it is Christ himself who in the Church performs the act of offering: he is both priest and victim. 'Thou thyself art He who offers and He who is offered.'⁷⁹

(2) We offer to Thee. The Eucharist is offered to God the Trinity-not just to the Father but also to the Holy Spirit and to Christ himself. Thus if we ask, what is the sacrifice of the Eucharist? *By whom* is it offered? *To whom* is it offered?-in each case the answer is Christ.

(3) We offer *for all*: according to Orthodox theology, the Eucharist is a propitiatory sacrifice offered on behalf of both the living and the dead.⁸⁰

In this explanation, however, there is no distinction between the incarnated Christ and the eucharistic Christ. Consequently, the discourse runs thus: Christ sacrifices Christ and offers himself to Christ. In addition, if we keep in mind that there is no distinction between the incarnated Christ and the ecclesial Body of Christ, then the discourse is even more confusing: Christ sacrifices Christ and offers it to Christ in order to be eaten by Christ.⁸¹ These methodological aspects have significant theological implications, to which we now turn.

2.3.2 Theological: Firstly, the theandric ecclesiology built around the analogy of the 'body' offers a model of union between God and man: Christ is the 'Head' and the Church is the 'Body'. Yet, in the absence of a clear distinction between Christ and the Church, the analogy of the body runs the risk of an 'ecclesio-Christo-monism.'⁸² In fact, Barth warns against such a risk when he writes: 'Even in its [the Church's] invisible essence it is not Christ nor a second Christ, nor a kind of extension of the one Christ.'⁸³

Consequently, the figure of the 'body' needs to be balanced by other images that convey clearly the idea of the *otherness* of the Creator in relation to the creation. For example, the Catholic Church since Vatican II has adopted the image of the 'People of God', which allows for a clearer distinction between the Church and its divine head.⁸⁴ Lossky himself tried to resolve this

⁷⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 292.

⁷⁹From the priest's prayer before the Great Entrance. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 293.

⁸⁰T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 293.

⁸¹More recently Zizioulas pointed out that the concept 'body of Christ' has been used in Christology (the historical Jesus), ecclesiology and the Eucharist without a clear distinction between them and also without any attempt to provide a synthesis. J. Zizioulas, 'Ecclesiology-The Mystical Body of Christ', paper presented at King's College, 16th February, 1993.

⁸²This tendency is clearly seen in the *Mystagogy* of Maximus the Confessor, when he asserts that in relation to God the universe is arranged in concentric circles about a centre which is occupied by the Church. See Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*, cap. II-IV; V; PG, 91, 658-718. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 178.

⁸³K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1962, vol IV/3ii, p. 754.

⁸⁴*Lumen gentium*, Art. 9.

problem when he turned toward the image of the 'bride.' Thus, he affirms that Christ is the head of the body in the same sense in which the husband is the head of a single unique body of the man and woman in marriage.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, Lossky realised that the union of a man and a woman in marriage implies two distinct persons (*prosopa* or *hypostases*). The problem, then, is to identify the hypostasis of the Church. Drawing on the patristic interpretation of the Song of Songs as referring to Christ and the Church, Lossky considers that the hypostasis of the Church can be neither the hypostasis of the Son nor of the Holy Spirit but only the hypostasis of the Mother of God.

Thus it would seem that until the consummation of the ages, until the resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgment, the Church will have no hypostasis of her own, no created hypostasis, no human person having attained to perfect union with God. And yet, to say this would be to fail to perceive the very heart of the Church, one of the most secret mysteries, her mystical centre, her perfection already realized in a human person fully united to God, finding herself beyond the resurrection and the judgment. This person is Mary, the Mother of God.... In two perfect persons—the divine person of Christ and the human person of the mother of God—is contained the mystery of the Church.⁸⁶

The 'spiritualised' hermeneutic of the Fathers⁸⁷ combined with Lossky's attempt to offer the Church a hypostatic identity, led to one of the most unfortunate conclusions reached by an Orthodox theologian. Besides the fact that Lossky personifies the Church as the hypostasis of Mary and thus transforms Mary into a kind of 'macro-anthropos', he also portrays the relation between Christ and his mother in concepts that resemble the story of Oedipus marrying his mother.⁸⁸

However, most Orthodox theologians accept the image of the 'body' without the necessary correctives for a balanced ecclesiology, and consequently divinise the Church. The Church is one organism with its head. In fact some theologians went as far as to speak about the Church as a new hypostatic union.⁸⁹ Elsewhere Lossky asserts:

Thus, all that can be asserted or denied about Christ can equally well be applied to the Church, inasmuch as it is a theandric organism, or more exactly, a created nature inseparably united to God in the hypostasis of the

⁸⁵V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 192.

⁸⁶V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 193-195.

⁸⁷See Cyril of Alexandria, *Hom. to Mary*, h,4; *PG*, 255-292; Ambrose, *On Virginitv*, 1,6,31, in *NPNF*, vol. X, p. 368; Augustine, *PL*, 38.1010.

⁸⁸Hopko asserts that there 'occurred in Orthodox Christian tradition, particularly in mystical contemplation and doxological poetry, a 'conflation' of the Holy Spirit, the Church and Mary in a complex of symbolism and images which manifest what may indeed in some sense appropriately be called the 'divine feminine' (T. Hopko, 'God and Gender', p. 158).

⁸⁹A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 51.

Son, a being that has-as He has-two natures, two wills and two operations which are at once inseparable and yet distinct.⁹⁰

This approach, however, fails to draw a distinction between the incarnated Christ and the ecclesial body of Christ.⁹¹ Moreover, it leads easily to the personification of the Church either as 'the Incarnation itself',⁹² or as a new hypostatic union.⁹³ Consequently the uniqueness of the historical Christ is endangered by this fusion between the incarnated Christ and the Church. Further, the divinization of the Church leads to a takeover by the 'body' of the attributes of its 'head.' Subilia points towards the shift from Christ to Church, from Apostles to bishops, from revelation to dogma:

The grand New Testament phrases, 'through Christ', 'in Christ', 'with Christ', 'in the sight of Christ' undergo a change from a Christological to ecclesiological reference, and take on the meaning, 'through the Church', 'in the Church', 'with the Church', 'in the sight of the Church.'⁹⁴

One other aspect of an ecclesiology construed by analogy to the body refers to the role of the Holy Spirit. In the absence of a clear distinction between Christ and the Church the Orthodox emphasis on pneumatological ecclesiology leads to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is the life-principle of the Church.⁹⁵ Bulgakov argues that:

The Church, in her quality of Body of Christ, which lives with the life of Christ, is by that fact the domain where the Holy Spirit lives and works. More: the Church is life by the Holy Spirit because it is the Body of Christ.⁹⁶

The risk of this approach lies in the fact that there is no space between the Holy Spirit and the institution in order to make possible a critical reflection upon the ministry of the Church.⁹⁷ Moreover, the Church is perceived as the only channel (or instrument) whereby the Spirit realises the relation between creation and deification.⁹⁸ Yet, whilst such an approach provides a theological framework for the relation between creation and new creation,⁹⁹

⁹⁰V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 187. 'The Church, in its Christological aspect, appears as an organism having two natures, two operations and two wills' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 186).

⁹¹Lossky speaks about the 'enhypostasized' union between Christ and the Church. See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 185.

⁹²See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 2.

⁹³V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 186-187.

⁹⁴V. Subilia, *The Problem of Catholicism*, SCM Press, London, 1964, p. 121.

⁹⁵See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 46.

⁹⁶S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 2.

⁹⁷The relation between the Spirit and institution will be analysed in the next chapter.

⁹⁸Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'Orthodox Soteriology', p. 48; G. Tsetsis, ed., *Orthodox Thought: Reports of Orthodox Consultations Organized by the WCC, 1975-1982*, WCC, Geneva, 1983, pp. 38ff; B. Bobrinskoy, 'The Holy Spirit-in the Bible and the Church', in *The Ecumenical Review*, 42, 34 (1990), pp.357-362.

⁹⁹J. Breck, 'Divine Initiative: Salvation in Orthodox Theology.' in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias, eds., *Salvation in Christ*, p. 118.

the absence of space between the Church and the Spirit leads to a realised eschatology.¹⁰⁰

2.3.3 Sociological: According to the Orthodox tradition the threefold office of Christ (Prophet, Priest and King) is continued by the Church.¹⁰¹ Scholars agree that in order to fulfill its role the Church has always had to have some forms of organizational features such as recognised ministers, accepted confessional formulas and prescribed forms of public worship.¹⁰² This is what is generally called the institutional aspect of the Church. However, historically speaking, this institutional aspect developed from a charismatic and diversified form into a more hierarchical model.¹⁰³ Thus the teaching, sanctifying and governing ministries of the Church became the [exclusive] prerogatives of the hierarchy being thus institutionalized.¹⁰⁴ Subsequently the Church developed the view that the institution is both sacred and the sphere of operation of the Spirit.

From the christological point of view, as the body of Christ and the grounds of organized sacramental life, the church is a sacred institution; from the pneumatological point of view, as the temple of the Spirit and the field where the Spirit of God operates, the Church is a continuous Pentecost...¹⁰⁵

Hence the conclusion that *Extra Ecclesia nulla salus*,¹⁰⁶ or, 'a man cannot have God as his Father if he does not have the Church as his Mother.'¹⁰⁷ Similarly, Florovsky asserts that 'outside the Church there is no salvation, because *salvation is the Church*.'¹⁰⁸ This view is supported by, among others, Pheidas who argues that the canonical limits of the Church coincide with its charismatic boundaries.¹⁰⁹ However, there are other Orthodox theologians, such as Zizioulas, Karmires and Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, who are in favour of a distinction between canonical limits and the

¹⁰⁰See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 219.

¹⁰¹Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'Orthodox Soteriology', pp. 44-45.

¹⁰²See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 32.

¹⁰³See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁰⁴See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 34-35. The difference between institution and institutionalism has been characterised by Bishop Emile De Smedt by three terms: clericalism, juridicism and triumphalism. Generally speaking, the Orthodox Church opted for a 'moderate institutionalism' and consequently its clericalism, juridicism and triumphalism are not as developed as in Roman Catholicism. See Bishop Emile De Schmedt of Bruges, in *Acta Concilii Vaticani II*, Vol 1, part 4, Typis Polyglottis, Vatican City, 1971, pp. 142-144.

¹⁰⁵Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'Orthodox Soteriology', p. 52.

¹⁰⁶Cyprian of Carthage, *Epist.* 71, 2 in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, pp. 257-259.

¹⁰⁷Cyprian of Carthage, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church*, 6, in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, p. 382.

¹⁰⁸G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: the Catholicity of the Church', in *The Church of God*, p. 53, Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 351.

¹⁰⁹V. Pheidas, 'The Limits of the Church'; paper presented at the Third International Theological Conference of the Orthodox Theological Schools, 1987, p. 14. Cf. E. Clapsis, 'Boundaries of the Church', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 35, 2 (1990), p. 120.

charismatic boundaries of the Church.¹¹⁰ Thus, whilst Orthodox theologians agree that the Orthodox Church is the only true Church¹¹¹ and that outside the Church there is no salvation, Ware asserts that there are disagreements among them concerning the situation of those who do not belong to their communion.¹¹² Firstly, there is a 'rigorous group' who hold that 'since Orthodoxy is the Church, anyone who is not an Orthodox cannot be a member of the Church.'¹¹³ This view seems to be consistent with the Orthodox teaching that *Extra Ecclesia nulla salus*, because the Church mediates the saving grace of Christ through the Holy Spirit. But once this view is accepted it leads to strong institutionalism, which implies that the work of the Holy Spirit is circumscribed to an institution. Second, the 'moderate group' holds that it is true to say that Orthodoxy is the Church but false to infer from this that those who are not Orthodox cannot possibly belong to the Church.¹¹⁴ This view allows for a little more space for the freedom of the Spirit, but it does not clarify the relations between the Spirit and the institution, between the believer and the institution, and between the believer and the Spirit. The clarification of these aspects would produce a significant shift in Orthodox theology. So far, the preparatory commission of the great and holy Council of the Orthodox Church has produced a document (1971) on *oikonomia* in the Orthodox Church, in which it affirms that 'the Holy Spirit acts upon other Christians in very many ways, depending on their degree of faith and hope.'¹¹⁵ However, Zizioulas believes that thus far Orthodox theology does not have a satisfactory solution to the problem of the limits of the Church and their implications for those individuals and communities who exist outside those limits.

...it is certainly not easy to exclude from the realm and the operation of the Spirit so many Christians who do not belong to the Orthodox Church. There are saints outside the Orthodox Church. How can we understand that theologically? How can we account for it without saying that the canonical limits of the Church are not important?¹¹⁶

The best way to describe this model would be 'open ended institutionalism', which without doubt renders a more favourable ecumenical rapprochement between different traditions. Furthermore, an institutionalized approach to ecclesiology promotes what can be called an 'institutionalized hermeneutic.' According to this approach the task of the theologian is 'to show how a doctrine defined by the Church is contained in the sources of Revelation.'¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰See E. Clapsis, 'Boundaries of the Church' pp. 117-120.

¹¹¹See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 1,9; E. Clapsis, 'Boundaries of the Church', p. 122.

¹¹²See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 315-316.

¹¹³T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 317.

¹¹⁴See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 316.

¹¹⁵*Toward the Great Council, Introductory Reports of the Inter-Orthodox Commission in Preparation for the Next Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church*, London, 1972, p. 45. Cf. E. Clapsis, 'Boundaries of the Church', p. 122.

¹¹⁶J. Zizioulas, 'Orthodox Ecclesiology and the Ecumenical Movement', in *Sourozh*, 21 (1985), 22-23.

¹¹⁷Pius XII, *Humanae Generis*, 1950, No. 36.

There is, however, a difference between the 'institutionalized hermeneutic' of an 'over-institutionalized' Church, as in Roman Catholicism, which tends to canonical formulation of its entire teaching inventory, and the 'moderate institutionalism' of the Orthodox Church, where the dogmas include only the major doctrines of the Church. Bulgakov affirms that the Orthodox Church has only a small number of dogmas that are absolutely binding for the whole church; the rest of its teaching are in the area of *theologumena* (theological opinions).¹¹⁸ However, Orthodox theologians do not speak with a single voice on this issue. Those who uphold the 'one-source' theory affirm that, strictly speaking, the minimum dogmatic teaching consists of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan symbol and the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils,¹¹⁹ whilst others who adhere to the 'two-source' theory argue that 'the dogmatic teaching of the Orthodox Catholic Church is identical with the teaching of the one, ancient and undivided Church, this teaching having been preserved integrally and without change over the centuries in Orthodoxy.'¹²⁰ And further, since the 'Orthodox dogma is the sum total of all the truth of Scripture and Tradition, all Orthodox doctrine is equally obligatory for all believers, as absolutely necessary for salvation.'¹²¹ Yet, in spite of these contradictions the Orthodox Church still considers that it contains the entire deposit of truth which is binding on all believers.¹²² In this context, Staniloae explains the task of the Orthodox theologian:

Thus Orthodox theology still remains faithful to the dogmatic formulations of the first centuries of the Church, while nevertheless making continuous progress in their interpretation and in the revelation of that ineffable mystery which they only suggest...Orthodox theology today understands that every dogmatic term and every combination of dogmatic terms indicates the boundaries and safeguards the depths of the mystery in the face of a one-sided and rationalist superficiality that seeks to dissolve it.¹²³

In other words, Orthodox theologians are free to find new meaning in old dogmas, but are not free to question or critique them. As long as theologians accept the binding character of the definitions of the councils, they are free to hold contradictory views on the meaning of these definitions. This is indeed one of the advantages of the 'moderate institutionalized hermeneutic', although any dogma that has unsatisfactory or contradictory explanations will lose its internal authority and subsequently rest upon the external authority of the office.

¹¹⁸See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 107-109

¹¹⁹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 100.

¹²⁰J. Karmiris, *A Synopsis of the Dogmatic Theology of the Orthodox Catholic Church*, (Tr. G. Dimopoulos), Christian Orthodox Edition, Scranton, PA, 1973, p. 1.

¹²¹J. Karmiris, *A Synopsis*, p. 2.

¹²²Stamoolis argues that some documents of the past are considered secondary simply because they were influenced to a certain degree by their particular historical setting and thus express the spirit of their own age. See J. Stamoolis, *Orthodox Mission*, p. 17. However, Gavin asserts: 'There can be only one Church founded by our Lord, and in that Church there can be but one single Faith. This one Church is the Orthodox Church; the one Faith is the whole Orthodox doctrine' (F. Gavin, *Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought*, pp. 259-263).

¹²³D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, p. 215.

2.4 The Spirit and the Institution

The view that the Church as *communion* is instituted by Christ and constituted by the Spirit has, according to Zizioulas, significant consequences for ecclesiology.

The 'institution' is something presented to us as a fact, more or less a *fait accompli*. As such, it is a provocation to our freedom. The 'con-stitution' is something that involves us in its very being, something that we accept freely, because we take part in its very emergence. Authority in the first case is something imposed on us, whereas in the latter it is something that springs from amongst us. If Pneumatology is assigned a constitutive role in ecclesiology, the entire issue of *Amt und Geist*, or of 'institutionalism', is affected. The notion of communion must be made to apply to the very ontology of the ecclesial institutions, not to their dynamism and efficacy alone.¹²⁴

However, Zizioulas affirms that the actual situation in Orthodoxy 'both theologically and canonically no longer does full justice to the tradition of which [his] exposé has been a reflection.'¹²⁵ Consequently, we turn now to examine the actual relation between the Spirit and the institution in contemporary Orthodoxy.

2.4.1 Charismatic Institution: Patterned after the monarchical model of the Trinity,¹²⁶ the Orthodox Church is a hierarchical Church.¹²⁷ As Hopko puts it: 'the church is rather a monarchical, patriarchal and hierarchical community in imitation of the Trinity.'¹²⁸ However, since this hierarchical structure of the Church is pneumatically constituted, Ware argues that it is not a dead institution but a charismatic body.¹²⁹ The bishop is not only appointed by God to be the *monarch* of his own diocese but he also receives a special *charisma* from the Holy Spirit to be the teacher of the faith and the president of the eucharistic assembly.¹³⁰ Moreover, since the Spirit is poured out on all God's people in baptism and chrismation, the lay state should be considered charismatic: 'a royal priesthood' which could be understood as ordination, although, only in a limited sense of the word.¹³¹ It follows, then, that within Orthodoxy the institutional and charismatic spheres are not in opposition but actually coincide. However, this raises the

¹²⁴J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 140.

¹²⁵J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 141.

¹²⁶Hopko argues that the interpersonal communion of the persons of the Holy Trinity is both ontologically and 'economically' ordered according to the *monarchy* of the Father. The communion of the three Persons of the Godhead is rooted not only in the consubstantiality of the three hypostases but basically in the Person of the one God and Father, the divine 'source' and 'cause' of the Word and the Spirit. However, the *headship* of God the Father does not imply heterosubstantiality or metaphysical subordination among the three hypostases. T. Hopko, 'God and Gender', p. 166.

¹²⁷T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 252.

¹²⁸T. Hopko, 'God and Gender', p. 173.

¹²⁹See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 253.

¹³⁰In virtue of the special *charisma* which the bishop receives at his consecration, he is endowed with the threefold power of ruling, teaching and celebrating the sacraments. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 253.

¹³¹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 48.

question concerning the origin of this model of 'two-tier priesthood': the sacramental (bishop, priest, deacon) and the universal (laity).¹³²

2.4.2 'Two-Tier' Priesthood: Staniloae argues that the origin of this model is not socio-historical but theological, that is, from the very beginning of the Church the sacramental priesthood was necessary in order both to mediate in a visible way Christ's invisible ministry as prophet, priest and king, and to point towards the *otherness* of Christ in His relationship with believers.¹³³ Similarly, the official teaching of Romanian Orthodoxy affirms that the christological and pneumatological origin of hierarchy is clearly recorded in Scripture.¹³⁴ The biblical support put forward is as follows: the Holy Orders were instituted by Christ after His resurrection when he gave His Spirit to the Apostles (John 20:21-23) and sent them to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47-48); the institution of hierarchy was constituted by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4,37-42); the hierarchy (bishop, priest and deacon) were endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit for the authoritative preaching of the Word (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; 2 Tim.2:15), the administration of the holy Sacraments (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16) and for leadership (Matt. 28:20; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 4:16). Thus the threefold ministry (prophetic, priestly, kingly) of the invisible High Priest continues in the Church with the same authority through the visible ministry of the hierarchy. Furthermore, the apostles continued the practice of the sacramental priesthood in its threefold structure (John 20:21-23; Acts 6:3,5-6; 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-7,8-12; 4:14; 5:17-22; 2 Tim. 1:6; Tit. 1:5,7; 1 Pet. 5:1-2,5; James 5:14). Theologically, the mystery of the Holy Orders, particularly that of the bishop, is the condition and the source of the other sacraments (mysteries) although it cannot be separated from them.¹³⁵ Therefore, Radu concludes that since the laity cannot administer the sacraments, it follows that the Church as a sacramental community cannot exist without hierarchy (bishop, priest and deacon).¹³⁶

However, the Romanian approach is in striking contradiction to Bulgakov's view, who argues:

It is impossible to state, historically, the place, the time and the manner of the institution by the Apostles of the hierarchy in its present form, that is in the three orders: bishops, presbyters, deacons. The documents of the beginning of the first century are silent on this point. Or indeed, if we find suggestions about the hieratic dignities it is evident that the orders there have another meaning than that of today, or that the distinction and the

¹³²N. Chişescu şi C. Cornişescu, 'Sfântul Duh Sfîntitorul: Lucrarea Lui în Biserică şi în Lume', în D. Radu, ed., *Indrumări Misionare*, pp. 398-399.

¹³³D. Staniloae, 'Isus Hristos, Arhiereu în Veac', în *Ortodoxia*, XXXI, Nr. 2 (1979), p. 223.

¹³⁴D. Radu in 'Învăţătura despre Biserică', in D. Radu ed., *Indrumări Misionare*, pp. 399-400; S. Cosma, *Cuvinte*, pp. 244-250; Patriarch Teoctist, *Învăţătura*, pp. 279-280; Metropolitan Nicolae, *Catehism Orthodox*, Ed. Mitropoliei Banatului, Timişoara, 1990, pp. 78-79.

¹³⁵*The Confession of Dositheus*, X; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 253.

¹³⁶D. Radu, 'Învăţătura despre Biserică', pp. 400-401.

correlation between the three degrees, very clear today, at that time lacked precision (Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Tim. 2:5,7; 1 Peter 5: 1-5).¹³⁷

Bulgakov does not question the Orthodox presupposition concerning the apostolicity of the Church's hierarchy but affirms that it developed gradually during the second century as a result of the interplay between the Old Testament priesthood and the apostolic succession.¹³⁸

The difference between Bulgakov, who argues that the early church had only a 'germ' of hierarchical structure, and the Romanian view, which asserts that from the very beginning the Church had a fully developed hierarchy (bishop, priest, deacon), demonstrates not only the disagreements within Orthodoxy concerning this issue but also the constant appeal by Romanian Orthodoxy to the authority of Scripture due to its encounter with the movement which emerged from the work of Cornilescu, Popescu and Trifa. However, once the idea of divinely appointed hierarchy is accommodated, the next problem the Church faces is to reconcile the charismatic constitution of the Church with its hierarchical institution.¹³⁹

2.4.3 *Sobornost*-The 'One' and the 'Many': One attempt to resolve the tension between the Spirit and the institution is the ecclesiology of *sobornost*.¹⁴⁰ Whilst rejecting both Catholic 'over-institutionalized' and Protestant 'over-democratized' ecclesiologies, Khomiakov, who coined the concept,¹⁴¹ developed a conciliar model, which, in his understanding, is a synthesis between the two.¹⁴² *Sobornost* affirms that both clergy and laity are *constitutive* of the Church. In other words neither can exist without the other, and consequently both clergy and laity are *in* the Church and not

¹³⁷S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 40.

¹³⁸S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 41. 'We cannot affirm that the Apostles instituted this succession immediately, but the fact of such institution cannot be denied. After some fluctuation the hierarchy was formed in the second century after the type of the priesthood of the Old Testament, yet always with a difference. For the Church, which lives in the unity of tradition, the institution of the apostolic succession of the hierarchy is axiomatic. Tradition remains the same, always possessed of the same power, whether a certain form or institution appears in the first or the second or the twentieth century, if only the new form contains, not a denial, but a completion of what has previously been contained in the substance of tradition' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 43).

¹³⁹Bulgakov presents his view on the role of the clergy and laity within the Church in 'The Church's Ministry', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 166-171. In the following sub-section I will present Bulgakov's view on ministry, because he makes an attempt to create space for laity that is very unusual within the Orthodox tradition.

¹⁴⁰S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry' p. 166.

¹⁴¹The ecclesiology of *sobornost* has its roots on the one hand in the Orthodox reaction to the so called 'Western captivity' which followed after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, and on the other in the Russian Orthodox quest for identity. Thus Khomiakov considered that the Roman Church is founded on external authority but has no liberty, whilst Protestant ecclesiology strives for internal liberty but loses any unity. See G.A. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology*, pp. 56-59.

¹⁴²According to this approach the tension between clergy and laity, institution and the Spirit that characterises both the Catholic and Protestant churches has been overcome. S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 61.

outside or above it.¹⁴³ This clarification was intended to correct the Catholic influence which stressed the right of the bishops to exercise episcopal authority even if they were not titular bishops.¹⁴⁴ However, in the Orthodox tradition, the bishop cannot exist without a local church and neither can a local church exist without the bishop.¹⁴⁵ In this way the 'one' and the 'many' are in a dynamic unity. Moreover, *charisma* and institution do not exclude each other but actually coincide, due to the fact that the sacramental priesthood is both divinely ordained and empowered:

The clergy is not above the people but in them and with them: it is not a judicial absolutism but a divinely-given authority. Yet, for the faithful, this authority is a spiritual power, based upon the mystical energy imparted in ordination to the priesthood for the fulfillment of its sacramental task. The sacrament which this energy of the priesthood brings into operation is a divine, not a human activity: not an idea, a doctrine, an institution, but an immediate divine Fact. The priesthood has the power to link the divine with the human, to bring heaven down to earth, and it is in this sacramental ministration that the efficacy and basis of the Holy Orders consists.¹⁴⁶

This divine power is not conferred on the clergy as a result of human election for office but is transmitted by apostolic succession.¹⁴⁷ Consequently the presence in the Church of this charismatic priesthood in apostolic succession is vital for the being of the Church. *Sine episcopo nulla ecclesia*.¹⁴⁸

However, Bulgakov argues that amongst the three offices of Christ (prophet, priest and king) entrusted to the Church, only that of the priesthood is by divine right and power (*de jure divino*) entrusted to the hierarchy, whilst the ruling ministry is an expression of the unity of the whole body and the prophetic ministry belongs to the whole Church (clergy and laity). Hence Bulgakov concluded that laity has the right to participate both in the teaching and ruling ministry of the Church.¹⁴⁹ However, while affirming that all believers are charismatic due to the fact that the Holy Spirit is poured out upon *all* God's people, Ware points out that lay charismatic ministries have been less emphasized in the Orthodox Church.¹⁵⁰ Bulgakov attempted to overcome this problem by creating space for the laity in Orthodox

¹⁴³S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 54-60. See also J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 137.

¹⁴⁴See K. McDonnell, 'Infallibility as Charism at Vatican I', in P.C. Empie, eds., *Teaching Authority and Infallibility*, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1980, pp. 270-286. For an analysis of the difference in the Catholic tradition between a titular bishop and a bishop without a diocese, see G. Feliciany, 'The Process of Codification' in *Concilium* 167, 7 (1983), pp. 37-40. In the Orthodox tradition the mention of the name of the community takes place during the prayer of ordination of a bishop, meaning that the community forms part of the ontology of the bishop. See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 137.

¹⁴⁵S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 169-170.

¹⁴⁶S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 168.

¹⁴⁷S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 169.

¹⁴⁸S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', pp. 169-170.

¹⁴⁹He [the bishop] does not impose his personal opinion upon his church but gives authoritative expression to the voice of the whole Church.' Sergius Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 168.

¹⁵⁰T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 254.

ecclesiology. He argues that despite the fact that this *ordo* of laymen is subordinate to the priesthood, it has a certain independence:

Baptism even without confirmation, imparts some charismatic gifts; and because of this, baptism in the Name of the Holy Trinity is valid even when performed by a layman, so that baptism is valid even among those Christian confessions which do not recognize Holy Orders and have lost apostolic succession.¹⁵¹

In *sobornost*, however, this freedom represents the grounds for co-operation between clergy and laity, or in other words, between the 'one' and the 'many.' Firstly, laymen co-operate with the clergy both in the administration of the sacraments and in the eucharistic liturgy through singing, responses and prayer.¹⁵² In this way the unity between the 'one' and the 'many' is clearly illustrated during the eucharistic liturgy, where the bishop as the image of Christ presides and the many are around him and participate at the Eucharist.¹⁵³ Therefore the eucharistic assembly can have only a single person as its head, the bishop.¹⁵⁴ At the same time the bishop, who is the source of all the other ministries (priests and deacons) in the Church, is consecrated within the Church during the eucharistic assembly and subsequently can exercise his episcopal prerogatives only in his church and as long as he is in office.¹⁵⁵ In this sense the Orthodox Church follows Cyprian: 'The bishop is in the church and the church is in the bishop.'¹⁵⁶ Secondly, the 'one' and the 'many' work together in the election of the clergy in all their degrees from that of deacon to that of patriarch.¹⁵⁷ The laity present at the ordination of a 'clergyman' signify their approval by acclaiming him as *axios* (worthy) immediately after the impositions of hands. Without this approval, affirms Bulgakov, ordination cannot take place.¹⁵⁸ Thirdly, administration is conducted by the bishop ('one') in 'concert with representatives ('many') of clergy and laity organised in episcopal, diocesan or presbyterial councils, or in special gatherings such as local or ecumenical councils.'¹⁵⁹ Fourthly, the 'one' and the 'many' work together in preaching and teaching. Bulgakov asserts that the authority to preach the

151S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 167.

152S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 167.

153'This 'catholicity' of the eucharistic community was also reflected in its structure. As far as we can reconstruct this structure from pieces of evidence that we possess, we can see that in the centre of the *synaxis* of the 'whole' Church and behind the one altar there was the throne of 'one bishop' seated 'in the place of God' or understood as the living image of Christ. Around his throne were seated the presbyters, whilst by him stood the deacons helping him in celebration, and in front of him the 'people of God' that *order* of the Church which was constituted by virtue of the rite of initiation (baptism-chrismation) and considered the *sine qua non* condition for the eucharistic community to exist and express the Church's unity' (J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 152-153).

154See J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, pp. 53-54.

155S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 46-48.

156Cyprian, *Epist.*, 66 in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, pp. 231-235.

157Bulgakov illustrates his point referring to the lay participation at the election of the Patriarch Tikhon of all the Russians. See Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 167.

158S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 167.

159S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 168.

Gospel and even the power to baptise are compatible with the status of the laity.¹⁶⁰

Strictly speaking, the succession of gifts of the Holy Spirit, given to the Church at the time of Pentecost and descending by the Apostles and their followers, extends to the whole Church. The 'apostolic succession', special and restricted, exists only for the sacramental ministry, for the priesthood and not for teaching and dogmatic consciousness.¹⁶¹

Moreover, Bulgakov asserts that the commandment 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation' (Mark 16:15) was given to all believers, and subsequently 'we find in the Scriptures instances when not only the apostles but all believers were involved in preaching and teaching (Acts 6:5; 8:5,12, 14, 26-36).'¹⁶² However, a certain limitation of the right of the laity ('many') to preach was introduced, asserts Bulgakov, not because of charismatic inferiority or of the incompatibility of the right of preaching with the status of laity, but because of practical and disciplinary reasons.¹⁶³ As a matter of fact, 'only one ministry is withheld entirely from the laity, that of the mysteries-the celebration of the holy Eucharist and other sacraments.'¹⁶⁴ Fifthly, the *pleroma* of the Church (clergy and laity) is considered to be the deposit and the guardian of truth, the only organ of infallibility. Even the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils become normative¹⁶⁵ only after they have been accepted by the whole Church.¹⁶⁶ In all these ministries, argues Bulgakov, by acting in unity and in co-operation and not with one group against the other, the Church reveals the very essence of *Sobornost*.¹⁶⁷

The Church is Christ's body, in which there are many members, differing from each other and yet indispensable to the body, and in that sense each has the same value. They are many: the body is one...the Church has a hierarchy and its constitution is hierarchical, and yet it is an organism rather than a juridical institution.¹⁶⁸

Whilst this approach attempts to resolve the problem of clericalism as a separate class from laity by emphasizing the unity between the 'one' and the 'many',¹⁶⁹ Orthodox theologians do not always agree over the practicality of

¹⁶⁰S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 168.

¹⁶¹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 60.

¹⁶²S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 52.

¹⁶³S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 53.

¹⁶⁴S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 169.

¹⁶⁵J. Madey, 'Ecumenical Council and Pan-Orthodox Synod: A Comparison', in *Concilium*, (1983), 64-65.

¹⁶⁶S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 64-75

¹⁶⁷S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 167.

¹⁶⁸S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 166.

¹⁶⁹'But the Church of Christ is not a community of equals in which all the faithful have the same rights. It is a society of unequals, not only because among the faithful some are clerics and some are laymen, but particularly because there is in the Church the power of God whereby to some is given to sanctify, teach, and govern, and to others not.' See J. Neuner and H. Roos, eds., *The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, Alba House, Staten Island, New York, 1967, No. 669.

this model. Some emphasize the primacy of the community ('many') over the bishop ('one') whilst others stress the primacy of the bishop over community. Thus Meyendorff argues that,

The documents at our disposal do not give us any certainty about the existence of a 'monarchical episcopate' in all churches from the first century...On the other hand, we can assert that there never was a Christian Church when the Lord's Supper was not celebrated.¹⁷⁰

However, Florovsky asserts that,

...the order of bishop is so necessary for the Church that without it the Church is not a Church and the Christian is not a Christian, and they cannot even be so called.¹⁷¹

Whilst attempting to overcome this contradiction between the 'one' and the 'many', Zizioulas proposes an eucharistic ecclesiology which reflects 'the proper synthesis between Christology and Pneumatology.... This principle is that the 'one'-the bishop-cannot exist without the 'many' -the community- and the 'many' cannot exist without the 'one.'¹⁷²

2.5 Observations

2.5.1 Methodological: The Orthodox approach to the relation between the Spirit and the institution represents a significant attempt to realize a synthesis between both christology and pneumatology, and the 'one' and the 'many.' However, from a methodological point of view the whole construct has weak exegetical foundations. Thus, in addition to the disagreements between Orthodox theologians concerning the origin of the monarchic episcopate, the validity of the biblical evidence put forward by the Romanian Church is severely questioned by the conclusions of recent studies in New Testament and post-apostolic writings.¹⁷³ Schillebeeckx, for instance,

¹⁷⁰J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 5.

¹⁷¹G. Florovsky, *Collected Works*, vol 3, *Creation and Redemption*, Nordland, Belmont, Mass., 1976, p. 191.

¹⁷²J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 136-137.

¹⁷³The unity of believers with Christ and among themselves, as is found in John 17:21-23, is not mediated by men (a bishop) but is a direct relationship: 'the believer is in Jesus as Jesus is in the Father.' Further, the New Testament records do not suggest that unity in Christ is replaced by unity around a person (bishop) who replaces Christ, or who is the image of Christ. G.M. Burge, *The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1987, p. 60. The same approach to unity of faith is followed in the Shepherd of Hermas where the Church gathers its members from the whole world, forming them into one body, which is united in understanding, mind, faith and love. Shepherd of Hermas, *Similitudes*, 9,17 in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 402-403. Similarly, Justin Martyr spoke of all who believe in Christ as united in 'one soul, one synagogue, one Church, which is brought into being through His name and shares in His name; for we are all called Christians' (Justin Martyr, *Dial*, 63,5 in *ANCL*, vol. II, pp. 173-174. Chadwick asserts that the unity of the Church 'depended on two things-on a common faith and on a common way of ordering their life and worship'

argues that the relation between the Spirit and the institution in the early church took the form of a *charismatic* type of leadership based upon the 'solidarity and equality of all Christians 'in the Spirit' (Acts 2:17-18).'¹⁷⁴ Due to their *charisma*, those leaders or 'teachers of faith', who could be ordained or non-ordained had undoubtedly 'great prestige in the Church.'¹⁷⁵ Faivre is of the opinion that the process of clericalization began in the middle of the third century when the bishop arrogated to himself all the authority in the Church.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, Stockmeier argues that,

The conspicuous absence from the New Testament writings of the office of bishop as materialized in the course of the second century is sufficient proof of the variety which characterised the developing outward structure of the Church.¹⁷⁷

Whilst this view has, to a certain degree, been accepted in recent years by some Orthodox scholars, there is no evidence yet of significant implications for ecclesiology.¹⁷⁸ However, Bria points out that the development of the institution in the imperial Church had been achieved at the expense of its charismatic dimension:

A particular understanding of the apostolic succession of the bishops appeared which conceded to them the right to make pronouncements of faith. Their doctrinal authority was based on their consecration in the apostolic succession, leaving little room for consideration of their spiritual capacity to discern the truth on the basis of the experience of the Pentecost. In some periods of church history, this led to crisis situations in which ecclesiastical authorities did not speak the word of God clearly or defend gospel values.¹⁷⁹

Secondly, in the absence of a critical hermeneutic, the typological approach which underlines the model of unity between the 'one' and the 'many' can be misleading. For example, Ignatius wrote:

You must all follow the lead of the bishop, as Jesus Christ followed that of the Father. Where the bishop appears, there let the people be, just as where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.¹⁸⁰

(H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, Penguin Books, London, 1967, reprinted 1990, p. 32. See also J. Ash, 'The Decline of Ecstatic Prophecy in the Early Church', in *Theological Studies*, 37 (1976), pp. 227-252; M. E. Boring, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus: Christian Prophecy in the Synoptic Tradition*, CUP, Cambridge, 1982; D. Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch. A Study of Early Christian Thought in the East*, CUP, Cambridge, 1982.

¹⁷⁴E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority of All-A Reflection about the Structure of the New Testament', in *Concilium* 180:4 (1985), p. 16.

¹⁷⁵E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', p. 18.

¹⁷⁶See A. Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie. Les premières étapes du cursus clerical*, Ed. du Cerf, Paris, 1977, pp. 153-170.

¹⁷⁷P. Stockmeier, 'The Election of Bishops by Clergy and People in the Early Church' in *Concilium*, 137, 7 (1980), p. 4.

¹⁷⁸See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 40-41; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 254.

¹⁷⁹I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 43.

¹⁸⁰Ignatius, *Smyr.* 8,10, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 249.

In the first sentence the bishop is the image of the Father and the people are the image of Jesus, whilst in the second the bishop is the image of Jesus and the people the image of the Catholic Church. Elsewhere Ignatius argues:

Everyone must show the deacons respect. They represent Jesus Christ, just as the bishop has the role of the Father and the presbyters are like God's council and an apostolic band. You cannot have a church without these.¹⁸¹

Here the deacons represent Jesus, the bishops represent God and the presbyters represent the apostolic band. Comparing the two passages from Ignatius' writings it becomes clear that a theology of hierarchy construed from his hermeneutical approach faces difficulties in harmonising the overlapping senses of the images. Even if one accepts Zizioulas's attempt to reconcile the historical and eschatological aspects of ministry,¹⁸² that is, ministry is not an 'interim' period between Ascension and Parousia but an expression of the eschatological nature of the Church, one still faces the problem of reconciling overlapping Ignatian typological roles, both historically and eschatologically. Additionally, commenting on the emergence of a rich literature on the 'reality and the symbolism of the episcopate', Bria asserts:

The episcopate is a visible structure exercising a power that gives certainty to the life and mission of the church. It is a structure which gives the church a status of certainty, but such a church cannot take risks in its affirmations and acts.¹⁸³

2.5.2 Theological: One important point of trinitarian theology, as C.E. Gunton argues, 'is that it enables us to develop an ontology of the personal', that is, of being in relations of mutual constitution with other persons.¹⁸⁴ However, an uncritical emphasis on the *monarchy* of the Father has not only trinitarian implications¹⁸⁵ but also ecclesiological, that is, it leads to a strongly episcopal ecclesiology that tends to see the bishop as the image of the Father.¹⁸⁶ For example, as a result of the emergence of the monoepiscopate, with Ignatius of Antioch the bishop acquired special ecclesiastical and soteriological prerogatives. Thus the bishop is the locus of unity and 'without him the life-giving sacraments could not be administered.'¹⁸⁷ The bishop is not only 'a living image of God upon earth'

¹⁸¹Ignatius, *Trall.* 3,1, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 191-192.

¹⁸²See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 209-246.

¹⁸³I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 42.

¹⁸⁴C.E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, p. 164.

¹⁸⁵An uncritical over-emphasis on the Father as the source of communion in the Trinity runs the risk of undermining the mutual constitution of the Father, Son and Spirit as communion. However, an uncritical over-emphasis on the 'social' analogy of the Trinity may suggest a form of tritheism. Further, C.E. Gunton proposes a model in which communion is 'a function—a way of characterising—the relation of all three'. He writes: 'Whatever the priority of the Father, it must not be conceived in such a way as to detract from the fact that all three persons are together the cause of the communion in which they exist in relation of mutual and reciprocal constitution' (C.E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, p. 165).

¹⁸⁶See C.E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, p. 167.

¹⁸⁷H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 41.

but actually the 'fountain of all Mysteries (sacraments) of the Catholic Church, through which we obtain salvation'.¹⁸⁸ And further, 'what God is in the heavenly Church of the first born, and the sun in the world, that every High Priest [bishop] is in his own particular Church.'¹⁸⁹ Similarly, Bulgakov affirms that the bishop 'has the power to link the divine with the human, to bring heaven down to earth, and it is in this sacramental ministration that the efficacy and basis of Holy Orders consists'.¹⁹⁰ Consequently, the bishop is not 'one among equals' but, as Chadwick points out, a figure given 'vertical justification by claiming that the bishop is God's representative on earth, an earthly counterpart corresponding to the heavenly Monarch, so that "we ought to regard the bishop as the Lord himself."¹⁹¹ Additionally, a hierarchical ecclesiology reflects a strong tendency to reduce the relation between the Spirit and institution to the relation between the Spirit and the hierarchical structure of the Church. Consequently, the *sobornost* attempt to create space for lay ministries is, to a large degree, rejected by other theologians. For instance, the relative lay independence illustrated by the idea that baptism administered by lay people is valid, is strongly rejected by Zizioulas who affirms that 'there is no baptism, which is the constitutive act of the community, i.e. the ontological basis of the laity, without the bishop.'¹⁹²

Furthermore, concerning the teaching ministry of the Church, Ware argues that 'the bishop is the divinely appointed *teacher* of the faith, whilst the *guardian* of the faith is not the episcopate alone, but the whole people of God, bishop, clergy, and laity together.'¹⁹³ Thus to teach and to possess the truth are two distinct functions: the former belongs to the bishop, the latter to the entire people of God.¹⁹⁴ However, whilst the role of the laity is being reduced to that of the *guardian* of faith, Orthodox theologians do not agree on the significance of this role. Drawing from the belief that the whole Church, not simply the clergy, is the *guardian* of truth,¹⁹⁵ Kotsone argues that a lay person is obligated to oppose even a bishop who is not holding to the truth.¹⁹⁶ Lossky, though, contends that except in the case of schism the will of a bishop is binding for the faithful regardless of whether the bishop is right or wrong.¹⁹⁷ Whilst attempting to reconcile these two trends, Ware

¹⁸⁸*The Confession of Dositheus*, X, in J.H. Leith, ed., *Creeds of the Churches*, pp. 491-495.

¹⁸⁹*The Confession of Dositheus*, X.

¹⁹⁰S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 168.

¹⁹¹H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 41.

¹⁹²J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 137.

¹⁹³T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 255.

¹⁹⁴T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 255.

¹⁹⁵See P.E. Bratsiotis, 'The Fundamental Principles and Main Characteristics of the Orthodox Church', in A.J. Philipou, ed., *The Orthodox Ethos*, Holywell Press, Oxford, 1964, pp. 28-29; J. Stamoolis, *Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today*, p. 107.

¹⁹⁶See I. Kotsone, *The Place of the Laity* (in Greek), Athens, 1956. Cf. J. Stamoolis, *Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today*, p. 107; H. Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity*, Lutterworth Press, London, 1958, pp. 96-98.

¹⁹⁷The acts which emanate from episcopal power have a binding authority: in submitting to the will of the bishop one is submitting to the will of God...the bishop, if he has not

fails to offer a synthesis which would create space both for relatedness and freedom between both the clergy and the laity, and the Spirit and the institution.

More than once in Orthodox history the 'charismatics' have come into conflict with the hierarchy, but in the end there is no conflict between the two elements in the Church's life: it is the same Spirit who is active in both.¹⁹⁸

However, Ware offers a lengthy description of the charismatic hierarchy, whilst the charismatic laity is considered to be a *silent guardian* of faith. This approach leads to the conclusion that when the space between the Spirit and the institution (hierarchy) diminishes, the space between hierarchy and laity increases, as happened, for instance, in the imperial church.¹⁹⁹

2.5.3 Sociological: Whilst the Orthodox Church dismisses the charge that its model of Spirit-institution downgrades the laity by arguing that the latter participates both in the election of the hierarchy and in the life of the Church, a careful analysis of Orthodox ecclesiology proves beyond any doubt that lay ministries are not encouraged.²⁰⁰ Being aware of this, Bulgakov attempted to create space for lay participation in the Church's governing, teaching and prophecy.²⁰¹ Thus, compared with the imperial church in which the 'People of God' (*laos*) were considered to be a 'mob' (*ochlos*), and thus totally excluded from episcopal election,²⁰² *sobornost* represents a significant step towards a more corporate ecclesiology. However, whilst affirming that lay people are necessary in episcopal election, *sobornost* ecclesiology limits

himself acquired grace, and if his understanding is not enlightened by the Holy Spirit, can act according to his human motives, he can err in the exercise of the divine power which is conferred upon him. He will be assuredly responsible for his actions before God; they will have, nevertheless, an objective and binding character, save only in case of a bishop who acts contrary to the canons—in other words, at variance with the common will of the Church. In such a case he becomes the promoter of schism and places himself outside the unity of the Church' (V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, p. 188).

¹⁹⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 254.

¹⁹⁹J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 25.

²⁰⁰T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 253-254.

²⁰¹'In the Church there is no place for speechlessness and for blind obedience....In our time the terms 'prophet' and 'prophecy' have become rather literary epithets....But the spirit blows where it wills; the gift of prophecy by the Holy Spirit is not connected with the hieratic ministry, though it may be united with it' (S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 53).

²⁰²With the recognition of Christianity by the State under Constantine, the episcopal office was caught in a public conflict of interests and, subsequently, 'the original structure [of the Church] was challenged not by charismatic sectarians, as in the early period, but by the temptation to identify church functions with the legal administrative patterns of Roman society' (J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 41). Among the consequences of the rapprochement between Church and State, the association of the office of the bishop with large cities, the political importance of the office and the exclusion of the laity from the election of the bishop are only some which are significant for ecclesiology. For a presentation of the transition from the pre-Constantinian to the post-Constantinian period of the Church, see J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 41-49; The Council of Laodicaea, canon 13; P. Stockmeier, 'The Election of the Bishops', p. 7.

their participation to the right to acclaim 'axios' the newly elected bishop. Consequently, Bulgakov's assertion that 'ordination cannot take place without this approval' is without basis if one observes that the acclamation takes place after the 'imposition of hands' which represents both the divine endowment and apostolic succession.²⁰³ Thus, compared with the early church model in which the *community* was actively involved in the election of its leaders²⁰⁴ due to their belief in 'horizontal unity',²⁰⁵ *sobornost* ecclesiology believes in 'vertical unity'²⁰⁶ which 'operates through the levels of being

²⁰³See S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 167.

²⁰⁴Stockmeier asserts that, 'The relevant texts more than once specify the congregation as being actively involved in the choice of its ministers' (P. Stockmeier, 'The Election of the Bishops', p. 4). Similarly, in *I Clement* 44,3 (ANCL, vol. I, pp. 38-39) the author states that the Apostles appointed presbyters 'with the consent of the whole Church.' *Didache* is more specific about the procedure of appointment: 'You must, then, elect for yourselves bishops and deacons who are a credit to the Lord, men who are gentle, generous, faithful, and well tried. For their ministry to you is identical with that of the prophets and teachers' (*Didache*, 15, in C. Richardson, ed., *Early Christian Fathers*, p. 178). Hippolytus (A.D. 215) expressly emphasizes the election of bishops by the whole people: 'Let the bishop be ordained after he has been chosen by all the people' (Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition*, 2, in T. Halton, *The Church*, p. 104). Cyprian of Carthage (d. 258) is an early example of the emergence of a pronounced episcopal and hierarchical self-consciousness, but nevertheless this tendency did not lead him to play down the responsibility of the laity in appointing Church leaders. Thus the account given in his biography points out that Cyprian withdrew in humility when the whole people rose up in love and honour for him under the inspiration of the Lord (Pontius, *Vita Cypriani*, 5 in CSEL, III, III, p. XCV, lines 15-16). There is no doubt that Cyprian believed in an active participation of the lay people in the election of the bishop, and not simply in their presence to acclaim the successful candidate. In a letter sent to the Numidian bishop Antonianus, Cyprian describes the election of Pope Cornelius (251-253): 'But Cornelius was made bishop by the judgment of God and of his Christ, by the testimony of almost all the clergy, by the vote (*suffragium*) of the people then present, and with the approbation of long-serving priests and of upright men' (Cyprian, *Ep.* 55,8 in ANCL, vol. VIII, pp. 186-187). Elsewhere, Cyprian gives an account of the election of the Spanish bishop Sabinus 'in virtue of the vote of the whole brotherhood and the judgment of the bishops' (Cyprian, *Ep.* 67,5, in CSEL, III, II, p. 739, lines 15-16). Likewise the *Apostolic Constitution* (c.360) insists that 'a man who is to be consecrated bishop should be blameless in every respect and elected by the people' (*Apostolic Constitution*, VIII, 2-4, in ANCL, vol. XVIII, pp. 210-213). It is clear from these patristic records that in the pre-Constantinian period 'the bishops were undoubtedly elected by clergy and people' (P. Stockmeier, 'The Election of the Bishops', p. 8. See also T. Halton, *The Church*, Michael Glazier, Wilmington, Delaware, 1985, pp. 105-106).

²⁰⁵In the early Church, the Christians called each other 'brother' and 'sister', and whatever differences there might be of race, class or education, in the Church they were all equals 'in the Spirit.' E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', pp. 16-17; H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 32.

²⁰⁶For a critique of the sacramental vertical model of ecclesiology see: B. Depuy, 'Is There a Dogmatic Distinction between the Function of Priest and the Function of Bishop?', in *Concilium*, 34 (1968), pp. 74-86; Y. Congar, 'My Pathfinding in the Theology and Laity and Ministries', in *The Jurist*, 32 (1972), pp. 169-188; H. Küng, *Why Priests?*, Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1972; O. Semmelroth, 'The Priestly People of God and Its Official Ministers', in *Concilium*, 31 (1967), p. 100; K. Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Men*, Harper Torchbooks, NY, 1957; K. Rahner, 'What Is the Theological Starting Point for a Definition of the Priestly Ministry?', in *Concilium*, 43 (1969), p. 85.

reflected in lower levels and representational levels, all held together in a synthesis of divine Word made human flesh.'²⁰⁷

One other sociological aspect concerns the ecclesial relation between the 'one' and the 'many' by analogy with the Trinity. Thus, whilst within the Godhead each divine *hypostasis* has His specific office as Father, Son or Spirit, a hierarchical ecclesiology which fails to provide space for each member of the *community* to have his/her particular office runs the risk of perceiving the 'many' only in non-personal terms such as 'crowd' or 'public.' Although Orthodoxy acknowledges that the gifts (*charismata*) of the Holy Spirit are intended to safeguard the person from absorption into an impersonal being,²⁰⁸ in practice the 'many' who respond to the 'one' during the liturgy have no space for the development of 'charismatic' ministries. As Fitzgerald puts it:

Orthodox theologians are challenged by the critical need to reaffirm the important place in the Church which the laity is meant to have. Simply put, can the Orthodox continue to advance the valuable features of eucharistic ecclesiology without, at the same time, calling for a genuine renewal of community worship and church life, in which the laity are enabled and encouraged to take their rightful place? In many places, the Eucharist appears to be very much an action of the clergy and their 'assistants', in which the laity are but passive spectators. Such a situation is certainly contrary to the best expression of Orthodox liturgical theology.²⁰⁹

However, one has to acknowledge that there have been periods in the history of Orthodoxy when lay persons played an important role in the life of the Church, such as St. Seraphim of Sorov, Father John Kronstadt or the *starsi* (elders) of the monastery of Optina,²¹⁰ but such examples are exceptions rather than the rule in the Orthodox Church.

Consequently it can be argued that, so far, Orthodox ecclesiology in general and *sobornost* in particular have failed to offer a satisfactory answer to the question concerning the tension between the institution and the Spirit. Moreover, even the attempt made by *sobornost* to address this issue faces a growing opposition from within both the Russian and Greek Orthodox folds. The main charge brought against Khomiakov and his school, for instance, is that it has endangered the prerogatives of the episcopate and 'democratized' the idea of the Church.²¹¹ Consequently, by failing to create space for laity to participate in the life of the community, a hierarchical Church runs the risk of losing the very communities which its bishops are supposed to represent. In fact, Zizioulas draws attention to this phenomenon when he

²⁰⁷T. Bradshaw, *The Olive Branch: An Evangelical Anglican Doctrine of the Church*, Paternoster, Oxford, 1992, p. 77.

²⁰⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 253-254.

²⁰⁹T. Fitzgerald, 'Conciliarity, Primacy, and the Episcopacy', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 38, 1 (1994), pp. 17-44 (here p. 30).

²¹⁰S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 51. C. N. Tsirpanlis, *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought and Orthodox Theology*, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1991, p. 151.

²¹¹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 257.

affirms that 'the community has almost disappeared and the number of titular bishops is increasing rapidly.'²¹² Further, whilst acknowledging that the Orthodox Church is a 'pyramidal' structure, Zizioulas argues that this 'clericalization' can be corrected only if christology and ecclesiology are pneumatically constituted.²¹³

²¹²J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 141.

²¹³J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 139.

Truth, Church and Infallibility

Both Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches believe in both the existence of ultimate truth and the Church's infallibility.²¹⁴ However, there is disagreement between the two traditions concerning the locus and the organ of the Church's infallibility.²¹⁵ This disagreement is rooted in the difference between two approaches to theology (apophatic and cataphatic) and two ecclesiologies (strong and moderate institutionalism).²¹⁶ Thus, whilst Roman Catholics emphasize the role of clear dogmatic formulae concerning

²¹⁴As we saw above, for the Orthodox Church the Tri-une God represents 'ultimate truth' and is at the same time incommunicable and communicable. E. Timiadis, 'God's Immutability and Communicability', pp. 23-49. This raises the question of the adequacy of human language to communicate *transcendent* realities. Whilst some, both in the East (for apophatic reasons) and in the West (for logical-empirical reasons), express doubts or even dismiss altogether the validity of religious language, others argue that given the nature of God's self-revelation and of religious experience, it is possible to communicate the truth of God in human language. See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, pp. 5-40; A. Dulles, 'Infallibility: The Terminology', in P.C. Empie, eds., *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1980, pp. 69-71; P. Winch, 'Meaning and Religious Language', in S.C. Brown, ed., *Reason and Religion*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1977, pp.193-221; D.Z. Phillips, 'Primitive Reactions and the Reactions of Primitives: The 1983 Marett Lecture', in *Religious Studies*, 22, 2 (June 1986), pp. 165-180. M.G. Harvey, 'Wittgenstein's Notion of "Theology as Grammar,"' in *Religious Studies*, 25, p. 93; H. Küng, *Infallible*, pp. 5-100; D. Staniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică*, vol. 1, pp. 24-52; 111-145; N. Afanasieff, 'L'infaillibilité de l'Eglise du point de vue d'une théologie orthodoxe' in *L'infaillibilité de l'Eglise*, Editions de Chavetogne, Chavetogne, 1963, pp. 183-202; I. Bria, 'Infaibilitatea Bisericii' in *Ortodoxia* XII, 1960, Nr. 3, pp. 494-504; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 116; P.C. Empie, eds., *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1980.

²¹⁵Infallibility: the term means immunity from error, in other words protection against either active or passive deception. Thus one can say that persons or agencies are infallible to the extent that they neither deceive nor are deceived. In Christian theological language, the term 'infallibility' carries a more restrictive meaning and it generally refers to the gift of abiding in the truth of the gospel. See A. Dulles, 'Infallibility', p. 71-74; Vatican II, *Lumen gentium* 12; T. Halton, *The Church*, pp. 79-81; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 57; 64; J. Ratzinger, 'Primacy, Episcopate and Apostolic Succession', in K. Rahner and J. Ratzinger, eds., *The Episcopate and the Primacy*, Herder and Herder, New York, 1962, pp. 162f; A. Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, pp. 143-144.; R.B. Kuiper, *The Glorious Body of Christ*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, (n.d.), pp. 73-74; H. Küng, *Infallible? An Inquiry*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1971, pp. 16-17;100-108; See J. Rogers, 'Inerrancy' in D.V. Musser and J.L. Price, eds., *A New Hand-Book of Christian Theology*, The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 254-256.

²¹⁶C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', in T.F. Torrance, ed., *Theological Dialogue*, p. 74.

faith and practice, Orthodoxy stresses mystical union with God.²¹⁷ Further, whilst Roman Catholics believe that the locus of infallibility is the Pope and the organ of infallibility is the *Magisterium Romanum*, Orthodoxy affirms that the locus of infallibility is the whole Church and the organ of infallibility is the episcopate, especially when assembled in Ecumenical Council.²¹⁸

Since, within Orthodox tradition, truth is understood not as a set of propositions but primarily as *communion*²¹⁹ in and through which the Church has the authority 'to make visible the plan of God for the salvation of humanity at all times, without human distortions',²²⁰ in this chapter we will explore the mode in which this *charisma infallibilitatis* is expressed in and through historical communities.

3.1 Truth and Community

The epistemic journey from the *rule of truth* in the early church to the *criteria of truth* in contemporary Christianity illustrates the Church's ongoing concern for knowledge of the truth.²²¹ The *rule of truth* does not imply in any way that truth for the early church was simply identical to a set of teachings (propositions). On the contrary, truth was considered to be identical with Christ.²²² Christ as the truth, however, was not looked upon as an isolated individual or as a static object but rather as a person in dynamic relationships to both history and *eschata*.²²³ Within such a relational context truth became an event of *communion*, due to the fact that there is no separation between the 'in himself' and 'for us' in the life of Jesus.²²⁴ This consistency, argues Schillebeeckx, made communication between Christ and man possible and explains the 'spontaneous or explicit' process of

²¹⁷T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 143; A. Archer, *The Two Catholic Churches*, SCM Press, London, 1986, pp. 7-147. P.D.L. Avis, *Christians in Communion*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN, 1990.

²¹⁸C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', in T.F. Torrance, ed., *Theological Dialogue*, p. 74.

²¹⁹A. Khomiakov, 'Letter', in W.J. Birkbeck, *Russia and the English Church*, p. 94. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 255; Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'East Meets West', p. 9; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 130-131.

²²⁰E. Timiadis, 'The Trinitarian Structure of the Church and Its Authority', in T.F. Torrance, ed., *Theological Dialogue*, vol. 1, pp. 151-152.

²²¹See R.B. Eno, 'Some Elements in the Pre-History of Papal Infallibility', in P.C. Empie, eds., *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*, p. 239; V.H. Neufeld, *The Earliest Christian Confessions*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1983.

²²²See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 67; T.F. Torrance, 'The Trinitarian Foundation and Character of Faith and of Authority in the Church', in T.F. Torrance, ed., *Theological Dialogue*, pp. 92-93.

²²³See E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', pp. 13-14.

²²⁴'What strikes us again and again', affirms Schillebeeckx, is the 'inner bond between the message and the one [Jesus] who proclaims it, just as there is an inner connection between the message and Jesus' consistent dealing with it' (E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', pp. 14-15). T.F. Torrance shares a similar view. See 'The Trinitarian Foundation', pp. 91-94.

interpretation' of Christians throughout the centuries' of Jesus' message and way of life.²²⁵ Moreover, in spite of the threats posed by a hostile environment, the early church applied the same principle of consistency to the relations between, on the one hand, the life and message of each member and that of the community, and on the other, each person/community and Christ.²²⁶ This approach is illustrated by the simultaneous emphasis on both the teaching of catechumens as well as their moral conformity to the teaching.²²⁷ Schillebeeckx affirms that,

Jesus' own resurrection, his sending of the Spirit, the emergence of the Christian 'community of God' that 'lives from the Spirit' and the New Testament testimony, although they are in no sense identical, define each other. And it is only within this mutual definition that anything can be said about Jesus of Nazareth and that he can be confessed as the Christ. It is *in* the community of faith, then, that the crucified but risen Jesus appears. The authority of Jesus becomes transparent in the authentic *sequela Jesu* of the community of Church-in the footsteps of Jesus.²²⁸

Moreover, the christological and pneumatological views concerning the nature of this community of faith were reflected in the belief that all members were equal and entitled to participate in the truth of Christ.²²⁹ Thus, by virtue of the dynamic and coherent relation between faith and conduct, Schillebeeckx argues that the teaching authority belonged to all believers and not to a select few.²³⁰ Concerning this aspect, however, the Orthodox Church does not speak with a single voice. Some theologians, like Meyendorff,²³¹ Ware²³² and Schmemmann,²³³ argue that the Church was from the very beginning a hierarchical-sacramental community which manifested its true identity in the eucharistic liturgy presided by the bishop, whilst others, like Bulgakov,²³⁴ Pospelovsky²³⁵ and Gvosdev, despite the fact that they too believe in the hierarchical-sacramental nature of the Church, affirm

²²⁵E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', p. 14. The Christ-event became the hermeneutical principle of the Old Testament scriptures, that is, Scriptures are fulfilled in Christ (1 Cor. 13:3-4). See S.G. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church*, SPCK, London, 1991, p. 28.

²²⁶See E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', pp. 13-15.

²²⁷There had been a transition from immediate baptism after conversion as mentioned in the Book of Acts (2:41; 8:35-38; 16:30-33) to a time of preparation that could last two or three years in the early third century. In some circumstances baptism was delayed until before death. See H. Bettenson, *The Early Christian Fathers*, OUP, London, 1956, vol. 1; C. Jones, eds., *The Study of the Liturgy*, SPCK, London, 1978; J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, pp. 1-4.

²²⁸E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', p. 15.

²²⁹See J. Ash, 'The Decline of Ecstatic Prophecy in the Early Church', in *Theological Studies*, 37 (1976), pp. 227-252.

²³⁰See E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', pp. 15-19.

²³¹J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 7-17.

²³²T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 20-24.

²³³A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 7-35.

²³⁴S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 168.

²³⁵D. Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church Under the Soviet Regime, 1917-1982*, vol. 1, St. Vladimir's Press, Crestwood, New York, 1984, pp. 33-34, 241.

that in the early church lay persons participated 'in shaping the dogma and the practices of the Church.'²³⁶ In other words, *episteme* and *praxis* were predicated to the entire community. However, because that truth as *communion* of all believers according to the principle of consistency was endangered by the emergence of the *pneumatici*²³⁷ and of heretical movements such as Montanism and Gnosticism along with the polemic with Marcion,²³⁸ the Church not only restricted the role of the itinerant 'charismatics'²³⁹ but also elaborated its doctrine and practice of truth along the line of 'apostolic continuity.' Practically speaking, this meant three things: Apostolic Tradition, Apostolic Scripture and Apostolic Office.²⁴⁰ Whilst the first two refer to the 'deposit of truth' entrusted by Christ to His Church, the last refers to the authorized organ of the Church to transmit and

²³⁶N.K. Gvosdev, 'Rendering unto Caesar...An Orthodox Perspective on Democratic Transition in Eastern Europe', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37, 1 (1993), p. 81.

²³⁷Hall argues that in spite of the equality of all believers, the dispute with Jews about the meaning of the prophecies and whether the Old Testament text meant that Jesus was the Christ (Messiah) required both inspiration, the gift of the Spirit and learning beyond the ability of ordinary believers. (S. G. Hall, *Doctrine*, p. 29). Consequently some members were more actively involved in debates than others, and out of this movement emerged the 'charismatic' leaders of the Church; the first being the Apostles, followed during their lifetime by others who received the gift of the Spirit (*pneumatici*) and who were called apostles, prophets or teachers. Schillebeeckx affirms that very soon the whole Mediterranean area 'was buzzing' with *pneumatici* who spread their 'experiences' based on the Pentecostal experience of baptism in the Spirit. See E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching Authority', p. 17. From an Orthodox perspective Meyendorff, for instance, acknowledges that in New Testament times ministries were more diversified, but slowly the office of the bishop became prominent among presbyters and deacons. However he does not refer to the diversity of ministries described in *Didache* 11-13. See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 39-41.

²³⁸Montanism laid claim to special prophetic revelation denied to the secularised church; the Gnostics held to a sacred cosmological wisdom disclosed by Jesus only to a select few; and finally Marcion, who not only rejected many biblical writings as false but actually introduced the idea of a God who, in granting salvation, is wholly other than the Creator and Judge of the Old Testament. See J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, pp. 68-120.

²³⁹Since some *pneumatici* spread false teaching and practices, the Church attempted to limit their influence by both introducing rules of conduct for the itinerant 'charismatics' and encouraging a more active role of local leadership (bishops). See *Didache*, 11:4-6; 11:7-12 in C.C. Richardson, ed., *Early Christian Fathers*, pp. 176-177.

²⁴⁰Irenaeus, *Adversus Haeresis*, III, iii, 1f, in ANLC, vol. V, pp. 260-264; Tertullian, *De Prescriptione Haereticorum*, 28, in ANLC, vol. VII, pp. 32-33. See also J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, pp. 108-120; Papias, *Expositions of the Oracles of the Lord*, in Eusebius, *EH*, III. 39 in NPNF, vol. I, pp. 170-173; *The Muratorian Canon*, in DCC, p. 28; J.C. Turro and R.E. Brown, 'Canonicity', in R.E. Brown, eds., *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ:, 1968, pp. 515-534; F.F. Bruce, *Tradition: Old and New*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1970; F.F. Bruce, 'Tradition and the Canon of Scripture', in D.K. McKim, ed., *The Authoritative Word: Essays on the Nature of Scripture*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1983, pp. 72-74.

interpret the 'deposit of truth.'²⁴¹ Although the Pre-Nicene Fathers disagreed concerning the mode in which these three elements should be combined in order to safeguard both the accuracy and consistency between belief and conduct,²⁴² it appears that eventually the view that truth was closely linked with 'office' prevailed.

3.2 Truth and Local Hierarchy

The belief that truth is associated primarily with the episcopate developed swiftly during the second and third centuries. This approach led to the tendency to both *reify* (objectify) and *pneumatologize* the office. Consequently, in the writings of Clement,²⁴³ Ignatius²⁴⁴ Irenaeus,²⁴⁵ and

²⁴¹See E. Clapsis, 'Prolegomena to Orthodox Dogmatics', pp. 16-26; E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', pp. 1-29; C. Konstantinidis, 'The Significance of the Eastern and Western Traditions', pp. 220-230.

²⁴²See J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, pp. 108-120.

²⁴³Clement of Rome (c. 95) argued that 'Christ comes with a message from God, and the apostles with a message from Christ... and they appointed their first fruits to be bishops' (Clement, *Epistle to the Corinthians*, 42,2, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 36-37). Thus the 'objectified apostolic message' is entrusted to the bishops who follow in 'apostolic succession'. See H.O. Maier, '1 Clement 40-44: Apostolic Succession or Legitimation? Insights from Social Sciences', in *Studia Patristica*, vol XXI, Peeters Press, Leuven, 1989, pp. 137-141.

²⁴⁴Ignatius (c. 112) established an ontology of office (bishop, priest and deacon) based on a typological hermeneutic: 'Everyone must show the deacons respect. They represent Jesus Christ, just as the bishop has the role of the Father, and the presbyters are like God's council and an apostolic band. You cannot have a church without these' (Ignatius, *Letter to the Trallians*, 3,1, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 191-192). Ignatian ecclesiology is dominated by the concepts of type, archetype and mystical union. (Compare *Magn.*, 6, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 177-178; *Trall.*, 2-3, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 190-191; *Philad.*, 5, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 229-230; *Smyrn.*, 8, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 248). Thus the bishop is the personification of the community; he is the image of God; and he is the visible representative of the invisible 'bishop', Jesus Christ. Whilst previously each local church had a plurality of ministries, with Ignatius the Church adopts the monoepiscopate model in which all authority rested with the bishop (monarchical episcopate). The local congregation is, for Ignatius, hierarchical and consequently the strong demand for obedience on the part of the laity is based upon the presupposition that the bishop symbolises God himself (Compare *Magn.* 6-7, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 177-179; *Trall.* 3; 8, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 192; *Ephes*, 6, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 152-153, where the image changes but the point is the same). See A. Pettersen, 'The Laity-Bishop's Pawn? Ignatius of Antioch on the Obedient Christian', in *SJT*, vol. 44 (1991), pp. 39-56; M. Wiles comments on the absence of arguments for the Ignatian model: *The Christian Fathers*, p. 141; C. Trevett, 'Prophecy and anti-episcopal activity: a third error combated by Ignatius?', in *JEH* 34 (1983), pp. 1-14; J.T. Lienhard, 'Ministry', in T. Halton, *Message of the Fathers of the Church*, vol. 8, Michael Glazier, Delaware, 1984, pp. 15-16.

²⁴⁵The development of the concept of episcopal authority continued with Irenaeus (c. 180), who argued not only that apostolic teaching is *the truth*, but that the apostles appointed bishops for the important cities and subsequently delivered to them the fullness of truth. These bishops passed on the truth to their successors so that anyone who sought the truth could find it by consulting one of the bishops from the apostolic churches (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III,3,1, in *ANCL*, vol. V, pp. 260-261). Therefore *the apostolic succession* was the key to defending the truth for Irenaeus. Moreover, according to Irenaeus' model, truth

Cyprian,²⁴⁶ the emphasis is placed on the fact that the bishop represents both the locus and the organ of truth. Since the bishop is 'wholly aligned to the Mind of God', it follows that 'he embodies the teaching of Christ.'²⁴⁷ Having received from God *charisma veritatis certum*, the bishop is infallible²⁴⁸ and thus the only one entitled both to defend and transmit the truth.²⁴⁹ It is in this context that individual interpretation of Scripture by the laity separated from the bishop is forbidden; he alone approves that

and office coincide since the bishop receives by the good will of the Father *charisma veritatis certum* (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III,3, 1-2 (ANCL, vol. V, pp. 260-261); VI,26,2 (ANCL, vol. IX, pp. 462-463); J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 37). Burrus argues that Irenaeus developed his theory of 'apostolic succession' in the rabbinic sense, in which both the tradition and the office are handed on. V. Burrus, 'Hierarchalization and Genderization of Leadership in the Writings of Irenaeus', in *Studia Patristica*, vol. XXI, Peeters Press, Leuven, 1987, pp. 42-48.

²⁴⁶The relation between truth and office was further developed by Cyprian who affirmed that the bishop's succession in the apostolic office is *de jure divino*, regardless of their personal failures. The questions which arose after the Decian persecution during which many believers, including bishops, lapsed were: who was to determine if the lapsed should be reinstated, and if so, on what conditions? Some suggested that those who are the highest in sanctity should have preeminence over those who are high in office. In other words, there was a tension between spiritual authority (especially of the martyrs) and the ecclesiastical (institutional) authority of the bishops. The answer that Cyprian gave to these questions illustrates another shift in the theology of ministry. Thus the bishop's succession was taught to be one in its own right and not dependent on the Church; rather, the Church depended on it. See M. Wiles, *The Christian Fathers*, pp. 142-143. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 204. Cyprian asserts: 'For although the proud and arrogant multitude of them that refuse to obey may take themselves off, still the Church never departs from Christ, and the Church is made up of the people united to their priest and the flock that cleaves to its shepherd. Hence you should know that the bishop is in the Church and the Church in the bishop, and if any one be not with the bishop he is not in the Church' (Cyprian, *Letter* 66, in ANCL, vol. VIII, pp. 231-235). Moreover, since the bishops are also the true bearers of the Holy Spirit having thereby divine authority, those who do not submit to the bishops rebel against the Holy Spirit. In conclusion, for Cyprian the bishop has the same authority as the Apostles and, furthermore, the episcopal office has an objective character. Cyprian, *De unit. eccl.*, 4,5,7,23, in ANCL, vol. VIII, pp. 380;383;395;396; B. Hagglund, *History of Theology*, pp. 107-111.

²⁴⁷A. Petterson, 'The Laity', p. 45.

²⁴⁸Wiles argues that Irenaeus himself realized that there were unworthy church leaders who failed as guardians of truth. To limit the damage brought about by such bishops and presbyters, Irenaeus suggested that these leaders should be checked on their fidelity to Scripture and Tradition. Yet in spite of the fact that some bishops fell into error, Irenaeus predicated to the episcopal office the *charisma veritatis certum*, thus clearing the ground for the doctrine of infallibility. M. Wiles, *The Christian Fathers*, p. 142.

²⁴⁹Irenaeus considered the Church to be the sole repository of apostolic truth, hence his emphasis on 'the canon of truth', that is, the teachings that were handed down in the Church and which, in contrast to the variegated teachings of the Gnostics, is identical and self-consistent everywhere. The identity of the teaching of the Church with the original apostolic teaching is guaranteed by the unbroken succession of bishops that can be traced back to the apostles themselves. The example given by Irenaeus in order to prove his point is the church in Rome, which was founded by the apostles Peter and Paul. See *Adv. Haer.*, III, 3.2, in ANCL, vol. V, p. 361.

which is acceptable to God.²⁵⁰ In other words, the episcopal office became the authority to establish the relation between *episteme* and *praxis* for the entire community.

Theologically, this shift from community to office took the form of ecclesiastical symbolism portraying the Church and the bishop as images or *eikons* of the being of God.²⁵¹ The risk of this approach, however, is to 'idealize the church by ignoring the people' and thus to lead to 'incoherence between church-as-symbol and church-as-community.'²⁵² This risk was still limited during the Pre-Nicene period due to the fact that each local church had its own bishop, that is, the 'charisma of truth' was still present in each local community through its own bishop.²⁵³ Moreover, the local community had a certain space, albeit limited, to participate in establishing the relation between *episteme* and *praxis* due to the right of the laity to elect their own bishop. However, both these aspects were significantly changed in the imperial church.

3.3 Truth and Regional Hierarchy

Meyendorff asserts that although no authority ever defined or endorsed it specifically, the monarchical episcopate was universally accepted about the beginning of the fifth century.²⁵⁴ However, after AD 320 this model underwent significant changes due to the fact that the Church adapted its structure to the legal administrative patterns of the Empire.²⁵⁵ Consequently, whilst it was considered an act of humiliation to associate the 'name and prestige' of a bishop with villages and small towns,²⁵⁶ the

²⁵⁰Ignatius wrote to Polycarp of Smyrna: 'Let nothing be done without your approval; neither yourself do anything without God's approval' (*Polycarp.* iv; A. Petterson, 'Laity', p. 49); W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, p. 141; R. L. Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986, pp. 502-511.

²⁵¹The bishop in each Church presides in place of God' (Ignatius, *Magn.*, 6,1 in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 177; *Smyrn.*, 8,1-2, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 248; *Eph.*, 20,2, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 168.

²⁵²I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 43-44.

²⁵³See Eusebius, *EH*, IV. xxii, 2 in *NPNF*, vol. I, p. 198; Irenaeus, *Adv. haereses*, III.2,1-4 (*ANCL*, vol. V, pp. 260-264); IV.1,1; IV.26,2 (*ANCL*, vol. IX, pp. 277-278; 462-463); Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, XX, XXI, XXXII (*ANCL*, vol. XI, pp 20-37); Cyprian, *De catholicae ecclesiae unitate*, 4-6 (*ANCL*, vol. VIII, pp. 380-382); *Epistle XXXIII*, 1 (*ANCL*, vol. VIII, pp. 67-68); *Epistle LXVI*, 7 (*ANCL*, vol. VIII, pp. 231-235); P.C. Empie, eds., *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1980, p. 17; D.K. McKim, *Theological Turning Points*, John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1988, p. 102-103.

²⁵⁴Meyendorff considers the perennial aspect of this model to reflect not merely custom or some sort of arbitrary consideration, but the very nature of the Church. Yet in the absence of other arguments (not offered by Meyendorff) one might ask if its perennial character is sufficient to prove Meyendorff's hypothesis. J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 41.

²⁵⁵J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 41.

²⁵⁶The Council of Serdica (AD 343) explains the reason behind this shift: 'One should not establish bishops in villages, or in small cities, where a simple priest suffices..., so that the name and prestige of a bishop may not be humiliated' (Council of Serdica, *Canon 6*).

episcopal office was linked with the administrative-political centre of the area (city) and with wealth and social influence.²⁵⁷ Commenting on this development in the life of the Church, Meyendorff concludes: 'Clearly, the Church was rapidly forgetting its humble origins, and successors of the Galilean fisherman were developing more worldly concerns.'²⁵⁸ Moreover, the emergence of the regional and ecumenical ecclesiastical structures as a result of the rapprochements between Church and State had significant consequences for the relation between truth and office. Firstly, the fact that the episcopal office was no longer a purely ecclesiastical institution but also political and administrative,²⁵⁹ led to what Meyendorff calls 'mercenary bishops': wealthy,²⁶⁰ corrupt²⁶¹ and subject to imperial interests in both election and removal from office.²⁶²

Secondly, as a result of the interplay of religious and political factors, certain churches and their bishops were recognized as having special

Along the same lines, Theodore of Mopsuestia recommended that the bishops should not be ordained in villages because there is no need of episcopal authority (Theodore of Mopsuestia, *In ep. B. Pauli Comentarium*. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 41-59). The Council of Laodicea in Canon 57 establishes that 'one should not appoint bishops in villages and country-districts, but travelling inspectors, and those already appointed should do nothing without the opinion of the city bishop.' This practice can be further illustrated in the transition from the council of Nicaea (325) to Chalcedon (451). At the former there were several 'country-bishops' who signed the decree in their own right whilst at the latter they acted only as delegates of the city-bishops. E. Honigmann, 'Une liste inédite des pères de Nicée', in *Byzantion*, XX (1950), pp. 63-71; A. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 184-602. A Social and Administrative Survey*, vol 2, pp. 877-879.

²⁵⁷See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*. p. 45.

²⁵⁸J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*. p. 43.

²⁵⁹Each bishop was invested with judicial authority by imperial law to judge in civil suits and to participate in the election of civil magistrates. A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, p. 758; W. Walker, eds., *A History*, p. 184; J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 14-15.

²⁶⁰John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Mat.* 66; *PG*, 58, 630; J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 13-14.

²⁶¹Meyendorff affirms: 'Under the new conditions of privilege and financial security for some only, various forms of bribery-or simony-crept into customary practices. There was fierce competition for ecclesiastical positions of wealth and influence. Both councils and emperors condemned such abuses, but, significantly, they were attempting only to limit them, without even pretending to suppress them altogether. Reflecting the situation in Antioch and Constantinople at the beginning of the fifth century, the writings of John Chrysostom (d.404) contain an abundance of examples illustrating the corruption among clergy and the difficulties which the author faced in his attempts at eradicating it. The shining examples of a few saintly and unmercenary bishops-St. John himself, St. Martin of Tours, St John the Merciful of Alexandria-must have been rare exceptions' (J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 49).

²⁶²See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 12, 13, 15, 46.

eminence and authority in a particular area.²⁶³ Once elected or appointed these hierarchs 'by gradual encroachments, hardening into custom, established their ascendancy over their lesser neighbours.'²⁶⁴

Thirdly, the local church was no longer a community which had the fullness of apostolic 'charisma' in the person of its own bishop,²⁶⁵ but only part of a regional church organised according to political and administrative criteria.²⁶⁶ As Tsetsis puts it:

The local church...is not necessarily present in every eucharistic assembly but in the episcopal diocese through which every eucharistic gathering acquires its catholic nature.²⁶⁷

Fourthly, the provincial or ecumenical office was considered to be the locus of truth. The authority of this office was expressed either by 'gradual encroachment', which led to imposed rather than freely consented unity,²⁶⁸ or by the decisions of provincial or Ecumenical Councils where only the city and regional bishops were entitled to participate.²⁶⁹ Consequently the participation of local communities in the truth of Christ was reduced to a careful repetition of the dogmatic or liturgical practices adopted by the regional or ecumenical hierarchy.²⁷⁰ The institutionalization went even further, since 'all decisions were to be ratified by Metropolitan, or bishop of the provincial capital, who thus held veto power over all decisions.'²⁷¹ Fifthly, the doctrine of ministry which emerged during the previous period developed into an 'ideology of ministry.' Thus, in spite of individual and corporate errors committed by various bishops, the doctrine of infallibility was adopted both in the East and in the West.²⁷² It is true, however, that in the East the doctrine of infallibility did not develop into a dogma as in the

9

²⁶³A bishop who exercised jurisdiction over the churches in the whole province was subsequently called 'Metropolitan'. W. Walker, ed., *A History*, pp. 184-101. Some churches in particular, such as Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, enjoyed special prestige and authority which extended over an area much larger than that of a single province, and their bishops were called 'Patriarch' in the East and 'Pope' in the West. See J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 406.

²⁶⁴A. Jones, *Roman Empire, II*, p. 874.

²⁶⁵Originally each church had its own bishop as the local leader responsible for pastoral and sacramental ministries. Some of the 'ecclesiastical canons' of that period required no less than twelve adult members in one place for the election of a bishop. See G. Horner, *The Statutes of the Apostles, or Canones ecclesiastici*, London, 1904, p. 133. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, 1989, p. 42.

²⁶⁶See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 41-43; 54-56; A. Jones, *Roman Empire, II*, pp. 877-879.

²⁶⁷G. Tsetsis, ed., *Orthodox Thought*, p. 24.

²⁶⁸J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 54.

²⁶⁹See E. Hoenigmann, 'Une liste inedite des pères de Nicée', in *Byzantion*, XX (1950), pp. 63-71.

²⁷⁰See J. Meyendorff, *Palamas*, pp. 96-98; *Imperial Unity*, pp. 68-76, 95-126.

²⁷¹J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 55; See Also Canons 4 and 5 of Nicaea 325.

²⁷²See J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, pp. 56-58; F. Dvornik, *Byzantium and Roman Primacy*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1966; H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *History of the Church*, vol. 2.

West;²⁷³ nevertheless, it was formally adopted by the Council of Jerusalem (1672) as the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church, whose organ is the episcopate.²⁷⁴ Consequently, the emergence of both ecumenical (imperial) hierarchy and the doctrine of infallibility inaugurated what Polanyi calls 'specific authority', which is characterized by a total subjection of *episteme* to the institutionalized *praxis*, the result of such authority being traditionalism, authoritarianism and stagnation of knowledge.²⁷⁵

3.4 Truth and Church in Contemporary Orthodoxy

The view that the Church is infallible and that the organ of infallibility is the episcopate is widely accepted within contemporary Orthodoxy. However, there is disagreement among Orthodox scholars concerning the mode in which the episcopate expresses this infallibility. Thus, one trend affirms that the bishops 'formulate decisions *ipso jure*, and these decisions are infallible in of themselves and not from the consent of the Church',²⁷⁶ whilst the other argues that 'no synod of bishops...can be considered 'ecumenical'...unless such a synod has been *accepted* by the royal priesthood as a whole, that is to say, *received* by the Church at large.'²⁷⁷ Additionally, some argue that the organ of infallibility is the Council which represents the supreme authority within the Church,²⁷⁸ whilst others maintain that the individual bishop represents the final authority due to the fact that he is the bearer of the *charisma infallibilitatis certum*.²⁷⁹ In other words, the former disagreement between the 'one' and the 'many' illustrates the tension between hierarchy and laity, and the latter represents the tension between the bishops themselves. However, each trend proposes a model of authority based upon the belief in infallibility, to which we now turn.

3.4.1 Truth Between the 'One' and the 'Many': Konstantinidis considers that the relation between the individual bishop and the Council

²⁷³The development of the dogma of papal infallibility pronounced on July 18, 1870 at the First Vatican Council has been criticized by the Orthodox Church ever since. However, during the patristic period the Eastern Fathers had been supportive of the idea of the primacy of the Roman See. P. Chirico, *Infallibility: The Crossroads of Doctrine*, Michael Glazier, Wilmington, 1983, pp. I-XXXIX.

²⁷⁴See *The Confession of Dositheus*, II, XII; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Ed. IBM al BOR, București, 1981, vol. 2, pp. 38-42.

²⁷⁵See M. Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society*, pp. 43-45.

²⁷⁶C. Androutsos, *Dogmatike*, Athens, 1907, p. 290. Cf. K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 954. P. Trembelas adopts a similar view: The bishops at ecumenical councils 'define the truth with the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, *ipso et divino jure*...' (P. Trembelas, *Dogmatique de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Catholique*, (Tr. by P. Dumont) Chevetogne, 1967, pp. 437-438; cf. K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 954). See also H. Andrușos, *Simbolica*, p. 74.

²⁷⁷K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 954.

²⁷⁸C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), 197-209.

²⁷⁹J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament of the Word', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), 395-400; 'The Sacrament of the Word' in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), 432-436.

concerning the question of authority has to be addressed in the context of the catholic (universal) Church. Truth is universal and consequently the agency which defines truth has to have a universal feature. This model, argues Konstantinidis, is illustrated by the two apostolic councils: first, the elective council (to elect Matthias), and second, the dogmatic council (to clarify doctrinal issues among the Gentile churches).²⁸⁰ The Church continued subsequently this conciliar practice, which eventually became institutionalized in the imperial church.²⁸¹ However, the institutionalization of the Councils does not mean that they lost their ecclesiastical character. On the contrary, being rooted in the life of the churches through the bishops, the Councils 'proved in most cases to be unavoidable (and thereby salutary) for preserving and affirming the revealed truth and the faith of the Church, not only for their own times but for all times and places.'²⁸² Although Konstantinidis is aware of 'certain exaggerations' or 'deviations from the proper ecclesiological norms',²⁸³ nevertheless he considers that,

It was through them [Ecumenical Councils] that the Church expressed itself and took decisions (as it still does) in all authority concerning the constancy and purity of the truth.²⁸⁴

However, whilst affirming both the *horizontal* (Christ-Apostles-bishops) and vertical (pneumatological) approach to apostolic succession, Konstantinidis denies the infallibility of the individual bishop.²⁸⁵ Moreover, he ascribes the present crisis of authority within Orthodoxy to the tendency of individual bishops to concentrate power into their own hands.²⁸⁶ The solution to this crisis, argues Konstantinidis, is the view that only the Church as the body of Christ is infallible, and that its organ of infallibility is the Ecumenical Council as 'the voice of the Church speaking through its bishops.'²⁸⁷

²⁸⁰C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 200. Clapsis on the other hand, argues that the conciliar practice emerged during the doctrinal controversies in the life of the early Church as a necessary form to express the apostolic faith and to draw a line of demarcation between the true faith and the heresies that distorted the Gospel. E. Clapsis, 'Scripture, Tradition and Authority', p. 25.

²⁸¹C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), pp. 202-203.

²⁸²C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 202.

²⁸³The danger of the council being secularised as an institution loomed large, as did the danger of racialism in the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, resulting either in ineffective functioning, or else in a purely juridical machine. Bad examples coexisted with the Church in close proximity. That is a well-known fact. The Roman State, and later the theocratic régime of Byzantium, various forms of both Eastern and Western civil law, a tendency in the Church to adopt secular models, the institutional and other resemblances between Church and State (such as emperor-patriarch, or senator-bishops), a weakness on the part of the political leaders for dabbling in church affairs and making theological pronouncements, combined to give birth to the notorious caesaro-papism and papo-caesarism both in the East and the West. All these factors were constant pitfalls to the life of the Church' (C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 203.

²⁸⁴C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 203.

²⁸⁵C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 205.

²⁸⁶C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 205.

²⁸⁷C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 206.

However, apart from the tension between universal-particular aspects of truth expressed through Council as opposed to an individual bishop, Konstantinidis addresses neither the question of the heretical councils nor that of the problem created by the fact that since Nicaea II the Church has had no other Ecumenical Council.

Conversely, Meyendorff attempts to demonstrate that the universal truth manifests itself through particular bishops in local churches. Consequently he points out that the Ecumenical Councils, in spite of their immensely significant role in defining some of the most important dogmas of the Church, do pose certain problems. Firstly, it is known that no Ecumenical Council was ever summoned until the time of Constantine, and yet that does not mean that the Church did not have until that time a universally accepted teaching.²⁸⁸ Secondly, the Ecumenical Councils were rather a 'political institution of the Byzantine theocratic state than a necessary function of the life of the Church.'²⁸⁹ Therefore it is important to distinguish between the essential principles of the Church's life and historical circumstances. The simple fact that since the eighth century no Ecumenical Synod has been summoned in the East, does not mean that the Church ceased to teach the truth.²⁹⁰ What is essential is the fact that the Church possesses the truth, which does not depend on councils. Rather, such councils derive their authority from the truth because the Spirit of Truth rested upon their participants.²⁹¹ To illustrate this point, Meyendorff argues that not all the Ecumenical Councils were necessarily Orthodox.²⁹² Moreover, some local councils defined some points of dogma which were subsequently included in the liturgy of the Eastern Church.²⁹³ For example, no Ecumenical Council ever defined the canon of Scripture or the eucharistic doctrine of the real presence, yet they are accepted by the Orthodox Church.²⁹⁴ Consequently, argues Meyendorff, the infallibility of the Church depends on the fullness of Christ who is always in the Church and not upon Ecumenical Councils which are historically determined ecclesiastical events.²⁹⁵ Thus, by arguing that

²⁸⁸J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), p. 396.

²⁸⁹It was the concern of the Byzantine Emperors to use the religious factor in order to restore peace in the Empire. Therefore they convoked all the bishops to establish the common faith of the Empire. Those ecumenical synods were possible only when the Roman Empire had become a Christian *oikoumene*. See J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), p. 397; *The Orthodox Church*, p. 29.

²⁹⁰J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), pp. 397-399.

²⁹¹J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), p. 398.

²⁹²The councils of Ephesus (499) and Florence (1438) had all the marks of ecumenicity but are considered non-Orthodox. See J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), p. 398.

²⁹³Meyendorff refers here to some local councils which were held in Constantinople during the fourteenth century. J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), p. 398.

²⁹⁴J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 9 (1951), p. 398.

²⁹⁵Its [the Church] truth cannot depend either on the will of Emperors, or on any formal criterion, such as the Byzantine ecumenicity. It is quite possible for the Orthodox Church to hold a Council which would be ecumenical neither in the Byzantine sense, because not imperial, nor in the modern sense, because the Orthodox Church is not nowadays universal in the geographical sense of the word; nor need it necessarily deal with

the truth of faith is linked to the infallibility of each local bishop, Meyendorff attempts to resolve a major problem within Orthodoxy, namely, its total dependence on the past for doctrinal definition.

The bishop is not only a minister of the sacraments and an administrator, he is also a minister of the word. In other words he is equally the president of the eucharistic assembly and a teacher.²⁹⁶ In this capacity the bishop is the 'type of the Father'²⁹⁷ and thus he *renders God present* in the Church. Therefore each time the liturgy is celebrated in the Orthodox Church, 'the bishop sits on the Throne of God and the Lamb, behind the altar on a high place surrounded by presbyters as an echo of the celestial liturgy described in the Revelation of St. John.'²⁹⁸ In addition, during the *synaxis* (the first catechetical part of the office) the people can see in the bishop the image of God and hear the words of revelation. Thus, concludes Meyendorff, 'when the bishop expounds the Gospel to the community assembled for worship he possesses by the Father's good pleasure, the infallible *charisma* of truth.'²⁹⁹

In order to explain how this infallible *charisma* of truth operates in each local church, Meyendorff (following Irenaeus) relates the infallibility of the bishop to the 'apostolic succession.'³⁰⁰ This succession has two distinct but related aspects: firstly, succession through predecessors and secondly, succession through consecrators. The former implies unity in time due to the fact that each bishop, when elected by a local church, continues the true apostolic faith of his predecessor, whilst the latter implies unity in space expressed through other bishops who confess the same true faith and come to examine and consecrate the incumbent.³⁰¹ Further, Meyendorff argues that the early church emphasized the first aspect and thus the bishops sit in the same *cathedra* as the Apostles and represent God in their local eucharistic assemblies. Consequently the infallibility of each bishop is

'ecumenism'! But, still, it could have the same significance as the council of Nicaea, if it were to be held in Christ and His Truth' (J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 399).

²⁹⁶J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 432.

²⁹⁷Here, Meyendorff adopts Ignatius' view on bishops. See Ignatius of Antioch, *Trall.*, III,1, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 191-192; *Magn.*, VI,1, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 177; *To the Romans*, IX,1, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 218.

²⁹⁸J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 432.

²⁹⁹J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 433; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, IV,21,2.

³⁰⁰J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 433.

³⁰¹J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 433. Meyendorff asserts that for the primitive Church apostolic succession was the symbol of the transmission of true doctrine (Irenaeus and Tertullian) and therefore 'apostolicity' became a synonym of 'orthodoxy'. In this sense the apostolic succession of bishops occupying the same See is not transmitted personally, because when a bishop dies his successor is elected by the local church. Therefore the *charisma infallibilitatis* is not a privilege transmitted by Christ to the apostles and thence to the bishops, as to his 'vicars' ruling over the Church, but a mark of the whole Church which holds the Divine Revelation, that is, the truth. The second aspect of apostolic succession refers to a 'kind of delegation ..from Christ through the apostles and bishops', which is given through the consecrators. See J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), pp. 433-434.

conditioned by his relationship with the eucharistic assembly. This relationship is described as being similar to the relationship between Christ and his Bride.³⁰²

The second aspect, unity in space expressed in the Councils, stems from the fact that each bishop is the president of a eucharistic assembly. Consequently, when the bishops from different churches began to meet in local councils in order to formulate the apostolic faith in language comprehensible to all, those councils were considered infallible not because they were ecumenical (pan-imperial) but because they were composed of true bishops who had 'by the Father's good pleasure, the infallible charisma of Truth.'³⁰³

This raises, however, the question concerning the relation between the doctrine of the infallibility of the bishops and the historical evidence of errors committed by bishops either individually or corporately (in Council).

Meyendorff responds by introducing the analogy of holiness. When believers gather together on Sunday to participate in the liturgy they are 'a holy people, kings and priests.'³⁰⁴ In other words, the believers are holy because of the grace received at baptism into the body of Christ, despite the fact that they fail to live a holy life in daily practice. Similarly, the 'infallible' bishops err in spite of the fact that they receive the apostolic charisma of truth. However, it appears that Meyendorff is aware of the weakness of this argument, for at this point he predicates infallibility to the whole Church. Accordingly, if an 'infallible' bishop persists in error, it is the responsibility of his church to depose him.³⁰⁵ It is the body of Christ which is the guardian of the truth of faith that is responsible for accepting or rejecting a doctrinal statement defined by councils: 'every Christian is *responsible* for his own faith before God.'³⁰⁶ However, this argument faces the same problem of inconsistency as the previous one, that is, a 'fallible' believer is responsible for his own faith before God and may reject the false teaching of an 'infallible' bishop, whilst at the same time having neither the *charisma infallibilitatis* nor the 'parliamentary rights to discuss the truth'. As Meyendorff says:

The people of God, as a body, is a witness and a guardian of the true faith and can receive or refuse the doctrinal statement of councils and of bishops:

³⁰²The bishop is linked to his local church as tough to his bride, and therefore the removal of a bishop from one see to another was considered a 'divorce' and as such was unknown in the early church. However, since the Orthodox Church forbids only a fourth marriage, by analogy the bishop is allowed to occupy only three sees. J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 434.

³⁰³J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), pp. 435-436. 'Each bishop was doctrinally supreme in his own diocese and sat 'on the chair of Peter'...The bishops were all depositaries of the same grace and all equal in office: they gathered not to add anything to the grace that each possessed in its entirety...but to witness to their unanimity in the true doctrine' (J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 28).

³⁰⁴J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 436.

³⁰⁵J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 436.

³⁰⁶J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10 (1951), p. 436.

every Christian is *responsible* for his own faith before God. But this reception cannot be interpreted as parliamentary discussion of doctrinal truths. A layman cannot sit on the episcopal cathedra, as he cannot preside at the liturgy. In periods of ecclesiastical disorder, when the majority of the episcopate was unable to teach the true Gospel, Orthodox laymen were always ready not only to proclaim the truth on the controversial point, but also to restore the ecclesiastical order, in which the apostolic faith is taught by true successors of the Apostles.³⁰⁷

However, in addition to the internal inconsistency of the argument and the external inconsistency between the belief of the Church and the historical evidences that bishops, patriarchs and councils do err, Bulgakov argues that in ascribing *charisma infallibilitatis* either to individual bishops or to Councils one infringes upon *sobornost* and leans towards the Vatican dogma.³⁰⁸ In order to avoid this risk some Orthodox theologians propose an alternative model.

3.4.2. *Infallibility and Consensus Fidelium*: Such an alternative approach to the question of authority affirms that the whole body of Christ is infallible, not simply one part of it.³⁰⁹ However, since the Church is a hierarchical community, the new paradigm tries to reconcile the tension between the 'one' and the 'many' affirming that the authority of the Church is to be seen from two complementary points of view. There is, firstly, the authority of the total community, or the 'general conscience' of the Church (*sensus fidelium*); and secondly, there is the authority vested in the episcopate.³¹⁰ The distinction between them is that, whilst by virtue of baptism every member of the laity becomes only a *fidelis* entrusted with the defense of the *fides* which he or she has professed publicly (or which has been professed on his or her behalf) during the rites of initiation,³¹¹ the bishops by virtue of their apostolic succession are endowed with the *charisma* to teach, define and examine the truth of the faith. In other words, the laity is the guardian of truth, whereas the episcopate represents the organ of the Church's infallibility as well as being the *mouth* of the Church.³¹² This approach asserts that neither the bishops nor the laity can function without the other, due to the fact that whilst the bishops, individually or in Council (*in solidum*), have the right to formulate the truth, their definition becomes

³⁰⁷J. Meyendorff, 'The Sacrament', in *Sobornost*, 3, 10, (1951), p. 436.

³⁰⁸S. Bulgakov, 'The Church's Ministry', p. 169. See also P.C. Empie, 'Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church: Roman Catholic Reflections', in P.C. Empie eds., *Teaching Authority*, p. 41.

³⁰⁹C. Mouratidis, *He ousia kai to politeuma tes ekklesias*, Athens, 1958, p. 17, Cf. C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 206.

³¹⁰K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 948.

³¹¹This view was clearly defined and defended by the Eastern Patriarchs in their *Answer to Pope Pius IX* (1848): 'Among us neither patriarchs nor synods could ever introduce new teaching, for the defender of religion is the very body of the Church, that is the people itself, which desires that its religion should be unchanged from age to age, identical with that of its fathers' (Cf. K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 950).

³¹²K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', pp. 951-953.

authoritative only when accepted by the whole Church.³¹³ This is in the final analysis the proof of infallibility: when a certain doctrine or practice has been accepted by the whole Church. However, despite the fact that this approach avoids the risk of presenting the truth as an exclusive monopoly of the hierarchy, the test of universal acceptance lacks any formal criteria of reception, having a mystical rather than a historical sense.³¹⁴ Further, whilst this approach affirms the authority of the laity in guarding and defending the truth of the faith, in reality the *pleroma* of the faithful does not have the organ nor the voice to speak out its view.

As Ware puts it:

The apostolic authority of the bishop extends equally to the realm of practice and of belief: it is an authority to give both leadership and teaching...The layman's task...is to conserve the faith unchanged, safeguarding it from innovation; it is not claimed for him that he formulates fresh definitions of doctrine, or that he examines and expounds the truth in council.³¹⁵

However, elsewhere Ware acknowledges that councils can err and that the Orthodox Church has not offered so far a satisfactory explanation of the mode in which the Church expresses its infallibility:³¹⁶

All Orthodox know which are the seven Councils that their Church accepts as ecumenical, but precisely what it is that makes a council ecumenical is not so clear. There are, so it must be admitted, certain points in the Orthodox theology of Councils which remain obscure and which call for further thinking on the part of theologians.³¹⁷

Thus, on the one hand, the Orthodox Church has no clear explanation of the mode in which the Church expresses its infallibility, whilst on the other it affirms that under the authority of the episcopate the Church is infallible in both *episteme* and *praxis*. Moreover, whilst the whole Church is infallible, the role of the community is reduced to that of 'conserving' the tradition of the Church.³¹⁸ The key issues confronting Orthodox ecclesiology will be presented in the following methodological, theological and sociological observations.

³¹³See A.A. Bogolepov, 'Which Councils are Recognized as Ecumenical?', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, VII (1963), pp. 54-72; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 18-38; N. Zernov, *Eastern Christendom*, p. 231; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 75-81.

³¹⁴G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 53.

³¹⁵K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 951.

³¹⁶Historically speaking, 'Many councils have considered themselves ecumenical and have claimed to speak in the name of the whole Church, and yet the Church has rejected them as heretical: Ephesus in 449, for example, or the Iconoclast Council of Hieria in 754, or Florence in 1438-1439. Yet these councils seem in no way different in outward appearance from Ecumenical Councils. What then, is the criterion for determining whether a council is ecumenical?' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 256). See also J. van Laarhoven, 'The Ecumenical Councils in the Balance: A Quantitative Review', in *Concilium*, 167, 7, 1983, pp. 50-60.

³¹⁷T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 256.

³¹⁸C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 208.

3.5 Observations

3.5.1 Methodological: In its attempt to defend the traditional belief in the infallibility of the Church, Orthodox ecclesiology faces two related tensions. First, the tension between 'church/symbol-church/community' refers to the Byzantine tendency to idealize the Church as a symbolic, mystical reality whilst ignoring the historical realities concerning the life and mission of the concrete communities that form the visible church.³¹⁹ Bria argues that Orthodox symbolism has left 'the impression that the church may live as a symbolic entity and that its personal, historical and sociological reality is irrelevant. The visible structure is seen as a symbolic representation disconnected from the life and salvation of the people of God.'³²⁰ Consequently, the *charisma infallibilitatis* is predicated of the invisible Church which is mystically united to Christ (Head and Body), whilst the errors of the visible Church are explained away as irrelevant. As Timiadis says:

The Church is divine and human. As composed of human elements she will inevitably show shortcomings and deficiencies on the human side; on the contrary, the divine side of the church is protected from error. This fact gives the Church the authority to interpret the Faith, i.e. to make the visible plan of God for the salvation of humanity at all times, without human distortion.³²¹

However, from a christological (the Body of Christ) and pneumatological (the Temple of the Spirit) perspective, whilst attempting to avoid this dualism between visible and invisible, Meyendorff argues that 'the Orthodox Church does not claim to possess any infallible and permanent criterion of Truth.'³²² The Church's infallibility is always a pneumatological event which is subsequently recognized as such by the Church under the guidance of the Spirit.³²³ However, this argument leaves unresolved the question concerning the relation between the uninterrupted unity of Christ, the Spirit and the Church on the one hand, and the punctiliar aspect of the infallible events on the other. The second methodological problem that the Orthodox Church faces concerns the relation between the overlapping images. Thus both the bishop presiding over the eucharistic liturgy in his local church and the bishops assembled in Council are images of the Trinity.³²⁴ According to this symbolism, because each local church possesses the fullness of truth and not just a part of it,³²⁵ the universal Church is not a federation of independent

³¹⁹I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 42.

³²⁰I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 43.

³²¹E. Timiadis, 'The Trinitarian Structure', p. 151.

³²²J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 225.

³²³J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 31.

³²⁴Y. Congar, 'The Conciliar Structure or Regime of the Church', *Concilium*, 167, 7 (1983), p. 4; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 244-245; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 135-136; K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 953.

³²⁵I. Bria, ed., *Jesus Christ-the Life of the World*, WCC, Geneva, 1982, pp. 12-13.

churches united hierarchically for institutional and administrative purposes but rather a communion of local churches which have inner eucharistic and canonical unity.³²⁶ Hence the difficulty in maintaining the balance between the local bishop and the Council concerning the *charisma* of infallibility. Bria, for instance, asserts that 'every local church holds a 'catholic' view, because the presence of the one Spirit is given to the Church as a whole as a guarantee of its unity and truth.'³²⁷ Alternatively, Ware argues that,

Collectively the shepherds of the Church, whether apostles or bishops, speak with an authority that none of them can command individually. At every true council the total is greater than the sum of the parts: *together* the members of the episcopate become *something more* than they are as scattered individuals, and this 'something more' is precisely the presence of Christ and the Spirit in their midst.³²⁸

This tension between the 'one' and the 'many' amongst the bishops has led either to a sense of independence, isolation and sometimes nationalism, or to rivalry and a spirit of domination.³²⁹ This crisis is illustrated both by the disintegration of the Orthodox Church in America (in the Russian jurisdiction) 'into an entire constellation of parallel national jurisdictions',³³⁰ and by the 'disunity on the world scale...of the Orthodox Church today.'³³¹

3.5.2 Theological: The attempt to extend the Chalcedonian christology to ecclesiology runs the risk of unbalanced relation between the divine and human elements. As Timiadis comments:

This divine Body, the Church, strictly speaking, does not really begin its life with Christ: it has been united with the eternal Logos from timeless beginning. It pre-existed beyond any limitation of time and space, 'hidden' in the mystery of God's economy. It has always existed in the 'wisdom' and providence of God, as Hermas says (*Shepherd* I.3,4), as a 'spiritual' Church having an invisible existence. Before the aeons God had conceived of a plan of redemption for mankind's salvation. St. Athanasius rightly says that the Church was first built and afterwards brought to birth by God (*De incarnatione* 12, PG 26,1004).³³²

However, a growing number of Orthodox theologians have become aware of the problems posed by this Neo-Platonic 'spiritualism' and consequently

³²⁶See G. Tsetsis, *Orthodox Thought*, p. 24; D. Popescu, 'The Local Church and Conciliar Fellowship', in *Ecumenical Review*, XXIX, 3 (1977), pp. 265-272; I. Bria, 'Ecclésiologie', in *Unité Chrétienne*, 70 (May 1983), pp. 46-88.

³²⁷I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 36.

³²⁸K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 954.

³²⁹See J. Zizioulas, 'The Local Church in Eucharistic Perspective', in *In Each Place*, WCC, Geneva, 1977, pp. 50-61; I. Bria and C. Patelos, eds., *Orthodox Contribution to Nairobi*, WCC, Geneva, 1975, p. 31.

³³⁰J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 119.

³³¹J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 139.

³³²E. Timiadis, 'The Trinitarian Structure', p. 137. This view is deeply rooted in patristic thought. See John Chrysostom, *Homily in Epist. ad Ephes.*, 1,4; PG 62,15; Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Ephs.*, prologue; Epiphanius of Cyprus, *Contra Haer.*, 3,2; PG 42,640; Origen, *In Numer. Hom.*, 3; PG 12, 596; Athanasius, *Contra Arianos*, 2,75; PG 26, 305.

advocate a return to an *ecclesiology in flesh and bones*.³³³ Such an ecclesiology, which takes into account the human element of the Church, is increasingly uncomfortable in using the language of infallibility. Thus, Ware affirms that 'many Orthodox would prefer to avoid this non-Scriptural and (for the most part) non-Patristic term [infallibility].'³³⁴ However, since the term is used, Ware argues that it refers to the Church in its totality:

According to our Lord's promise, truth will be invincible within the Church, in the sense that there will never be a time when all members of the Church fall into falsehood. But it does not therefore follow that any particular bishop or gathering of bishops will be exempted automatically from all possibility of error, and that we shall know this fact in advance.³³⁵

More precisely, Kartachoff contends:

It is high time we give up using the divine nature of the church to cover up the sins and defects in church life, when the time comes to reform them and make certain innovations...The Church has a kernel of infallibility and a foundation which is impeccable, but certain aspects of it are subjected to sin. The historic church must have the courage to recognize its sins in history, its human weaknesses, the errors in its life and work, and must make an effort to correct them.³³⁶

The other major problem within contemporary Orthodoxy concerns the failure of traditional ecclesiology to maintain the trinitarian balance between the 'one' and the 'many.' Thus the belief in the monarchy of the Father cleared the ground for the shift from a *communal* to a *hierarchical* ecclesiology in which the office of the 'one' overshadows the office of the 'many.' The bishop is the image of God, whilst the others occupy lower places; the bishop is linked to the 'Mind of God', whilst the believers are linked only to the 'mind of the bishop'.³³⁷ Further, the bishop alone receives from God *charisma veritatis certum* which together with the 'deposit of faith', is transmitted through an uninterrupted apostolic succession.³³⁸ Thus, whilst the hierarchy became a special class within the Church possessing special God-given 'charisma' in order to perform its priestly, prophetic and kingly prerogatives,³³⁹ the 'many' (the laity) became a 'mob' deprived not only of direct communion with God (hence priestly mediation),³⁴⁰ but also of their right to participate in episcopal election.³⁴¹ Zizioulas points out this situation when he affirms that,

³³³I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 44.

³³⁴K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', p. 950.

³³⁵K. Ware, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', pp. 950-951.

³³⁶A. Kartachoff, 'Orthodox Theology and the Ecumenical Movement', in *Ecumenical Review*, VIII, 1 (January 1955), p. 33. See also I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 95.

³³⁷See Ignatius, *Trall.*, 6, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 193; *Philad.*, 5, in *ANCL*, vol. I, pp. 229-230; *Smyrn.*, 8 in *ANCL*, vol. 1, pp. 248-249.

³³⁸A. Pettersen, 'The Laity', p. 47; P. Stockmeier, 'The Election of Bishops', pp. 4-6.

³³⁹See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 55.

³⁴⁰J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 25.

³⁴¹See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 44-45.

...the actual situation in Orthodoxy both theologically and canonically no longer does full justice to the tradition...The synodical institutions no longer reflect the true balance between the 'one' and the 'many,' sometimes because the 'one' does not operate or even exist, and sometimes because the 'one' or the 'ones' ignore the 'many'.³⁴²

However, since the days of Khomiakov the Orthodox Church has attempted to develop an ecclesiology of *community*. The return to an understanding of truth as *being as communion* faces, however, the resistance of the traditional hierarchy which, idealizing the 'church-as-model', is not eager to validate the 'church-as-community'.³⁴³ Yet in spite of this opposition a growing number of Orthodox theologians speak about an ecclesiology of the 'parishioners', which affirms that 'there is no theological support for considering the ecclesiastical authority as appointed by God to master the truth. The people of God have their own quality and right to voice the gospel, beyond any magisterial manipulation.'³⁴⁴ Moreover, Timiadis argues that the laity ('many') have the right to participate in conciliar debates according to the apostolic model of Acts 15:22. Thus, whilst rejecting any form of *subordinationism* derived from a misunderstanding of the divine *monarchy*, he affirms the right of the laity to participate at all levels of ecclesiastical life. In other words, a *monarchical* ecclesiology needs to be balanced by a *perichoretic* ecclesiology.³⁴⁵ However, as Schillebeeckx considers,

The obvious conclusions for the *Church as an institution* have, however, not yet been drawn from this, with the result that the teaching authority of the community of faith even now is treated with only scant justice and sometimes even suffers from the power of office in the Church. From the ecclesiastical point of view, this is not in any sense a normal situation.³⁴⁶

3.5.3 Sociological: The shift from the authority of the community to the authority of the office in the relation between theological epistemology and ecclesiastical practice has significant influence on the relation between truth and office.³⁴⁷ While, historically speaking, truth and authority have always been related categories, Hanson argues that an agency which assumes the role of determining the truth is not always competent for this task. Consequently there can be tension between 'office' and 'truth.'³⁴⁸ There have been periods when truth was considered to be a predicate of office. Thomas Stapleton (1535-1598) formulated this view as follows: 'In matters of faith,

³⁴²J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 141.

³⁴³I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 55.

³⁴⁴I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 44.

³⁴⁵See E. Timiadis, 'The Trinitarian Structure', pp. 152-156.

³⁴⁶E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching', pp. 21-22.

³⁴⁷H. Vorgrimler, 'From *Sensus Fidei* to *Consensus Fidelium*', in *Concillium*, 180, 4 (1985), pp. 3-4; P.C. Empie, eds., *Teaching Authority*, p. 19; J.T. Lienhard, 'Ministry', in T. Halton, *Message of the Fathers of the Church*, vol 8, Michael Glazier, Delaware, 1984, pp. 12-16.

³⁴⁸The authority of the office (hierarchy) is needed in order for the institution to function but this cannot replace the authority of competence, that is, of the experts (charismatic), in order to maximize the role of the institution. In Hanson's understanding, the two do not always coincide. See A.T. and R.P.C. Hanson, *The Identity of the Church*, SCM Press, London, 1987, p. 190.

it is not *what* is being said, but *who* is saying it, that is of prime concern to the faithful.³⁴⁹ Thus the *what*, the proposed truth of faith, may not be conclusively authoritative; the office-bearer can call upon his formal authority.³⁵⁰ Generally speaking, this is one of the features of institutionalised ecclesiology, or 'hierarchology', as Congar puts it.³⁵¹ Whilst the process of institutionalisation began in the pre-Constantinian period, it is the mark of the imperial church to have patterned its structures of authority after those of the imperial state.³⁵² Consequently the development of the doctrine of authority shifted during this period from *general* to *specific authority* and from *auctoritas* to *imperium*, the role of the theologian being 'to find out plausible justification in scripture and history for whatever the *magisterium* declared to be doctrine to be believed by the faithful.'³⁵³ Bria considers that the Church managed to avoid open crisis as a result of this shift due to this period coinciding with the golden age of the Fathers.

This great patristic tradition must be understood primarily as a counter-movement, correcting the extremes of the fourth century Constantinian 'symphony' in a way that avoided a radical crisis between the apostolic church and the Constantinian church.³⁵⁴

Today, however, we live in a post-Constantinian era, and concerning Church authority this looks more like a return to a pre-Constantinian state of affairs.³⁵⁵ The separation of Church and State and the present position of the Church in society 'have modified the presupposition of its theological work and public action.'³⁵⁶ One such presupposition concerns authority as a predicate of truth, and consequently the *what* being said having preeminence over *who* is saying it; or in other words, competence is not necessarily a predicate of office.³⁵⁷

³⁴⁹T. Stapleton, *De principiis fidei doctrinalibus*, Paris 1572. Cf. Y. Congar, *Concilium*, 77 (1972), p. 68. (*In doctrina fidei non quid dicatur, sed quis loquetur a fidei populo attendendum est.*)

³⁵⁰G. Denzler, 'The Authority and the Reception of Conciliar Decisions in Christendom', in *Concilium*, 167:7 (1983), p. 14.

³⁵¹Y. Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, Newman, Westminster, Md., 1965, p. 45.

³⁵²During the Constantinian era, the Church adopted secular models of authority in so far as the authority of the Church and the authority of state became quite indistinguishable. Generally speaking, to be a member of the Church was virtually to be a member of the state. A.T. and R.P.C. Hanson, *The Identity*, p. 192. Konstantinidis asserts that this process was twofold: Firstly, the Church's tendency to adopt secular models, and secondly, the tendency of the state to interfere with the life of the Church. C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church' in *Sobornost*, 3:2 (1981), p. 203.

³⁵³A.T. and R.P.C. Hanson, *The Identity*, p. 211.

³⁵⁴I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 43.

³⁵⁵For example, the excommunicated person was rejected by the other members on a voluntary basis without external (state) support. A.T. and R.P.C. Hanson, *The Identity*, p. 172.

³⁵⁶N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Theology of the Church and its Accomplishments' in *The Ecumenical Review*, 29:1 (January 1977), p. 63.

³⁵⁷A.T. and R.P.C. Hanson, *The Identity*, p. 208.

Generally speaking, since the beginning of the modern period, and particularly as a result of Enlightenment, there are objections to any attempt to link truth in an exclusive way to a particular 'office.'³⁵⁸ This approach is also reflected in the area of religious truth, especially if by 'office' we mean 'hierarchy.'³⁵⁹ In fact contemporary Orthodoxy carefully avoids an explicit link between hierarchy (office) and truth, preferring instead to speak about the whole Church as being the locus of truth since the whole Church is actually the 'pillar and the ground of the Truth.'³⁶⁰ Yet in spite of this new shift towards the authority of community in establishing the relation between *episteme* and *praxis*, the Orthodox Church has still not found the balance between the roles of the hierarchy and the laity. Thus even the attempt of *sobornost* to reverse the downgrading of laity to, at worst a state of 'blind uncritical obedience' which only dehumanises,³⁶¹ or at best to a mere passivity,³⁶² faces the opposition of the Church authority which is not eager to validate the people's contemporary experience. As Bria says:

The church does not easily allow the faithful to bring their actual prayers and needs into the liturgy. It does not provide a forum for open debate on problems of morality, secularization, family life, political engagement. Internal divisions and crises are misinterpreted, and the sociological reality of women and youth is hidden, because the church is unable to assume them.³⁶³

Thus one of the problems which confronts contemporary Orthodoxy concerns the construction of an ecclesiology of *community* which creates space for both clergy and laity, for the 'one' and the 'many.' In the absence of such a balanced ecclesiology there have emerged internal movements, such as the 'Lord's Army' within the Romanian Orthodox Church, which attempt to create such a space.

³⁵⁸See G. Daly, 'Catholicism and Modernity', in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 53 (1985), pp. 773-796; W.G. Jeanrond, 'Community and Authority: The Nature and Implications of the Authority of the Christian Community', in C.E. Gunton and D.W. Hardy, eds., *On Being the Church*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1989, p. 93.

³⁵⁹See A.T. Hanson and R.P.C. Hanson, *The Identity*, p. 208.

³⁶⁰N. Glubokovsky, 'The Church's Message to the World-The Gospel', in C. Patelos, ed., *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC, Geneva, 1978, p. 154. The authority of the Church to determine the truth is warranted by the fact that, on the one hand, Christ, the truth, indwells the Church through the Holy Spirit and, on the other, the Church contains the divine revelation of truth. 'The Holy Spirit's indwelling of the body of the Church means that the Church preserves the truth and the revelation in the same way that a living body preserves its soul' (C. Scouteris, 'Paradosis: the Orthodox Understanding of Tradition', in *Sobornost*, 4, 1 (1982), p. 32).

³⁶¹A. Petterson, 'The Laity', p. 45.

³⁶²See E. Schillebeeckx, 'The Teaching', pp. 19-21; H. Vorgrimler, '*Sensus Fidei*', p. 6; W. Beinert, 'Bedeutung und Begründung des Glaubenssinnes (*Sensus fidei*) als eines dogmatischen Erkenntniskriteriums', in *Catolica*, 25, 171 (1971), pp. 271-303; J. Wohlmuth, 'Konsens als Wahrheit?', in *Zeitschr. Kath. Theol.* 103 (1981), pp. 309-323.

³⁶³I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 55.

Toward a New *Sobornost*: The 'Lord's Army'

4.1 Historical Background

At the end of the First World War the Kingdom of Romania doubled its territory by means of the incorporation of Bessarabia, Transylvania, great parts of the Banat, eastern Hungary and Bukovina.³⁶⁴ During the following decades until 1940 Romania underwent a period of economic³⁶⁵ and political liberalism³⁶⁶ which exposed the country to Western influence.³⁶⁷ At the same time, however, the previously religiously (Orthodox) and nationally (Romanian) homogeneous Danube state became a multi-ethnic³⁶⁸ and multi-faith country.³⁶⁹ This change generated within Romania two major trends: modernism and nationalist traditionalism. Whilst the former was in favour of Western democratic standards, the latter was more intolerant and advocated a return to traditional Romanian Orthodox values.³⁷⁰ Since both trends had powerful political lobbies, the religious policy from that period reflects this dualism. Thus, the Romanian Constitution of 1923 declared the Romanian Orthodox Church the 'dominant religion',³⁷¹ whereas in 1920 Romania had also begun, secret diplomatic relations with the Vatican, which concluded on 10 May 1927 with the signing of a concordat.³⁷² Other religious groups were more exposed to orchestrated persecution by the Orthodox Church which, in the absence of strong political support from the

³⁶⁴See H. Jedin and J. Hubert, eds., *History of the Church*, vol. X, Burns & Oates, London, 1981, p. 523.

³⁶⁵Romania had been known in those days as the 'bread basket of Europe', because it was the fifth largest agricultural producer in the world. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 198.

³⁶⁶Under the liberal Government which held office with little interruption until 1937, Romania adopted a democratic constitution (1923) and a series of other democratic laws which further stimulated the development of agriculture, manufacturing, education and culture. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 190-204.

³⁶⁷See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, 1991, p. 204.

³⁶⁸Out of 18,057,028 inhabitants in 1930, 71.9% were Romanian, 7.9% Hungarian, 4.4% German, 4% Jewish, 3.2% Ruthenian and Ukrainian, 2.3% Russian, 2% Bulgarian, 1.5% Gypsy, 1% Turkish and Tatar, 0.8% Gagauzi (Christianized Turks in Dobrudjia), 0.3% Czech and Slovak, 0.3% Polish, 0.1% Greek, and less than 0.1% Albanian, Armenian and others. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 189.

³⁶⁹In 1919 about 70% of the population belonged to Orthodoxy; 2.5 million Catholics, 1.5 Uniates and a number of other growing groups, such as: the Baptists, Pentecostals, Brethren, Nazarenes, Adventists, Bible Students, etc. See H. Jedin and J. Hubert, eds., *History of the Church*, vol X, pp. 523-524; P. Deheleanu, *Sectologie*, pp. 43-78.

³⁷⁰See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 191-198, 202-207.

³⁷¹This was clearly expressed in the constitution of 28 March 1923, par. 22. See N. Brînzeu, *Culte în România*, Lugoj, 1925; H. Jedin and J. Hubert, eds., *History of the Church*, vol X, 1981, p. 524.

³⁷²See H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *History of the Church*, vol X, 1981, p. 525.

West (as was the case for the Catholics), were more or less endorsed by the government.³⁷³ However, in addition to these interrelated political, ethnic and religious tensions the unity and stability of the newly formed Kingdom was affected by the moral and spiritual vacuum of post-war society with its great number of widows, orphans and homeless and with its widespread corruption, prostitution, alcoholism and burglary, which could no longer be ignored.³⁷⁴

4.2 The Emergence of the 'Lord's Army'

The Orthodox Church, in cooperation with the nationalistic political movements attempted to create a strong dominant Church which could bring about not only protection against Western materialism and modernism but also internal cohesion based upon 'native values.'³⁷⁵ However, this approach had very limited success due to both the corruption of the clergy³⁷⁶ and the ongoing intrigues within the Church.³⁷⁷

Moreover, Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan of Ardeal (Transylvania)³⁷⁸ resolved to improve the moral life of the nation by religious education. Consequently he encouraged pastoral ministry among the clergy and the printing and spreading of religious writings, especially religious periodicals.³⁷⁹ Among other papers, in 1921 he founded *Lumina satelor* (*The Light of the Villages*) and appointed Iosif Trifa, a young priest, as the editor of this paper which provided the launching pad for the 'Lord's Army' movement.³⁸⁰ During his

³⁷³See R.E. Davies, 'Persecution and Growth: A Hundred years of Baptist Life in Romania', in *The Baptist Quarterly*, XXXIII, 6 (April 1990), 266-267; A. Popovici, *Istoria Bapțiștilor din Romania*, Ed. Bisericii Baptiste Romane, Chicago, Ill. vol II, 1989, pp. 27-49.

³⁷⁴See A. Popovici, *Istoria Bapțiștilor*, vol. 2, pp. 11-14; P.I. David, *Călduză*, p. 166. See also 'Indrumări', article published by Asociația Clerului 'Andrei Șaguna', in *Revista Teologică*, XIV, 2-3 (February-March, 1924), 91-96.

³⁷⁵See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 205.

³⁷⁶Isac argues that due to such corruption, Church attendance was between 1 and 2 percent of the population. See V. Isac, *O Lumina a Viitorului*, Editura Traian Dorz, Cluj, 1992, pp. 13-15.

³⁷⁷See T. Popescu, *Am Trăit*, pp. 58-59; Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, *Dascăli de Cuget*, pp. 414-457.

³⁷⁸N. Bălan was appointed Metropolitan in 1920. Previously professor at the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Sibiu, Metropolitan Nicolae was deeply concerned about the Church's responsibility for the moral decay of the nation. See Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan, ed., *Pravila Oastei Domnului*, Tipografia Arhidiecezeană, Sibiu, 1937, pp. 1-4.

³⁷⁹Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, pp. 1-10.

³⁸⁰Iosif Trifa was born on 3 March, 1888, in a small village, Certege (near Albac and Vidra), in the Western Carpathians. He studied at Certege (primary school), Brad (secondary school), Beiuș (high school) and Sibiu (Theological Seminary). In 1910 he was appointed priest at Vidra, where he lived until 1921. See M. Velescu, 'Părintele Iosif Trifa și Oastea Domnului', in M. Velescu, ed., *Calendarul 'Oastea Domnului' 1992 (COD)*, Ed. Isus Biruitorul, Sibiu, 1992, p. 38; Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 2. The bibliographical resources concerning the 'Lord's Army' movement in Romania are for the most part fragmentary and incomplete, especially in Western literature. Therefore

first ten years as priest in Vidra, Trifa was known for his concern to improve the moral and religious standards of his parishioners. According to Trifa, the Church's rituals were 'empty shells' in which people participated without being changed spiritually. Therefore he decided to fill those 'shells' with biblical teaching, prayer and moral values.³⁸¹ Further, Trifa carried to his new editorial office the same concern for the moral regeneration of the Romanian people. However, the turning point in Trifa's life came after one year in office, on New Year's Eve 1923, when, discouraged about the limited impact of his work, he underwent a deep spiritual crisis. As Trifa meditated upon the fact that if at his age (34) he were to 'stand before God, his Master and Judge' in order to give an account of his ministry, he realized that, like so many other Romanian priests, he also had failed to fulfill his priestly vows.³⁸² As Trifa reflected upon the depth of the moral crisis of the country and upon his responsibilities as a priest, he took his Bible,³⁸³ recalling his mother's words: '...to know and to proclaim Christ. In this will be your salvation and of many.'³⁸⁴ Trifa underwent his own 'Damascus Road experience', and was challenged by the words of Christ: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life... apart from Me you can do nothing.... But take heart! I have overcome the world.'³⁸⁵ Subsequently, Trifa wrote an article for his paper, in which he described 'new life in Christ', and concluded his article with a 'Resolution' which called on every Romanian to enroll in a spiritual army, the 'Lord's Army', in order to serve Christ.³⁸⁶ This initiative was supported by Metropolitan Nicolae, who wrote an official letter to all the priests urging them and their parishioners to make subscriptions to *Lumina Satelor* and to disseminate its teachings within their communities. Moreover, Metropolitan Nicolae commissioned all the protopopes to oversee the whole process of distribution, in order to overcome complacency or negligence.³⁸⁷ Although at the beginning people were hesitant to enroll themselves in the 'Lord's Army',³⁸⁸ nevertheless *Lumina Satelor* spread rapidly throughout the archdiocese of Ardeal.³⁸⁹ From 1924 the results were more encouraging; the movement began to grow and Metropolitan Nicolae personally believed the 'Lord's Army' to be the agency to evangelize

occasionally I have had to rely on manuscripts which belong to some of the leaders of the movement.

³⁸¹See Trifa's sermon delivered at his tenth anniversary as priest in Vidra, 'La 10 ani de păstorie', in *COD*, pp. 38-42.

³⁸²See I. Trifa, 'Hotărîrile și Adeziunile', in *COD*, p. 53.

³⁸³It was his mother's Bible given to him as a gift before she died in 1895, when Trifa was 7 years old. See T. Dorz, *Istoria Unei Jertfe*, vol 1, Beiuș, 1970, p. 22, (Manuscript), henceforth Dorz.

³⁸⁴I. Trifa, 'Hotărîrea și Adeziunile', in *COD*, p. 55.

³⁸⁵See I. Trifa, 'Hotărîrea și Adeziunile', in *COD*, p. 55.

³⁸⁶See I. Trifa, 'Hotărîrea și Adeziunile', in *COD*, pp. 55-56.

³⁸⁷See 'Circulara Nr. 434-1922-Ianuarie', followed by another one on 28 November, 1922, in Metropolitan Nicolae, *Pravila*, pp. 4-6.

³⁸⁸See Metropolitan Nicolae, *Pravila*, p. 7; V. Isac, *O Lumină*, p. 29.

³⁸⁹There were villages in which hundreds of families subscribed to Trifa's paper. See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 6.

Romania.³⁹⁰ Trifa and Metropolitan Nicolae worked closely together in leading the movement and editing the paper, and whenever the 'Lord's Army' was criticised by clergy, Metropolitan Nicolae affirmed his support of the movement on the grounds that it brought about moral regeneration in the country and also countered the negative effects of the 'sects.'³⁹¹

4.3 Institution and the Spirit: A New Dimension

If initially the 'Lord's Army' emphasis was on moral issues such as total abstinence from alcohol and giving up bad language, from 1924 the movement adopted a more positive and devotional approach. Thus, its members were encouraged to read the Scriptures and other religious books on a regular basis and to spend time in prayer daily.³⁹² Whilst *Lumina Satelor* was instrumental in motivating people to live a new life, it could not provide a more consistent religious teaching for them. Consequently, between 1924 and 1938, Trifa published 54 books, booklets and pamphlets in over a million copies,³⁹³ which dealt with issues such as: the new birth by faith in Christ, the lordship of Christ, holiness, the role of the laity in evangelism, the centrality of the Scriptures, prayer and exhortations to the 'Lord's Army' members to remain in the Orthodox Church and to attend the liturgy.³⁹⁴ Trifa's emphasis, however, was less upon the soteriological functions of the Church and sacraments than upon personal faith in Christ which leads to holiness, obedience grounded in Scripture, prayer and communion with other believers within the 'Lord's Army.'³⁹⁵ Disseminated throughout the country with the blessing of Metropolitan Nicolae,³⁹⁶ Trifa's teachings aroused the religious interest of a large number of people.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁰See *OD*, No. 24, 8 June, 1930.

³⁹¹The Orthodox Church called 'sects' all other non-Orthodox or non-Catholic religious movements. See D. Staniloae, ed., *Biserica și Sectele*, Asociația 'Sf. Grigore Palama', București, 1992, pp. 25-35; Metropolitan Nicolae, *Pravila*, pp. 7-8.

³⁹²See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 8.

³⁹³See I. Marini, *Culegeri de Cunoștințe și Cugetări Duhovnicești*, (Despre evenimentele mai importante din trecutul mișcării religioase 'Oastea Domnului'-lucrare spiritual Evanghelică de renaștere duhovnicească la o viață nouă în Domnul Isus), Vol I, (Manuscript), pp. 928-942, (henceforth, Marini); I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, Editura 'Oastea Domnului', (4th ed.), Sibiu, 1991, p. 173; Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, pp. 8-9.

³⁹⁴See I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991.

³⁹⁵See I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991.

³⁹⁶Although the Orthodox canons prohibit such practice, Trifa and Metropolitan Nicolae extended their ministry beyond the boundaries of the Ardeal archdiocese. In Bucharest, two novelists L. Moldovanu and I. Gr. Opreșan were the first to enroll in the 'Lord's Army'. They were then followed by I. Binescu, who offered his house as a meeting place, Fr. T. Chiricuta, Zlatari Church; Fr. Comana, St Apostoli Church; and Fr. I. Gafton, St. Ecaterina Church. In Sibiu the local meetings were led by Fr. M. Neagu, Fr. A. Nanu and Fr. Gh. Secaș. A group of archpriests from different parts of the country also supported the 'Lord's Army' work. Among them were: Fr. I. Moța, Orăștie; Fr. E. Stoica, Sighișoara; Fr. A. Nistor, Sf. Gheorghe; and Fr., I. Duma, Petroșani. In addition to them there were also the following priests: I. Alexandrescu, Sarînga; Nic. Șerpoianu, Pietroasele; P.

However, despite the fact that both Metropolitan Nicolae and Trifa constantly emphasized the ecclesio-centred character of the movement, there were at least two factors that created tensions. Firstly, many local priests opposed the 'Lord's Army' on the grounds that it undermined the traditional teachings of the Church, and that their parishioners who had become members of the movement had done so against the will of their own priest. Secondly, there was tension between the desire of the 'Lord's Army' adherents for a new form of *community* on the one hand and the liturgical traditionalism of their local churches on the other.³⁹⁸ Thus it became obvious that the initial desire for a moral renewal in the nation brought about a major theological problem: the relation between the Spirit and the institution. This tension is illustrated in Trifa's own views which, on the one hand, explained the status of the 'Lord's Army' by analogy with the army in 'The Valley of the Dry Bones' (Ezekiel 37:1-11) and so underlined the 'charismatic' character of its members, mostly lay people but with a significant number of priests,³⁹⁹ whilst on the other, affirmed his belief in the institution of the Church as the agency which administers the 'Seven Sacraments' unto salvation.⁴⁰⁰ Moreover, as Trifa pointed to the practice of the early Christians who 'devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer...Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts... praising God',⁴⁰¹ it became clearer that this approach challenged the centuries-old institution with its own canons and rules.

4.4 One Church: Two Ways

The first attempt to reconcile the tension between the Spirit and the institution was to affirm both the unity of the Church and the diversity of forms of worship. Thus from 1928 the 'Lord's Army' organized its own meetings after the official liturgy in the building of the church or in the homes of believers in those communities where the priests were against the movement.⁴⁰² Their programme was inspired by 1 Cor. 14:26,⁴⁰³ and accordingly the study of the Bible, public prayer, singing, reading poems and charity were central in the 'Lord's Army' assemblies.⁴⁰⁴ In addition, from 1931 onwards the 'Lord's Army' organized national meetings periodically,

Chirica, Iași; I. Brânzea, Brașov, among others. See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, pp. 11-12.

³⁹⁷See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 9.

³⁹⁸See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 9; I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 120-128.

³⁹⁹See I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 50-53.

⁴⁰⁰See I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, p. 53.

⁴⁰¹Acts 2:41-47; Cf. I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, p. 54.

⁴⁰²See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 9.

⁴⁰³'When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All these must be done for the strengthening of the Church.' Cf. I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, p. 120.

⁴⁰⁴See I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 120-124.

and from 1932 an annual national congress.⁴⁰⁵ At those events, besides space for laity to practise their 'charisma', the meetings also had a tremendous impact on the life of the country. Membership increased dramatically after the first national meeting. Thus, if in 1929 the membership, was about 5,000, by 1932 at the First National Congress in Sibiu the membership had increased to 40,000, and in 1933 to 70,000.⁴⁰⁶ In addition to these national meetings, the 'Lord's Army' organized regional meetings whose overtly 'charismatic' character is clearly illustrated by their themes such as 'The Lord's Army Jerusalem', or the 'Lord's Army Pentecost'.⁴⁰⁷

At the same time the 'Lord's Army' members participated regularly in the liturgy and the sacraments in their local churches and many priests were encouraged by the growing church attendance.⁴⁰⁸ Consequently, Metropolitan Nicolae and other church leaders⁴⁰⁹ encouraged priests to spend more time with their people and especially to join the 'Lord's Army' meetings.⁴¹⁰

However, in spite of the commitment of the 'Lord's Army' members to participate in liturgies and sacraments, there was one other aspect which generated a growing opposition, namely that the 'Lord's Army' constantly emphasized the authority of the Scriptures and encouraged lay people to study the Bible and also to teach.⁴¹¹ Additionally, some moral practices incriminated by the 'Lord's Army' on biblical grounds affected not only a large number of Orthodox believers but also many priests and hierarchy.⁴¹² Consequently, the 'two ways' in one church became 'two parties' which opposed each other. The situation grew even worse when some practices labeled by the 'Lord's Army' as 'sins' were part of Orthodox local tradition.⁴¹³ However, the traditionalists accused the 'Lord's Army' of being a 'sect' with a Protestant hidden agenda to destroy the Orthodox Church from within by replacing 'the old tradition of the Church' with 'dangerous novelties'.⁴¹⁴ Such novelties included lay teaching ministry and lay missionary programmes, both considered to be practices of the 'sects'. Consequently, in some villages 'Lord's Army' assemblies were banned and its members persecuted by local

⁴⁰⁵See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 12.

⁴⁰⁶See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 12.

⁴⁰⁷See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 12.

⁴⁰⁸See Bishop Grigore Comşa, 'Ne Chiamă Poporul', in *OD*, 5 (1933), p. 1.

⁴⁰⁹Bishop Grigore Cosma from the bishopric of Dunărea de Jos. See *OD*, 5 (1933), p. 1.

⁴¹⁰See Metropolitan Nicolae, *Pravila*, pp. 18-20.

⁴¹¹See I. Trifa, *Biblia-Cartea Vieții*, Ed. Oastea Domnului, Sibiu, 1938, pp. 8-15; 56-57; I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?* 1991, pp. 58-61.

⁴¹²See Dorz, vol. 1, p. 108.

⁴¹³Weddings, funerals, baptisms and birthday parties were events in which the laity and the clergy drank a lot of alcohol. Gambling was a 'social event' on national holidays and weekends. These practices were included by the 'Lord's Army' in the same category as adultery, robbery and corruption. See Dorz, vol. 1, p. 108.

⁴¹⁴See Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 107-108.

governments in cooperation with the local priests.⁴¹⁵ Subsequently the tension between the two parties took on a formalised character which involved the whole Church, both clergy and laity.

4.5 One Church: Two Structures

As the conflict between the two groups escalated rapidly, all parties looked to the hierarchy of the Church for an answer. It was known that Metropolitan Nicolae had been on the side of the 'Lord's Army' from the beginning and occasionally wrote articles in *Lumina satelor* commending the success of the movement in bringing about moral renewal in the country, for its achievements in limiting the spread of the 'sects' in Romania and also for their financial contribution toward the budget of the Church.⁴¹⁶

On Easter Sunday, April 1927, Metropolitan Nicolae wrote a pastoral letter to Trifa in which the hierarch made public his blessing of the young priest for his work and success in leading *Lumina Satelor* and the 'Lord's Army', and also offered 10.000 lei from the treasury of the Church toward Trifa's work.⁴¹⁷

Whilst this gesture of the Metropolitan could not silence the traditionalists, nevertheless it influenced them to change their strategy: instead of attacking the whole movement they singled out Trifa.⁴¹⁸

During this time, however, Trifa organised the movement in such way as to create as much space as possible for lay ministry. Thus, he encouraged the young people to write articles, poetry, choruses and stories for *Lumina Satelor* and also to meet at regional and national level. In this way the 'Youth Lord's Army' was founded.⁴¹⁹ Similarly, Trifa encouraged women's ministries and meetings for children.⁴²⁰ Trifa's approach to the emergence of these new structures was to avoid their institutionalization and to encourage their 'charismatic' character based upon a new birth experience, obedience to God as revealed in Scripture and training in order to grow and become active in evangelism, teaching, writing and charity.⁴²¹ Additionally, in order to stimulate spiritual growth in the members of the movement, Trifa started a Bible study programme for them through his paper. Furthermore, Trifa also decided to publish his teachings in books in order for new members of the 'Lord's Army' to have the complete series of his basic teachings. He also started a library and a national network to distribute his publications.⁴²² Additionally, he bought a new printing press for the 'Lord's

⁴¹⁵See Dorz, vol. 1, p. 107.

⁴¹⁶Dorz, vol. 1, p. 107. See also the speech of Archimandrite Iuliu Scriban at the Orthodox Conference in Cluj, March 1927, in *LS*, 11 (March 13, 1927).

⁴¹⁷Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 112-113.

⁴¹⁸Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 120-130.

⁴¹⁹See *LS*, 13, (26th May, 1926); 18, 19, 20, 24, 27, 48, 50, (1926); 44 (1928); 20 (1930).

⁴²⁰See *LS*, 5 (1926); 41 (1927); *OD*, 18 (1932).

⁴²¹See *LS*, 45 (1926); Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 321-322.

⁴²²Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 238ff.

Army' in order to have freedom in printing and publishing. To accomplish all these projects, Trifa also initiated the 'Lord's Army' fund-raising programme, independent of the archbishopric treasury.⁴²³ The increase in membership was very noticeable in the large crowds which attended the 'Lord's Army' regional and national meetings.⁴²⁴

However, all these new projects of the 'Lord's Army', along with the mounting opposition from the traditionalist party, managed to arouse the suspicion and the jealousy of Metropolitan Nicolae.⁴²⁵ Consequently, as a response to the criticism against *Lumina Satelor* that it had abandoned the traditional values of the Church, Metropolitan Nicolae appointed in 1930 two other editors for the paper, ⁴²⁶ who changed its christological and biblical bias in favour of dogmatic articles, Church history and Canon Law.⁴²⁷ In response, Trifa immediately started a new paper called *Oastea Domnului* ('The Lord's Army') in which he continued to publish his teachings and to inform the movement about the manoeuvre that had been made by the archbishopric.⁴²⁸ However, in spite of the fact that Trifa constantly affirmed his allegiance to the Orthodox Church and emphasized the role of the 'Lord's Army' in opposing the 'sects', and in spite of his claim to have recovered to Orthodoxy many Uniates,⁴²⁹ it became more and more obvious that the two structures were irreconcilable.

4.6 Toward One Church and One Structure

The first attempt to resolve the tension between the two parties, or as Trifa used to call it, between the 'letter' and the 'spirit' or between 'law' and 'grace',⁴³⁰ was to remove Trifa from the leadership of *Lumina Satelor* and subsequently to change its content. Yet, despite the fact that the hierarchy succeeded in appointing other editors, they could not control Trifa's other papers until the confiscation of his printing press in January 1938.⁴³¹

⁴²³See *LS*, 5 (1929); 47 (1929); 51 (1929).

⁴²⁴Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 237-257.

⁴²⁵Dorz, vol. 1, p. 266.

⁴²⁶The two editors were Fr. F. Maior and Fr. A. Nistor. See *LS*, 1 (1930).

⁴²⁷See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, p. 9; Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 248 ff.

⁴²⁸Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 239, 241-250.

⁴²⁹See *LS*, 50 (1929), p. 2.

⁴³⁰Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 334-335.

⁴³¹In 1930, when Trifa had been marginalized from *Lumina Satelor*, he founded another paper, *Oastea Domnului*, which was banned in 1935. Then he founded *Isus Biruitorul* (Jesus the Victor) which, except for a short ban, circulated until 1937. Subsequently, Trifa published for a short time two other papers: *Ecoul* and *Alarma*. When these two papers were also banned, Trifa published two other papers in 1937: *Ostaşul Domnului* and *Glusul Dreptăţii*. All these measures against Trifa had been taken by the Court in Sibiu, based upon allegations from the Archbishopric of Sibiu. Finally, in January 1938 the Court passed a decision to confiscate Trifa's printing press. Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 11-12, 306.

The second attempt was to prove dogmatically that the laity should not teach the Bible, since the 'charisma' of teaching is given only to clergy in the mystery of Ordination. To this Trifa responded by referring to Bulgakov's ecclesiology of *sobornost*, which affirms the right of all the faithful to teach.⁴³² Thus, under the umbrella of *sobornost*, Trifa escaped the charge of heresy.⁴³³

The third attempt was to 'institutionalize' the 'Lord's Army.' Thus, whilst Trifa was officially removed from the leadership of 'The Lord's Army' on the grounds of illness,⁴³⁴ Metropolitan Nicolae appointed another leader for the movement in the person of Fr. Secaş. Subsequently, Secaş organized a series of 'Lord's Army' meetings (regional and national), and within a short time replaced Trifa's christological and scriptural teachings with his views emphasizing the role of the Church as institution and obedience to Church authority and its tradition.⁴³⁵ Furthermore, the hierarchy proceeded to 'organize' the 'Lord's Army' in such a way as to bring it totally under the control of the official structure of the Church.⁴³⁶ As the diocesan bishops became the organisers of the local meetings, they launched a severe attack on Trifa and his followers on the grounds of sectarianism, whilst the 'obedient sons of the Church' were promoted to the local leadership of the movement.⁴³⁷

As a result of these tensions the 'Lord's Army' split into two groups: one which followed the hierarchy and the other which followed Trifa. Finally, because he opposed the 'institutionalization' of the 'Lord's Army', in March 1937 the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church defrocked Trifa on the grounds of 'rebellion' against the Church's authority.⁴³⁸ Further, on 16 June 1937 the Holy Synod approved the new Constitution and the By-Laws of the 'Lord's Army', according to which its organisation and ministry had to be totally submitted to the authority of the Church.⁴³⁹ In addition to the ecclesiastical methods used against Trifa and his movement, the Church since 1935 had received the support of the Government in implementing the decisions of the Synod against the 'non-institutionalized' part of the 'Lord's Army'. Moreover, in 1948 the Communist régime, in co-operation with the

⁴³²Bulgakov's book *The Orthodox Church* had been recently translated into Romanian and published. See I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 91-92.

⁴³³See I. Trifa, *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?* 1991, pp. 91-92.

⁴³⁴It is true that Trifa was very ill at that time and in fact from 1927 to 1937 he underwent eight major surgical operations before he died in February 1938. But his illness was only a pretext in order to deceive the people. Dorz, vol. 1, p. 10.

⁴³⁵Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 265-276; Fr. V. Ouatu, 'Un Adevărat Martir', in *Ostaşul Domnului*, 6-8 (15 April, 1935), p. 5.

⁴³⁶Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 331-332.

⁴³⁷Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 334-339.

⁴³⁸Dorz, vol. 1, pp. 12, 321-340.

⁴³⁹Regulament Desvoltător al Statutelor 'Oastei Domnului', cap. 1. art. 2, approved by the Holy Synod, Bucharest, 16 June 1937. Cf. Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, pp. 193-220.

Orthodox hierarchy, outlawed the movement.⁴⁴⁰ However, in spite of all these attempts, while remaining formally within the Orthodox Church, the 'Lord's Army' continued its work independently of the Church's hierarchy, functioning underground under the Communist régime. According to Keston College records, however, the membership of the movement dropped from a few million before the Communist takeover to about 400,000 in the 1980s.⁴⁴¹

4.7 One Church.... Many Structures

During the Communist régime the 'Lord's Army' underwent dramatic changes. The Church's hierarchy overtly turned against the 'Lord's Army', humiliating it to the point of forcing its members to openly confess that they had committed sin by joining the 'Lord's Army.'⁴⁴² Many of the priests who were associated with the movement were either removed from office or persecuted until they compromised with the Communist régime.⁴⁴³ After 1948 the active leaders of the 'Lord's Army' were imprisoned, and many of them died in Communist jails.⁴⁴⁴ In addition, the 'Lord's Army' meetings, although they continued throughout the Communist era, were held in secret and more limited in number, and consequently the whole movement took on a more 'insular' form.⁴⁴⁵ However, whilst T. Dorz, poet and hymn writer, who had followed Trifa as the leader of the 'charismatic' wing of the 'Lord's Army' and who had spend nearly seventeen years in prison, succeeded in maintaining the relative unity of the movement,⁴⁴⁶ after his death (22 June, 1989) there emerged no other national leader with sufficient 'charismatic' authority to bring the different groups together.⁴⁴⁷ Consequently all these tensions, both from within and without have significantly weakened the 'Lord's Army' movement. While all attempts to unify the movement after the anti-Communist Revolution in December 1989 have failed, the 'Lord's Army' remains divided in different groups, each one claiming the right to be the

⁴⁴⁰The leaders of the 'Lord's Army' were imprisoned, tortured, harassed and fined in order to make them give up their faith and ministry. See R. Tobias, *Communist-Christian Encounter in East Europe*, School of Religion Press, Indianapolis, USA, 1956, pp. 318-351; Christian Committee for the Defence of Religious Rights in Romania, ALRC, 'The 'Lord's Army' Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 8, 4 (Winter, 1980), pp. 314-317.

⁴⁴¹ALRC, 'The 'Lord's Army' Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 8, 4 (Winter, 1980), p. 314.

⁴⁴²F. Andrețoiu, 'Au Justificare Rezervele Unora?', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 10 (27), (October, 1992), p. 2.

⁴⁴³See R. Tobias, *Communist-Christian Encounter*, pp. 323, 326, 331, 332, 333; ALRC, 'The 'Lord's Army' Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 8, 4 (Winter 1980), pp. 314-317.

⁴⁴⁴Dorz, vol. 3, pp. 1330-157.

⁴⁴⁵Dorz, vols. 2-3.

⁴⁴⁶ALRC, 'The 'Lord's Army' Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 8, 4 (Winter, 1980), pp. 314-317.

⁴⁴⁷See I.O. Rudeanu, 'Traian Dorz, conducător spiritual al Oastei Domnului', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 1 (18), (January, 1992), p. 4.

legal successor of Trifa and Dorz. In addition, the Orthodox Church has sought to bring the movement under its official control. Thus on 28 September 1990 the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church decided to remove the sentence pronounced against Trifa by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church in March 1937. Consequently, Trifa is no longer a 'rebel' against the authority of the Church; on the contrary he is now appreciated as one who made a significant contribution towards the spiritual development of the Orthodox Church. Although the Synod acknowledges that Trifa had some 'conflicts' with Metropolitan Nicolae, nevertheless it deemed that he loved the Church and accepted its dogmas.⁴⁴⁸ Moreover, the 'Lord's Army' is no longer described as a 'sect' but as the 'elite corps' of the Romanian Orthodox Church.⁴⁴⁹

The same Synod of 28 September 1990 also adopted the new Constitution of the 'Lord's Army', according to which the movement is an 'association' within the Orthodox Church whose activities are coordinated by Bishop Serafim-Făgărășanul and its publications by Fr. Professor Vasile Mihoc from Sibiu Theological Seminary.⁴⁵⁰ The constitution also stipulates that the purpose of the 'Lord's Army' association is 'voluntary spiritual life' and 'lay missionary activity.' By 'voluntary spiritual life' the Romanian Orthodox Church understands personal commitment to live an authentic Christian life imparted in baptism and actualised in and through a life of obedience to the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵¹ Further the constitution specifies that the laity have the opportunity to teach, provided that the canons and Tradition of the Church are followed with the blessing of their bishop or priest, in accordance with Ignatius' teaching that nothing should be done without the approval of the bishop.⁴⁵² Constitutionally, meetings of the 'Lord's Army' should take place normally in church buildings, although they may also occur elsewhere (homes or open spaces), on the condition that these meetings do not coincide with the liturgy. Therefore the Synod exhorts all priests to integrate the activity of the 'Lord's Army' movement within their parishes.⁴⁵³ In spite of these provisions, however, the Romanian Orthodox Church is far from united on this issue. The first major division concerns those who are in favour of the

⁴⁴⁸For more details about the vindication of Fr. Trifa and the attitude of the hierarchy, see Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul, 'Noul Statut al Oastei Domnului și reabilitarea oficială a memoriei părintelui Iosif Trifa,' in *Calendarul 'Oastea Domnului' 1992*, pp. 44-47.

⁴⁴⁹See V. Mihoc, ed., 'Măreața Adunare de Rusalii-Sibiu, 1992: Din Cuvîntul P.S. Episcop Serafim-Făgărășanul', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 7 (24), (July, 1992), pp. 1-2; 'Din Cuvîntul Părintelui Profesor Vasile Mihoc', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 7 (24), (July, 1992), pp. 1-2.

⁴⁵⁰See Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul, 'Noul Statut al Oastei Domnului', in *Calendarul 'Oastei Domnului' 1992*, pp. 44-47.

⁴⁵¹Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul, 'Noul Statut al Oastei Domnului', in *Calendarul 'Oastei Domnului' 1992*, p. 45.

⁴⁵²The Church has but one teaching and the bishop is its guardian. See Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul, 'Noul Statut al Oastei Domnului', in *Calendarul 'Oastei Domnului' 1992*, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁵³See Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul, 'Noul Statut al Oastei Domnului', in *Calendarul 'Oastei Domnului' 1992*, p. 46.

'Lord's Army' movement and those who are against.⁴⁵⁴ Among the former three major tendencies can be identified. Firstly, those who want to see the movement under the official control of the Church and to be circumscribed by the canonical boundaries of the institution. Secondly, those who want to be part of the Evangelical Alliance⁴⁵⁵ but remain members of the Orthodox Church. And thirdly, a more independent group which while not wishing to become part of another organization, does desire freedom and to remain Orthodox, wishing to develop a more positive relationship with all other Bible-believing Christians. The situation is very complex and also confusing, since there is growing tension within the movement; each party accuses the other either of 'dead-letter traditionalism' or 'neo-protestantism', or of being a 'sect'.⁴⁵⁶ In addition each group has among its members both clergy and laity, a national board and its own paper.⁴⁵⁷

However, besides the two-fold tensions between the Spirit and the institution and between the different 'charismatic' groups within the 'Lord's Army', there are some other theological and ecclesiological observations which reveal the crisis of authority within the Romanian Church.

4.8 Observations

4.8.1 Methodological: Initially both Metropolitan Nicolae and Trifa shared the same concern for the moral decline of the nation and consequently believed the Church to be the agency through which to bring about moral regeneration.⁴⁵⁸ Moreover, at the beginning both believed that the institution could be renewed and that the clergy would be the leaders of the new spiritual movement.⁴⁵⁹ However, following Trifa's religious experience (on New Year's Eve, 1923), he emphasized more and more the pneumatological experience of Christ, which he called 'new birth.'⁴⁶⁰ Consequently, despite his commitment to the Orthodox Church, Trifa's emphasis was less on institutional aspects of salvation and more on

⁴⁵⁴See Fr. S. Gheorghe, 'Este Oastea Domnului o sectă?', in *Isus Biruitorul*, II, 10 (15), (October, 1991), p. 2; Fr. Prof. V. Mihoc, 'Oastea Domnului și Biserica', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 1 (18), (January 1992), p. 3; F. Andrețoiu, 'Au Justificare Rezervele Unora?', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 10 (27), (October, 1992), p. 2; Fr. Prof. I. Bria, 'Isus Hristos, dincolo de curtea bisericii', in *Isus Biruitorul*, IV, 2 (31), (February, 1993), pp. 1-2.

⁴⁵⁵In 1990 the Baptist, the Brethren, the Penticostal, the Romanian Lutheran churches and some groups from the 'Lord's Army' founded the Romanian Evangelical Alliance.

⁴⁵⁶See P. Giurgi, 'Nedumerire', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 12 (29), (December 1992), p. 4; Sfatul Frățesc pe țară, 'Comunicat', in *Isus Biruitorul*, IV, 3 (32), (March, 1993), p. 4.

⁴⁵⁷The traditionalist group has *Isus Biruitorul*, the pro-Evangelical group has *Alo* and the independent group *Oastea Domnului*. See Sfatul Frățesc pe țară, 'Comunicat', in *Isus Biruitorul*, IV, 3 (32), (March, 1993), p. 4.

⁴⁵⁸See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, pp. 1-5.

⁴⁵⁹I. Trifa, 'La 10 any de păstorie', in *Calendarul 'Oastei Domnului' 1992*, pp. 38-42.

⁴⁶⁰See I. Trifa, 'Hotărîrea și Adeziunile', in *Calendarul 'Oastei Domnului' 1992*, pp. 53-57.

'charismatic' experiences based upon a systematic study of the Bible and moral living.⁴⁶¹ Hence Trifa encouraged the 'charismatic' meetings of the 'Lord's Army', where the people were free to express themselves and to share their common experiences. Moreover, whilst he encouraged participation at liturgies, Trifa considered the Church's rituals to be 'empty shells' without pneumatic content, and the clergy as the main barrier to spiritual renewal within the Church.⁴⁶² Consequently, Trifa's concern was to safeguard the freedom of the movement from the institutionalized control of the Church. This aspect is clearly reflected in Trifa's guidelines for the 'Lord's Army' assemblies, which pointed towards the practices of the early church in the pre-hierarchical period (Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 14:26; Acts 17:11; Col. 3:16).⁴⁶³ Further, during the attempt of the hierarchy to take over the leadership of the 'Lord's Army', Trifa argued that Christ is the invisible Leader of the movement, and the visible leader can only be a person who experienced the 'new birth' in Christ. In other words, Trifa did not necessarily consider an ordained clergyman to be 'charismatic'. Rather he affirmed that a person could be 'charismatic' whilst not being ordained. Furthermore, Trifa affirmed that if the movement were to be 'institutionalized', it would die.⁴⁶⁴

However, Metropolitan Nicolae and other hierarchs who supported the 'Lord's Army' movement expected to see a more effective institution in which the hierarchical structures of the Church would be respected.⁴⁶⁵

Unfortunately, from a methodological perspective neither Trifa nor Metropolitan Nicolae attempted to either reflect critically on Orthodox ecclesiology or to propose a different model of relation between the Spirit and the institution. Instead, Trifa believed in the renewal of the Church provided it would emphasise a 'charismatic' ministry which did not exclude the priest but neither include him automatically, whilst Metropolitan Nicolae believed that the institution was sacred and all that it needed was a more dynamic life. Additionally, Trifa affirmed the authority of Scripture and the value of direct access of all believers to its message, whilst Metropolitan Nicolae believed in the authority of Tradition over and against Scripture.⁴⁶⁶ The same methodological difference and lack of clarity can be traced throughout the whole history of the 'Lord's Army', and unfortunately the two parties have made no attempt to develop conceptual clarification.

⁴⁶¹T. Keppeler, 'Romania's Army of the Lord', in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, 29, 2 (1993), pp. 132-138.

⁴⁶²See I. Trifa, 'Toți cei Insetați Veniți la Ape', in *Isus Biruitorul*, III, 2 (19), (February, 1992), p. 1.

⁴⁶³See I. Trifa, 'Adunările Oastei Domnului', in *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 120-121.

⁴⁶⁴See I. Trifa, 'Cine este conducătorul Oastei Domnului și cine pot fi îndrumătorii și conducătorii ei?', in *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?* 1991, pp. 138-141.

⁴⁶⁵See Metropolitan Nicolae, ed., *Pravila*, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁶⁶See Trifa's view on Scripture. I. Trifa, 'Sfânta Scriptură (Biblia)', in *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 58-61; See also the Metropolitan Nicolae's view on Tradition in *Pravila*, pp. 10, 14.

4.8.2 Theological: Besides the theological implication of the tension between the Spirit and the institution on the one hand, and between the Bible and Tradition on the other, there are other important issues. First, from an ecclesiastical perspective, Trifa affirmed the role of the Church in administering the 'Seven Sacraments' unto salvation and spiritual growth,⁴⁶⁷ but he also argued that besides baptism in water administered by the Church there is a baptism with the Holy Spirit which brings about new birth.⁴⁶⁸ Unfortunately, he never developed the relationship between the two baptisms beyond the point that the first without the second is useless. The same unclear attitude is found in Trifa's approach to the 'Lord's Supper': whilst it is a mystery of the Church unto salvation⁴⁶⁹ it is also the 'Word of God which feeds our souls.'⁴⁷⁰ Because Trifa avoided theological clarifications, there are currently major disputes on these subjects between the traditionalist and the 'charismatic' groups within the 'Lord's Army.' For example, Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul affirms that the Eucharist is the fountain of all the other sacraments and ministries of the Church,⁴⁷¹ whilst I. Alexandru argues that we can meet Christ in the Eucharist only if we have met him before in the Word. The risen Christ did not perform miracles, argues I. Alexandru, but taught his disciples how to interpret the Scriptures; He broke the bread (Eucharist) only after they had understood the Scriptures. Eucharist without understanding Christ as revealed in Scripture is magical.⁴⁷² Secondly, Trifa and his followers believed in salvation by the death and resurrection of Christ appropriated through personal faith, which is further reflected in moral regeneration (or 'new birth') and missionary commitment.⁴⁷³ In Trifa's soteriology, faith and obedience under the ministry of the Holy Spirit are the central themes, whereas in official Orthodoxy the sacraments are the means whereby salvation is appropriated.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁶⁷I. Trifa, 'Biserica Domnului nostru Isus Hristos este păstrătoarea tainelor rînduite pentru întărirea și mîntuirea noastră', in *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 53-54.

⁴⁶⁸See I. Trifa, 'Botezul cu Foc', in *Tîlcuirea Evangheliilor*, 4 vols. Ed. 'Oastea Domnului', Sibiu, 1926, vol. 1, p. 16; *Corabia lui Noe*, Ed. 'Oastea Domnului', Sibiu, 1930, pp. 15-16; *Focul cel Ceresc*, Ed. 'Oastea Domnului', Sibiu, 1936, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁶⁹I. Trifa, 'Biserica Domnului nostru Isus Hristos', in *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?*, 1991, pp. 53-54.

⁴⁷⁰See I. Trifa, 'Chemarea la Cină', in *LS*, 50 (1927), p. 3; 'Eu Sînt Pîinea Vieții', in *Lumina Satelor*, 10 (1928), p. 3; 'Eu Sînt Pîinea Vieții', *Oastea Domnului*, 50 (1931), p. 2.

⁴⁷¹Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul, 'Noul Statut al Oastei Domnului', in *Calendarul 'Oastei Domnului' 1992*, p. 46.

⁴⁷²I. Alexandru is a well-known Romanian poet and author. He teaches Hebrew and Greek at Bucharest University and presently is a member (senator) of the Romanian Parliament. Alexandru is also a member of the Romanian Orthodox Synod and one of the leading Orthodox lay teachers. See I. Ille, ed., 'Din cuvîntarea poetului Ioan Alexandru la inaugurarea Universității de Vară Traian Dorz, July 1992, Simeria', in *Oastea Domnului*, I, 2 (December, 1992), p. 4.

⁴⁷³See I. Trifa, 'Inima și viața omului este ca o cetate'; 'Jertfa Crucii Mîntuitorului'; 'El a Murit și pentru Noi', in *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?* 1991, pp. 40-49.

⁴⁷⁴P.I. David, *Călduză*, pp. 259-304.

However, since the 'Lord's Army' does not aim at theological clarification, for the time being the main part of their activity is invested in meetings, missions, organizations, publishing and charity. In the absence of theological clarification, however, their activism does not resolve the existing tensions within the movement which, in turn, have significant sociological implications.

4.8.3 Sociological: The sociological problems of the Romanian Orthodox Church today are rooted in a methodological and theological confusion which surrounds its dynamism. There are within the same Church different groups with parallel structures on the local and national levels. The so called 'unity in one church' is not a reflection of a dogmatic unity but rather a determination by each group to affirm its Orthodoxy. In fact each group has its own structure of authority, more or less defined, and the role of the local church is consequently severely undermined, because in the same church there are people who belong to different groups with different teachings and authorities. Moreover, there is the risk of overlapping authority among priests or even bishops, especially when parishioners from one community where the priest is against the 'Lord's Army' follow the lead of another priest from a different community who is for the 'Lord's Army'. In this way the Orthodox model of unity of the 'one' and the 'many' is totally undermined. The Synod's attempt to bring the movement under official control failed because two groups already opposed 'institutionalization.' Moreover, the attempt to institutionalize the 'Lord's Army' remains a problem as long as there are clergy who reject the movement. Since sociological structures are the reflection of ideas, beliefs and traditions, any attempt to solve the problem has to start from there. However, in spite of all these theoretical and practical problems, the existence of the 'Lord's Army' movement in Romania proves that laity can have their own place and ministry in the Church. Although there is confusion and lack of clarity, nevertheless there are also very active and, in many ways, successful lay ministries.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Commenting on the situation of contemporary Orthodoxy, Gvosdev affirms:

The Orthodox Church has been described as a rigidly hierarchical, authoritarian body. At various points in its history, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth century, the national Orthodox churches in Eastern Europe 'remained static, lacking a horizontal cohesiveness and local dynamism' because of a system of 'bureaucratized, pyramidal subordination' to a state dominated hierarchy.⁴⁷⁵

This hierarchical model, which has characterized the Orthodox 'school-theology',⁴⁷⁶ has its roots in the unbalanced translation of both Chalcedonian christology and *monarchical* trinitarianism into ecclesiology. Thus, whilst an ecclesiology construed around the image of the body of Christ provides a framework for the relation between Christ and the Church, it does not allow for enough space between the 'Head' and the 'Body.' Consequently, emphasis has been placed on the invisible Church which shares the same authority with Christ. Further, since the Holy Spirit is the life of the Church, there is no space between the Spirit and the institution; hence the latter claims the same authority as the former. Theologically, this approach paved the way for an ecclesiology in which Christ, the Spirit and the Church are so inextricably knit together as to run the risk of merging into one another, or of extending the principle of *communicatio idiomatum* from christology to ecclesiology. Historically, however, the Orthodox Church faces the danger of incoherence between symbolism and reality. In other words, whilst Orthodoxy took the magisterial route of idealizing the institution, it lost the *community*.⁴⁷⁷ The hierarchical ecclesiology provides space for the 'one' (the bishop) whilst failing to create space for the 'many' (the laity). However, the twentieth century has revealed not only the crisis of the Orthodox Church but also its significant potential for renewal. The most significant change appears to be the shift from a hierarchical institutionalism to a hierarchical *community*. The underlying principle for this change is the belief that the universal church exists only in and through local communities.⁴⁷⁸ There are two main trends within this shift from institution to *community*. First, the *eucharistic vision* emphasizes the fact that since truth exists ontologically as *communion* as Zizioulas affirms:

⁴⁷⁵N.K. Gvosdev, 'Rendering unto Caesar', p. 81. See also, D. Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church*, vol. 1, pp. 241ff.

⁴⁷⁶See E. Melia, 'Point de vue Orthodoxe sur la problème de l'Authorité dans l'Eglise', in *Problème de l'Authorité*, Les Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1962, p. 29.

⁴⁷⁷I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 44.

⁴⁷⁸See N. Afanasiëff, 'The Church which Presides in Love', in J. Meyendorff, eds., *The Primacy of Peter*, The Faith Press, Leighton Buzzard, England, 1973, pp. 74-81.

Only in the Eucharist does the Church acquire a vision of the truth as both historical and free from the laws of history; as social and yet transcending all societies; as love which although experienced in and through human relations remains ultimately only a matter of sharing the trinitarian love of God, of *theosis*. The Eucharist is the only historical experience that the Church possesses in which all this becomes real.⁴⁷⁹

This view, adopted by Melia, Florovsky, Meyendorff, Schmemmann and Afanasieff,⁴⁸⁰ and particularly emphasized by Zizioulas, attempts to develop a *neo-patristic synthesis* in order to recover both the symbolic-hierarchical and corporate-existential aspects in the teaching of the Greek Fathers.⁴⁸¹

Secondly, there is the *pastoral vision* which is primarily concerned with the present situation of the Orthodox *pleroma* living in different cultures and facing different challenges from those of the Byzantine period. This approach argues that contemporary Orthodoxy has to rewrite its theology in such a way that while remaining faithful to the Holy Tradition, it is also relevant for the present. In other words, Orthodoxy has to rediscover the theology of *community* which allows space for all the faithful to participate in the truth of faith according to their charisma. As Bria says:

Pentecost continues to enable the people of God to hold the Tradition in ways the Spirit wills. The Eastern Church understands this continuity as ensured by an episcopal ministry consecrated in the apostolic succession. But the church is built on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as its main cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). This view of the church does not prevent the participation of all in building up the body. The wholeness-koinonia-of the body implies that all categories of the people of God share fully in 'all truth.' This is the charismatic ministry of the people of God, who are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit into the 'living stones' of the church.⁴⁸²

This pastoral view illustrates clearly the Romanian perspective on ecclesiology: from the institutionalism of the past through to the experience of the 'Lord's Army' towards a new ecclesial *community*; or, in other words, from *specific authority* towards a *general authority*. Consequently, authority is no longer a mere predicate of office but a quality of truth; and truth is Christ in *communion and in community*.

⁴⁷⁹J. Zizioulas, 'Communal Spirit and Conciliarity: First Comment', in S. Agourides, ed., *Procès-Verbaux du Deuxième Congrès de Théologie Orthodoxe*, Athens, 1978, pp. 140-146.

⁴⁸⁰See Bishop Maximos Aghiorgousis, 'East Meets West', pp. 12-13.

⁴⁸¹McPartlan presents a well documented view on the positive and negative aspects of eucharistic ecclesiology. See P. McPartlan, *The Eucharist Makes the Church*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993.

⁴⁸²I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 39.

Section IV

Church, State and Authority

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Church is not simply an institution. She is a 'mode of existence', *a way of being*. The mystery of the Church, even in its institutional dimension, is deeply bound to the being of man, to the being of the world and to the very being of God... It is a way of *relationship* with the world, with other people and with God.¹

Speaking about the fact that the Church is simultaneously part of the created and uncreated spheres, Zizioulas points out that between the two there is a tension; on the one hand, the Church runs the risk of being completely 'historicized',² and on the other, the risk of being historically 'disincarnated'.³

Historically speaking, there have been different attempts to resolve the tension between these two realms, created and uncreated, or this age (history) and the age to come (*eschata*). Yet the Church is far from having a universally accepted answer on this issue due to both the complexity of the matter and the diversity of methodological approaches.⁴ Thus, from the 'church of the martyrs',⁵ 'the church of the apologists'⁶ and 'the church of the

¹J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 13.

²This is the case of the Western approach, which tends to limit ecclesiology to the historical content of faith. See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 19.

³This tendency to emphasize the pneumatological-eschatological aspects of the Church at the expense of historical realities characterises Eastern Orthodoxy. See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 20.

⁴See H. Küng, *The Church*, Burns & Oates, London, 1968; J. Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, Harper, New York, 1977; H.R. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, Harper, New York, 1951; H.R. Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, Holt, New York, 1929; E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*, Macmillan, New York, 1931.

⁵Central to Christian martyrdom was a distinction between the spiritual and political realms. This distinction was grounded in the theological presupposition that Jesus' kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). See *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, in *ANCL*, vol. I, p. 37; H.R. Boer, *A Short History of the Early Church*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1979, pp. 45-48; C.J. Cadoux, *The Early Church and the World*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1925, pp. 97-115; G. Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity*, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1982, pp. 69-120; C. Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1986, pp. 3-5.

⁶The conflict between Church and State in the Roman Empire arose from different concepts of what constituted good citizenship. For the Roman State this was understood

Emperor⁷ in the early period, through the papo-caesarism⁸ and caesaropapism⁹ in the Middle Ages and the 'two kingdoms' of the Protestant Reformations,¹⁰ to the contemporary church in pluralist societies¹¹ or the

to entail unquestioning obedience to its law, whilst the early Church stressed that good citizenship meant to obey God and offer consistent obedience to ethically defensible law. It was this conflict which gave rise to a succession of Christian apologists (including Quadratus, Aristides, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Melito of Sardis, Athenagoras and Theophilus of Antioch), among whom Tertullian (150-220) was one of the most articulate. See Tertullian, *Apology*, IV, in *ANCL*, vol. X, pp. 61-63; W. Walker, *A History*, pp. 50-56; C. Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*, pp. 5-16; H.R. Boer, *A Short History*; J.R. Willis, *A History of Christian Thought from Apostolic Times to St. Augustine*, Exposition Press, Hicksville, NY., 1976.

⁷Following the Edict of Milan in 312 and the religious shift towards Christianity in the life of Constantine, there was also a major shift in the relations between Church and State. The sharp distinction between the pre- and post-Constantinian church is shown clearly by comparing Tertullian's *Apology* with Eusebius' (260-337) panegyric written to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Constantine's reign on July 25, 335. Now imperial power was seen to be on God's side, whereas before it had been seen to be demonic and therefore rejected by Christians. See R.R. Reuter, 'Augustine and Christian Political Theology', in *Interpretation*, 29 (1975), p. 256; N.H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays*, Herald Press, London, 1955, pp. 168-172; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 157; A. Kee, *Constantine Versus Christ*, SCM, London, 1982; J.-M. Hornus, *It Is Not Lawful for Me To Fight*, Herald Press, Scottdale, PA., 1980.

⁸Since the time of St. Ambrose (339-387) the Latin Church developed a different approach to the issue of Church-State relations from the Byzantine model. Ambrose's views, developed by Augustine (354-430), laid the foundation for medieval papal hegemony. Ambrose's greatest triumph over the imperial power came when he refused Theodosius the sacrament of holy communion until he openly repented of his violent brutality in suppressing a seditious movement in Thessalonica. See C. Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*, p. 20. In his *The City of God*, Augustine develops his theory of 'two kingdoms', that is, the kingdoms of this world are the kingdom of Satan, which he contrasted with the kingdom of God. Within this frame of thought, Augustine turns away from the grandiose claims of the State in affirmation of a heavenly city. In so doing, Augustine de-absolutizes the power of the State and creates the theological basis for an eschatological critique of the State. See T.J. Biggam and A.T. Mollegen, 'The Christian Ethic', in R.W. Battenhouse, ed., *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1979, pp. 388-395; R.A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*, CUP, Cambridge, 1970, pp. 28-44. Thomas Aquinas tried to reconcile Augustine's otherworldly interpretation of Church-State relations with Aristotelian empiricism. For a comparison between Toma and Augustine, see D. Knowels, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*, Longman, London, 1962; A.P. D'Entreves, ed., *Aquinas: Selected Political Writings*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1970; D. Bigongiari, ed., *The Political Ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Hafner, New York, 1969; B.D. Hill, ed., *Church and State in the Middle Ages*, John Wiley, New York, 1970; T.A. Shannon, *War or Peace?*, Orbis, Maryknoll, N.Y., 1980, pp. 3-71.

⁹Schmemmann affirms that 'in proportion as the struggle between the Empire and Christianity was, as we have seen, fated and inevitable, just so, inversely, the peace between them was a matter primarily of a single person, a single will, and a single initiative. No-one denies that Constantine played this role' (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 62). See also J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 18-38; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 156-165; C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 203.

¹⁰The Protestant Reformation produced a variety of models of Church-State relations based upon the 'two kingdoms' paradigm. Dominant among them were those of Martin Luther (1483-1546), John Calvin (1509-1564) and Radical Reformation. See J.H. Leith,

'nationalist church' in regions affected by nationalist and ethnic conflicts,¹² Christianity has struggled to offer a model of relation between the two spheres which would do justice to the nature of the Church 'without annulling the dialectic of this age and the age to come, the uncreated and the created, the being of God and that of man and the world.'¹³

However, it appears that one of the challenges that the Church has faced throughout the centuries has been the drive toward a mode of being in which the 'age to come' tends to be replaced by 'this age', or, in other words, the *eschaton* is fully realised in history. It is true that the way in which this 'substitution' of the *eschaton* by history is realised differs from one historical period to another, but generally speaking, the essence of the phenomenon was the same whether in the Byzantine Christian Empire, the Muscovite messianic kingdom, post-Enlightenment 'eschatology' or in the Communist

ed., *Creeds of the Churches*, pp. 72-73; M. Luther, 'The Freedom of a Christian', in *Works of Martin Luther (LW)*, Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1959, vol. 31, p. 341; H.G. Haile, *Luther: An Experiment in Biography*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1980, p. 101; C. Vella-Vicencio, 'Augsburg, Barmen and Ottawa: The Protestant Quest for a Political Theology', in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 47, June 1984, pp. 47-58; B.A. Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New: Essays on the Reformed Heritage*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh 1982, pp. 248-254; John Calvin, *Institutes of The Christian Religion (CI)*, Tr. by Henry Beveridge, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1989, Book III, Ch. XIX:15, pp. 41-141; P. Lehmann, *The Transfiguration of Politics*, Harper & Row, New York, 1975, p. 40; J.T. McNeil, 'John Calvin on Civil Government', in G.L. Hunt, ed., *Calvinism and the Political Order*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1965, pp. 31-32; P.T. Fuhrmann, *Calvin: Instruction in Faith*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1947, pp. 76f; J. Calvin, *On God and Political Duty*, ed., by J.T. McNeil, Bobbs-Merrill, 1956; W.F. Graham, *The Construction Revolution: John Calvin and His Socio-Economic Instinct*, John Knox Press, Richmond, Va., 1971; A. Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1970. The Radical Reformation developed the theory of 'two-kingdoms' in a variety of senses from total separation between Church and State (Anabaptist) to the political engagement of Scottish Presbyterianism. See G.H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, Westminster, Philadelphia, 1975, pp. xxiii-xxxi; J.H. Yoder, *Christian Witness to the State*, Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kans., 1964; *The Politics of Jesus*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1972; P. Sangster, *A History of the Free Churches*, Heinemann, London, 1983; G. Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation*, CUP, Cambridge, 1960; J. Knox, *The History of the Reformation of Religion*, (ed. C.J. Guthrie), Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1982; E. Muir, *Portrait of a Calvinist*, SCM, London, 1939; J.G. Davies, *Christians, Politics and Violent Revolution*, Orbis, Maryknoll, NY., 1976, pp. 54-65.

¹¹See P. Marshall, 'Liberalism, Pluralism, and Christianity: A Re-conceptualization', in *Fides et Historia*, 21, 3 (Oct. 1989), 4-17; H. Montefiore, 'Introduction', in *The Gospel and the Contemporary Culture*, ed., H. Montefiore, Mowbray, England, 1992, pp. 3-4; P. Berger, *The Heretical Imperative*, p. 27; C. E. Gunton, 'Knowledge and culture: towards an epistemology of the concrete', pp. 84-99.

¹²'Nationalist church' describes those situations where a particular church is associated with national survival, or the protection of a particular ethnic identity or culture. In such cases the Church becomes part of a 'national myth', and subsequently religious and national identity are overlapping realities: for example, to be a good Polish citizen one has to be Catholic or to be a good Russian one has to be Russian Orthodox. See D. Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1978, pp. 9-10; M. Elliot, 'For Christian Understanding, Ignorance is not a Bliss', in *East-West Church & Ministry Report*, 1, 3 (Summer 1993), 1-4.

¹³J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 20.

'eschatological' state. When such a 'substitution' takes place the role of the Church within society either diminishes significantly or tends to assume historical functions at the expense of its *eschatological* dimension. Thus, for example, under the influence of the Enlightenment, the modern world transferred the Christian eschatological hope in a paradise of perfection from another world to this one;¹⁴ a paradise attainable through progress and the emancipation of the human spirit from the bondage of dogma and superstition. Moreover, through the extension of analytical and mathematical reason to human behaviour, work and society, *purpose* has been removed from large sectors of human activity.¹⁵ This man-made paradise, however, failed to fulfill the eschatological promise of 'space' and thus 'freedom' for all particular views,¹⁶ because in reality, as C.E. Gunton argues, beneath the surface' there is a pressure for homogeneity which in effect nullifies them.'¹⁷ The secret of this leveling process lies in the underlying presupposition that the only true knowledge is one achieved by human reason.¹⁸ Consequently, whatever does not conform to the categories of thought, which are considered to have a common structure for all forms of human knowing, is dismissed as meaningless.¹⁹

However, D. Martin argues that the private sphere of values tends to come back on the public sphere not primarily as 'scientific truth' but as symbol, feeling, meaning and ideology, which legitimate certain social structures.²⁰ These structures cover a wide range from dictatorial states²¹ to sub-cultural communities in pluralist-democratic societies.²² Therefore, in spite of the

¹⁴See R.N. Bellah and W.G. McLoughlin, eds., *Religion in America*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1968.

¹⁵L. Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture*, SPCK, London, 1986, p. 29.

¹⁶P. Berger, B. Berger and H. Kelner, *The Homeless Mind*, pp. 3ff; 62; P. Berger, *Facing up to Modernity*, pp. 18ff.

¹⁷C.E. Gunton, 'Knowledge and Culture', p. 84.

¹⁸See C.E. Gunton, 'Knowledge and Culture', pp. 84-89; M. Midgley, 'Strange Contest', in H. Montefiore, ed., *The Gospel*, pp. 40-42.

¹⁹See J. Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Response to the Transcendent*, Macmillan, 1989, p. 240.

²⁰See D. Martin, *Secularization*, pp. 12-13.

²¹For a presentation of Church-State relations in those societies where all the social structures and cultures are directly manipulated in the service of an ideological monopoly (whether right or left), see D. Martin, *Secularization*, pp. 209-239; P. Prifti, *Religion and Atheism in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe*, Macmillan, London, 1975; T. Beeson, *Discretion and Valour*, Fontana, London, 1974; T.O. Beidelman, eds., *The Translation of Cultures*, Tavistock Publications, London, 1971; B.R. Bociurkiw, 'Church-State Relations in Communist Europe', in *Religion in Communist Lands*, 1, 4-5 (1973), 9-14; D.A. Binchy, *Church and State in Fascist Italy*, OUP, Oxford, 1970.

²²'Sub-cultural communities' is a very elastic concept which covers a variety of social structures from tolerant denominational communities in the civil religion system of America, established and dissenting communities in the democratic states, 'duo-polistic' communities, intolerant religious communities in societies where a certain religion has the monopoly, to the religious identity of ethnic groups. See P. Blau, ed., *Approaches to the Study of Social Structure*, Free Press, New York, 1975; R.A. Dahl, *Political Opposition in Western Democracies*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1966;

fragmentation of human society into many structures and substructures, organized around cultural, economic or ethnic values, it is, as Moyser argues,

very difficult in the modern world to ignore the presence of religion in public affairs. Virtually on a daily basis, the media provide instances demonstrating that the people, institutions, and ideas that make up the religious sphere have a continuing and important relevance to the political realm.²³

Thus, Moyser argues that the vast changes that have taken place in our world, far from suggesting that religion is not relevant to modern society, in fact requires a new approach to the relation between Church and society.²⁴ The need for a new paradigm concerning the relation between created and uncreated, between history and *eschata*, can be identified in one form or another in all the major traditions of Christianity (Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox), although the way in which they address this may vary from one tradition to another from one region to another, and from one historical period to another.

In the Eastern Orthodox tradition, for instance, the tension between history and *eschata* is best illustrated in the relation between Church and State. It is in the dialectic between the two spheres, created and uncreated, that the authority of the Church in the State or of the State in the Church finds its way. According to Orthodox ecclesiology the Church is an *eschatological community instituted* by the Son and *constituted* by the Spirit. Since the Spirit 'is beyond history', whenever he acts in history 'he does so in order to bring into history the last days, the eschaton.'²⁵ Whilst considering itself the agency whereby the Spirit 'transfigures' the whole world,²⁶ the Church attempted also to 'eschatologize' the State.²⁷

The State, however, as 'a politically sovereign system of government', is a historical institution *par excellence*.²⁸ Hence the State's tendency is to exercise its authority over the entire society, and thus to 'historicize' the Church. Consequently, in order to avoid the risk of either 'sacralizing' the state or of 'historicizing' the Church, the relation between Church and State from the perspective of authority has to be construed around the concept of 'space'. In providing for both freedom and relatedness this space must be

G. van Dartel, 'The Nations and the Churches in Yugoslavia', in *Religion, State and Society*, Vol. 20, 3-4 (1992), pp. 275-285; N. Glazer and D. Moynihan, eds., *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1975; G. De Vos, 'Ethnic Identity and Minority Status: Some Psycho-Cultural Considerations', in A. Jacobson-Widding, ed., *Identity: Personal and Socio-Cultural, A Symposium*, Almqvist & Wilksell, Uppsala, 1983, pp. 135-158.

²³G. Moyser, 'Politics and religion in the modern world: an overview', in G. Moyser, ed., *Politics and Religion in the Modern World*, Routledge, London, 1991, 1-27, (here p. 1).

²⁴G. Moyser, *Politics and Religion*, pp. 2-17.

²⁵J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 130.

²⁶Bishop Maximos Aghiorgousis, 'East Meets West', p. 6.

²⁷See J. Meyendorff, *The Byzantine Legacy in the Orthodox Church*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1982, pp. 143ff; I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, pp. 43, 96.

²⁸A.H. Richmond, *Immigration and Ethnic Conflict*, Macmillan, London, 1988, p. 190.

pneumatological, that is, beyond the possibility of being institutionalized and thus manipulated. From such a perspective, then, we will explore the Orthodox model of Church-State relations as defined by the Byzantine 'symphony', and subsequently adapted in turn to the absolutist, democratic, pro-Nazi and Communist regimes in Romania.

Church - State: The Orthodox Paradigm

Historically speaking, the Eastern tradition adopted a different approach to the issue of Church-State relations from that of the Western Church. The 'two cities' model of Augustine which shaped political theology in the West never flourished in Constantinople.²⁹ Instead, after the conversion of Constantine,

[T]he Church drew near to the state and took upon itself the responsibility for the latter's destiny. This rapprochement made a place for the Emperor in the Church. When he became a Christian sovereign, the Church poured out its gifts upon him, by means of unction. It loved the Anointed, not only as the head of the state but as one with a special charism, the charism of rule, as bridegroom of the Church, possessing the image of Christ himself.³⁰

Consequently the State and the Church were not two separate kingdoms but one kingdom, where in the person of the Emperor 'the state was crowned by the Cross.'³¹ Moreover, there was no clear line of separation between the religious and the secular, between the Church and the State, due to the fact that Byzantium was considered an icon of the 'heavenly Jerusalem' and the emperor an icon of the monarchy of God.³² However, the question raised concerns the mode in which such an organism functioned.

2.1 The Model of 'Symphony'

The concept of 'symphony' as describing the relation between Church and State was coined by Justinian (483-565). According to this model although the Church and the State formed a single organism, yet within this one organism there were two distinctive elements, *sacerdotium* (priesthood) and *imperium* (the imperial power).³³ Whilst working in close cooperation, each of these elements had its own proper sphere of operation. Between the two there was a 'symphony' or 'harmony', but neither element exercised absolute control over the other.³⁴ The sphere of the Church's authority was that of human souls whilst the sphere of State's authority was that of thuman

²⁹See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 150.

³⁰S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 156.

³¹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 157.

³²T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 48-49. See also A. Kee, *Constantine Versus Christ*, SCM, London, 1982.

³³Gvosdev argues that 'traditionally, Orthodoxy has always maintained that the Kingdom of God "is not of this world"' and consequently Church and State are two separate entities. However, his arguments are in contradiction with the other Orthodox theologians who affirm that the model of 'Symphony' accurately describes the Byzantine view. See N.K. Gvosdev, 'Rendering to Caesar', p. 84.

³⁴See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 49.

bodies.³⁵ Further, in public life, the authority of the emperor was to summon the councils and to carry their decrees into effect whilst the authority of the bishops was primarily to determine the content of the decrees.³⁶ In the same vein the emperor was considered a 'bishop of external affairs', in which capacity he watched over the financial and administrative affairs of the Church, as well as convoking and presided at Ecumenical Councils.³⁷ In this 'symphony' 'the state recognized the Church as an interior guide for its activity' whilst 'the Church considered itself as under the state.'³⁸

The underlying presupposition of this model of Church-State relations, argues Bulgakov, is not the dogmatic necessity of a Christian Emperor for the ontology of the Church (as it is, for example, in the office of hierarchy), but 'the idea of the sanctification of the power in the person of its supreme representative.'³⁹ This is not a political idea connected with a certain form of state organization, continues Bulgakov, 'but an idea wholly religious', which may be realised in a democracy, by an elected representative of power, a president, or, even by an autocrat.⁴⁰ However, Bulgakov's argument is not very well grounded in the historical realities of the Byzantine tradition. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, for example, Antony, the patriarch of Constantinople, wrote a letter to the Grand Prince Vasili Dmitrievich of Moscow in order to explain the Byzantine theocratic theory and argued that,

It is impossible for Christians to have the Church but not to have the Emperor. For Empire and Church are in close union and it is impossible to divide them from each other.⁴¹

Moreover, after the fall of Constantinople, the model of 'symphony', far from being abandoned or revised, continued to work in Russia and other Balkan states,⁴² including the Romanian Principalities.⁴³

Although it was meant to explain the relation between two separate but related entities, in fact the model of 'symphony' ended up by merging the two into one- the Christian Empire. Within the Empire the space between *sacerdotium* and *imperium* disappeared. This assertion becomes clearer when we reflect upon some methodological, theological and sociological implications of the model of 'symphony'.

³⁵This is how Emperor John Tzimisces saw the relation between the two authorities of priesthood and Empire. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 49.

³⁶T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 49.

³⁷S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 157.

³⁸S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 157.

³⁹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 160.

⁴⁰See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 160-161.

⁴¹A. Kartashoff, 'The Destiny of Holy Russia', in *Pravoslavnaia mysl*, Vol. 1, Paris, 1928, p. 143. Cf. A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 310.

⁴²J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 63; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 158.

⁴³See A. Bantaş, *The Romanian Orthodox Church: Yesterday and Today*, Publication of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Foreign Relations Department, (Tr. Andrei Bantaş), The Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1979, p. 18.

2.2 Observations

2.2.1 Methodological: The merging of the Empire and the Church following the conversion of Constantine gave birth to a new political-religious entity called the 'Christian Empire'. The Christian Empire, however, was the result of an ambiguous conceptual enterprise which, according to Schmemmann, represents 'the inner fallacy of this theory'.⁴⁴ The ambiguity consists in the fact that the Church, bewitched by the conversion of Constantine, accepted pagan absolutism⁴⁵ as part of the Christian world view.⁴⁶ Constantine was a typical representative of this pagan religious state of mind, and consequently 'the Empire, its method of government and social principles remained basically the same.'⁴⁷ In the absence of a radical change in the Roman State's philosophy⁴⁸ and of a content 'in terms of the Gospel',⁴⁹ the concept of 'Christian Empire' conveys an ambiguous construct. Thus, in the pagan world, the emperor as the representative of the people was *Pontifex Maximus*. Runciman argues that it was the emperor's duty to conduct the sacrifices to the gods in the name of the people. When the people became 'the Christian Oecumene the emperor was still their representative and Pontifex Maximus. He was the source of law. If the law had to be amended to include Christian principles no one else but he could do it.'⁵⁰

However, Bulgakov defends the validity of the concept of 'Christian Empire' arguing that the Empire became Christian in the person of the emperor, when the latter bowed before the Cross and subsequently 'the Church poured its gifts upon him, by means of unction.'⁵¹ Such argumentation is refuted by

⁴⁴A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 145.

⁴⁵The Roman State had gradually become a theocratic monarchy, the state being the earthly reflection of the divine realm. The cult of the invincible Sun had been adopted by Aurelian in the middle of the third century as the imperial religion. The emperor in the world was the same as the sun in heaven. The monarch stood apart from simple mortals; he was 'consecrated' and therefore all that surrounded him was consecrated. 'The religious devotion tendered to him, the imperial liturgy, and the sacred ritual that surrounded his whole life symbolized the divine nature of the state and the heavenly system reflected in the world' (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 64).

⁴⁶P. Brown analyses the blending of Hellenistic and Christian elements in the conception of the Empire; on one hand 'the invisible world was as real as the visible' and human existence was always understood in reference to the Divine, and on the other, people looked for leadership by men, 'friends of God, who find direct access to the Divine' (P. Brown, *The Making of the Late Antiquity*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1978, pp. 10-26).

⁴⁷J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 9.

⁴⁸The Cult of the Sun co-existed with Christian elements. See H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, Penguin Books, London, 1967, (reprinted 1990), pp. 125-129.

⁴⁹A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 69.

⁵⁰S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity*, CUP, Cambridge, 1968, pp. 55-56. Eusebius used and adapted the Hellenistic model of *mimesis* whereby the emperor came to be regarded as an imitation of the king of heaven, and thus theologically legitimated political authority against its opponents. See also, Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*; PG XX, col. 1060; N.H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays*, pp. 168-172.

⁵¹S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 156.

Meyendorff, who questions the very 'conversion' of Constantine himself. Thus, besides the fact that Constantine postponed baptism until the last days of his life, Constantine entered Rome⁵² without changing its pagan traditional behaviour and political methods.⁵³ These observations do not question Constantine's commitment to help the Church and to make Christianity the official religion of his Empire; they point out that there are incoherences between Christian claims and ethical conduct, both in the life of the emperor and in the Empire.

Another ambiguity in the Byzantine model of 'symphony' concerns the ontological distinction between a Christian Empire and the Christian Church. Schmemmann asserts that 'as late as the fourth century the borderline between the Church and the world had been clear', due to the fact that the Church had been from the beginning a new community created through the sacramental new birth which introduced the Christian into a new world, the Kingdom of God.⁵⁴ 'The Church', continues Schmemmann, 'had been divided from the world not by persecution or rejection alone, but by the incompatibility of its most sacred essence with anything earthly.'⁵⁵ After the union of the Church with the Empire, this borderline began to be effaced until the Christian community coincided with Byzantine society as a whole to the point where not only the historical but also the ontological distinction between the Church and the Empire disappeared. As Schmemmann argues:

Here lay the deepest of all the misunderstandings between the Church and the Empire. The Roman state could accept the ecclesiastical doctrine of God and Christ comparatively easily as its official religious doctrine; it could render the Church great help in rooting out paganism and implanting Christianity; and finally, it could Christianize its own laws to a certain extent. But it could not really recognize that the Church was a community distinct from itself; it did not understand the Church's ontological independence of the world. The religious absolutism of the Roman state and the emperor's belief that he was representative of God on earth prevented it.⁵⁶

From this ontological misunderstanding flow practical ambiguities concerning the nature of the 'symphony'. If the Church and the Empire are one entity not only historically but also ontologically, should one not speak of

⁵²After the battle of the Milvian Bridge against Maxentius (312), a battle which is related to a personal conversion-experience of Constantine. See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 6.

⁵³Constantine entered Rome, 'a largely pagan city, at the head of an overwhelmingly pagan army, and was proclaimed Augustus of an Empire where Christians constituted a small minority. He continued to invoke the 'Unconquered Sun' (*Sol Invictus*) on his coins and official documents and remained the supreme pontiff (*pontifex maximus*) of the official Roman, largely syncretistic paganism. He change practically nothing in the traditional behaviour and political methods of Roman emperors. For example, he ordered the execution of his former colleague Licinius-the co-signer of the edict of toleration-whom he defeated (324), and later of his own son, Crispus, and his own wife, Fausta (326). These executions took place at the very time when Constantine was sponsoring and presiding over the council of Nicaea (325)' (J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 6).

⁵⁴A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 146.

⁵⁵A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 146.

⁵⁶A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 149.

a 'harmony' rather a 'monody'? Since the Church merged with the Empire, the issue at stake is not the relation between two ontologically distinct *beings*, but between two offices of the same *being*. As Schmemmann points out: 'the problem of relations between Church and State in Byzantium was almost imperceptibly replaced by the problem of relations between the secular authority and the hierarchy.'⁵⁷

The theoretical construct intended to clarify the issue was equally misleading and incorrect. Thus Byzantine literature borrowed the analogy of the body and the soul in order to explain the relation between the Church and the State; the Empire is the body and the Church is the soul. In addition to the theological and practical problems posed by this dualistic approach to anthropology,⁵⁸ the analogy is in striking contrast to the view of the early church, which considered itself to be the body, understood as a living organism of a new community, with the Holy Spirit the life of the body. Moreover, in official Byzantine tradition, the State was compared to a body not in this early Christian sense, but in a pagan sense according to which 'the state itself was considered to be the only community established by God, and embraces the whole life of man.'⁵⁹

Since the Roman Empire was now a Christian Empire, it had to have forms of expressing its religion. This was the role of the Church, which consisted of 'the hierarchy, the dogmas, the services, the Church buildings; all this was indeed the soul of the world, the soul of the Empire. But the idea of the Church as a body or community had dropped out of sight and was replaced for that of the state.'⁶⁰ Further, when Justinian spoke about the relations between the Church and the Empire, he acknowledged that the emperor and the hierarch had different tasks, but that the ultimate and absolute value to which the Church has to submit was 'the well-being, strengthening and blessing of the Empire.'⁶¹ Consequently, the Church was only a means toward the well-being of the Empire, which was the earthly reflection of the Kingdom of God; its ontology having been sacrificed in favour of the ontology of the Empire.

2.2.2 Theological: In Byzantium the Church ceased to be an *eschatological* community and became co-extensive with the Empire.⁶² This was done, argues Meyendorff, at the risk of having many 'only superficially baptized at best...'⁶³ since to be a Byzantine citizen implied being a Christian as well. Consequently there was no clear distinction between Christian and non-Christian, because the denotative power of the concept

⁵⁷A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 149.

⁵⁸The Byzantine analogy of the human person presupposes that human body and human soul are governed by two distinct centres.

⁵⁹A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 150.

⁶⁰A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 150-151.

⁶¹A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 153.

⁶²J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 24.

⁶³J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 25.

'Christian' was lost.⁶⁴ Moreover, Schmemmann affirms that the Byzantine church adopted pagan forms and concepts which subsequently intermingled with Christian tradition:⁶⁵

...no conversion is in itself a guarantee of the purity of Christianity, and no form—even the most Christian in essence and origin—can magically save, if it is not filled with the Spirit and the truth by which it is justified and which it serves. One must keep in mind that paganism comprises not only the religions which preceded Christianity chronologically and were eliminated when it appeared; it is also a sort of permanent and natural magnetic pole of religion, and in this sense a constant threat for every religion.... Any divergence between form and content, or the emergence of form as value and goal in itself, is paganism. It is a return to natural religion, to belief in form, ceremony, and sacred objects without regard to their content and spiritual meaning. In this sense even Christian rites and sacred objects may themselves become centres of pagan veneration and may overshadow what they solely exist for: the liberating force of truth.⁶⁶

In addition, Schmemmann points to the moral decline of Byzantine society and the clergy, particularly as these aspects are reflected in the writing of Barsanuphius⁶⁷ and the canons of the Trullan Council.⁶⁸ Further Schmemmann affirms that the doctrinal distortion of Christianity from that period resembled the defects of subsequent periods of church history and thus prove that 'Christianity had ceased to be selective, had become the religion of masses, and for too many was only self-evident from the inner

⁶⁴D. Reeves, ed., *The Church and the State*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1984.

⁶⁵In the struggle against the pagans and its heroic conquest of the world, the church never hesitated in adapting many "natural" forms of religion, usual for paganism, to the service of Christianity. The pagans had celebrated the birth of the Invincible Sun on December 25; Christians allotted this date the celebration of the birth of Christ, which taught men "to honour the Sun of Righteousness and to come to know it from the height of the East." The pagans had celebrated an "epiphany" on January 6, which became the date of the Christian Epiphany as well. The ecclesiastical cult of "Unmercenary Saints" had much in common with the pagan cult of the Dioscuri; the form of the Christian saint's life with the models of pagan eulogies of heroes; and finally, the explanation of the Christian sacraments to catechumens with the mysterious terminology of pagan initiations' (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 185).

⁶⁶A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 186.

⁶⁷A Byzantine monk who in 530 attacked 'mechanical' religiosity which reduced the whole significance of Christianity to external forms. 'If you pass by relics, bow down once, twice, thrice... but that is enough. Cross yourself three times if you wish, but no more' (J. Pargoire, *L'Eglise Byzantine de 527 à 847*, Paris, 1923, p. 221. Cf. A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 186). Other teachers attacked those who expressed their faith only by covering icons and crosses with kisses. 'What are the Gospels and communion to them? If the Gospel is too long and the prayers dragged out longer than usual, they display signs of impatience and displeasure. Even during short services, Christians fill the time talking about business or condemning their neighbours. Others simply stand on the street so as to run into the church at the last moment and 'take communion and run', as St. Anastasius of Sinai expressed it. But they are perfect Christians, for have they not kissed the icons of our Redeemer and the saints?' (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 186-187).

⁶⁸Many of the canons of the Trullan Council (691) summoned by Emperor Justinian II are devoted to the struggle against open distortions of Christianity and its transformation into pagan magic. (A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 187)

meaning which was not even considered. For these it had truly become a natural religion, and they no longer heard its call for a "renewal of nature."⁶⁹

As a reaction to the fact that the assembly of believers had become an 'assembly of citizens' whose lives contradicted the standards of Christian faith, there were two particularly significant movements in the Byzantine Church. Firstly, the corporate worship of the early community was replaced by the official liturgy chanted by the clergy in the 'presence' of the people.⁷⁰

In sermons, theological works, and the symbolism of church art, from now on there would be much more emphasis on the terrifying mystery of the divine presence in the Church, on the dangers of unworthy reception of the 'communion' in this mystery, and on the role of the clergy as mediators between the people and the Mystery.⁷¹

This increased emphasis upon formality was necessary in order to maintain the 'sense of the Sacred in the Church' at a time when confusion between the sacred and the profane was quite general.⁷² However, in so doing, the Church sacrificed its nature as a 'community of true Christians' and thus became an institution which mediated the Mystery to spiritually illiterate people.

Secondly, other Christians refused to have anything to do with this new 'Christian society' and so retired to the desert 'to witness there to the supernatural and eschatological nature of the Church.'⁷³ Some of them preferred to live completely isolated lives, while others established communities and sought to reconstruct the ideal of the first Christian community.⁷⁴ One aspect particularly emphasized by the monastic movement was the *supernatural* aspect of the Kingdom of God. Bouyer affirms that,

The supernatural essence of Christian life has always required some absolute expression which would reveal the complete freedom of the Christian in relation to all the realities of this world. Martyrdom was the first response to this demand, born from outward conditions; when these conditions changed and the world ceased to struggle against Christianity, but, on the contrary, proposed an alliance which could and very often did become more dangerous for spiritual values, which were not susceptible to 'naturalization', monasticism became a sort of affirmation of their independence... It brought nothing essentially new into the Church of the first centuries; it was an expression in a new form, created by new circumstances, of what is customarily called the 'eschatological' nature of Christianity, of which the first Christians had been acutely aware and which they had expressed in martyrdom.⁷⁵

⁶⁹A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 187-188.

⁷⁰J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 25.

⁷¹J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 25.

⁷²J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 25.

⁷³J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 26.

⁷⁴On the rise of the monastic movement and their ideal of Christian life, see L. Bouyer, *La Vie de Saint Antoine*, Editions de Fontanelle, Abbaye de Saint-Wandrille, 1950, pp. 7-11.

⁷⁵L. Bouyer, *L'Incarnation et L'Eglise-Corps du Christ dans la théologie de St. Athanase*, Fontanelle, Paris, 1943, p. 24.

Since monasticism was a spontaneous movement which had arisen in the fourth century, neither the leadership of the Church nor the imperial administration were initially sure of its real place in the Church or in society.⁷⁶ One thing was sure however, namely that the Christian Empire did not allow for an alternative community. Consequently, the canons of the Council of Chalcedon placed the monastic communities under the jurisdiction of the local bishop.⁷⁷

The eschatological nature of Christianity had been likewise linked to the Christian Empire. 'The Emperor', argues Bulgakov, 'was the sign of the conquest of the world by the Cross; he was the "architect" of the Kingdom of God on earth.'⁷⁸ Consequently, eschatology was understood in terms of the Empire and not in the terms of Church as a separate eschatological community. After the fall of Byzantium, this eschatological dream was incarnated in the Orthodox Russian Empire and in the Balkan states.⁷⁹

Yet in spite of these theological distortions as a result of State-Church relations, paradoxically the Byzantine period is also, to a large extent, the period of the Ecumenical Councils when some of the major doctrines of the Church have been defined. However, Meyendorff argues that the remarkable victories of this period were 'achieved less by the "system" itself, than by individual Saints who succeeded in using it in the spirit of the Gospel.'⁸⁰ Such comments, in addition to the fact that they emphasize the continuity of the work of the Spirit in history, raise also the question of the relation between the Spirit and the institution. It appears that Meyendorff does not necessarily link the Spirit to the institution; on the contrary, when the institution is enslaved by historical realities the Spirit distances himself from it and continues his work through those 'individual Saints' who maintaining their lives the tension between history and eschatology. However, if that is the case, then the whole doctrine of the apostolic succession must be reconsidered, since it would be difficult to advocate a line of apostolic succession through a non-pneumatological institution.

2.2.3 Sociological: The sociological aspects of the theory of 'symphony' between Church and State are very complex and display significant variation from one epoch to another, even from one emperor to another.

⁷⁶See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 81.

⁷⁷J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 90.

⁷⁸S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 157.

⁷⁹A British visitor in 1817 remarked on 'the extraordinary phenomenon of a pure despotism exercised by a Greek prince who is himself at the same time an *abject slave*. But chiefly it was in pursuit of the Imperial idea, the rebirth of Byzantium. Under Phanariot princes a neo-Byzantine culture could find a home in the Principalities. A Greek-born nobility could root itself in lands there; Greek academies could educate citizens for the new Byzantium. There, far better than in the shadowy palaces round the Phanar, with Turkish police at the door, Byzantine ambition could be kept alive. In Rumania, in Rum beyond the Danube, the revival of the New Rome could be planned' (W. MacMichael, *Journey from Moscow to Constantinople, 1817-1818*, London, 1918. Cf. S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity*, pp. 175-176). See also S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 1988, p. 158.

⁸⁰J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, 19.

Therefore any attempt at generalizations faces major methodological and historical difficulties.⁸¹ However, in an attempt to offer a hermeneutical principle for this 'symphonic' model, Schmemmann affirms that Byzantine's understanding of the concept of State was rooted in the theocratic mind of pagan empires:

[F]or which the state was a sacred and absolute form for the world-its meaning and justification. One cannot speak of the subordination of the Church to the state, because for subordination there must be two distinct subjects. But in theocratic conception there is not and cannot be anything that is not related to the state, and religion is essentially a state function. It is even a higher function, which in certain ways subordinates everything else in state life to itself; but only because the state itself is religious by nature and is the recognized divine form for the human community. The state is subject to religion; but religion itself has the state as the goal of its functions, and in this sense is subject to it as the final value, for the sake of which it exists.⁸²

In fact, when Justinian developed his theory of 'symphony', he simply did not find place for the Church in it, although the word 'church' appears many times in his writings.⁸³ Consequently the space needed for the Church to exist as a distinct being was totally filled by the State. This new socio-political-religious being, called the Christian Empire, not only made the State and the Church co-extensive, but made the political and ecclesial offices interchangeable. Thus the emperor took a special place in the hierarchy⁸⁴ ('equal to the apostles' and 'a bishop of external affairs'), whilst the bishops become magistrates.⁸⁵ However, the Byzantine Church never determined exactly what was the place of the emperor in the hierarchy, for the imperial office had many meanings.⁸⁶ Due to this lack of clarification, even today Orthodox scholars are divided over this issue. Some affirm that the Church did not compromise its standard by allowing the emperor to perform the Eucharist,⁸⁷ whilst others consider that Eusebius was right when he painted a 'super-episcopal' portrait of the emperor. Using Neo-Platonic imagery, Eusebius describes the *ideal* image of the Emperor Constantine and affirms that *imperium* was understood as a particular personal charism bestowed directly by God, and thereby granted the emperor 'episcopal' functions over the 'external' aspects of ecclesiastical

⁸¹For an account of the complexity of the Byzantine world see M.V. Anastos, *Studies in Byzantine Intellectual History*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1979.

⁸²A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 152.

⁸³Kidd analyses the active role played by Justinian in the life of the Church, both in its administration and doctrinal controversies. See B.J. Kidd, *The Churches of Eastern Christendom*, pp. 24-55.

⁸⁴Constantine the Great was hailed as the thirteenth Apostle. See G. Every, *The Byzantine Patriarchate 451-1204*, SPCK. London, 1962, p. 20.

⁸⁵See J. Boojamra, *Orthodox Synthesis: The Unity of Theological Thought*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1981, pp. 198-204; G. Every, *The Byzantine Patriarchate 451-1204*, pp. 20-21; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 19; S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 157; J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 17.

⁸⁶S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 156.

⁸⁷T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 48.

affairs.⁸⁸ This *ideal* image, argues Meyendorff, 'was accepted by all in the patristic and Byzantine periods.'⁸⁹ Moreover, the universal interests of the Empire such as unity and order were now inseparable from the life of the universal (catholic) Church. The emperors were aware of the fact that a divided Church would also mean a divided Empire. Since every bishop was responsible for the 'internal affairs' only at the local level (an aspect recognized by emperors), it was the responsibility of the emperor to care for the universal Church.⁹⁰ Consequently, the emperor organized the Church after the pattern of the imperial administrative structures and summoned the bishops (in council) to settle doctrinal disagreements between different church leaders or regions.⁹¹ Once the emperor took upon himself the responsibility of safeguarding the *unity in faith*, not only did the distinction between 'internal' and 'external' affairs of the Church lose its relevance, but the emperor began to act as a 'universal bishop'.⁹² In his *Life of Constantine*, Eusebius writes:

As dissensions had arisen in various lands, he acted like a universal bishop appointed by God, and convoked councils of the ministers of God. He did not disdain to be present at their meetings and to become one of the bishops. He took cognizance of the subjects that came up for discussion and communicated to all the benefits of the peace of God... He treated with the utmost consideration all those who follow the majority and disposed to work in agreement and harmony, showing that above all he rejoiced for the common concord of all; but those who refused to yield to persuasion he rejected.⁹³

In an attempt to refute the charges of caesaro-papism brought against the Byzantine Church, Meyendorff argues that whilst the emperor acted as a 'universal bishop' nevertheless he was but 'one among many' and consequently the Hellenistic principle of the monarch dictating divine revelations had been replaced by one of conciliarity.⁹⁴ Further, Meyendorff argues that no-one understood the 'episcopal' functions in a sacramental

⁸⁸He derives his reason from the great source of all reason; he is wise and good and just, as having fellowship with perfect wisdom, goodness and righteousness; virtuous as following the pattern of perfect virtue; valiant, as partaking of heavenly strength. And truly may he keep the imperial title, which has trained his soul to royal virtues after the standard of the heavenly Kingdom'(Eusebius, *Praise of Constantine*, 5, in *NPNF*, vol. I, p. 587). 'Hence is our Emperor perfect in discretion, in goodness, in justice, courage, piety, and devotion to God. He is truly a philosopher... and imitates Divine philanthropy by his imperial acts' (Eusebius, *Praise of Constantine*, 2, in *NPNF*, vol. I, pp. 583-584). 'Like the radiant sun and through the presence of the Caesar, he illuminates his subjects in the remotest corners of his Empire with his piercing shafts of his brightness.... Bearing the image of the heavenly Empire, with his eyes fixed on high, he rules the lives of mortals after that original pattern, with his strength drawn from an imitation of God's monarchy' (Eusebius, *Praise of Constantine*, 3, in *NPNF*, vol. I, pp. 585-586).

⁸⁹J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 32.

⁹⁰See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 33.

⁹¹J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 33-34.

⁹²See H. von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church*, (Tr. S. Goldman), Pantheon, New York, 1959, pp. 64-87.

⁹³Eusebius, *The Life of Constantine*, I,44 in *NPNF*, vol. I, p. 494.

⁹⁴J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 34-35.

sense, but only as an analogy.⁹⁵ However, Meyendorff's arguments are unconvincing;⁹⁶ Konstantinidis openly acknowledges the caesaro-papist model in the Byzantine world,⁹⁷ and Runciman argues that 'if the Church was to be a body united in doctrine and if its doctrine was to be guaranteed by the State, it was logical and practical that the Head of the State should be the head of the Church'.⁹⁸

One other important sociological implication of the model of 'symphony' is the relation between the 'universal bishop' and the 'local bishops'. As 'universal bishop' the emperor was above the 'local bishops'. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the emperor summoned and presided over the councils,⁹⁹ appointed or removed bishops,¹⁰⁰ approved the definitions and the canons of the councils¹⁰¹ and subsequently enforced them as the rule of the Empire.¹⁰² Moreover, in order to assure the unity of the Empire when the

⁹⁵One argument that Meyendorff puts forward as support for his view is the letter written by Theodosius II to the Council of Ephesus (431), in which he instructs the imperial delegate Candidianus 'to have nothing to do with problems and controversies regarding dogmas of faith, for it is not desirable that one who does not belong to the body of holy bishops should meddle with ecclesiastical questions and discussions.' See G.D. Mansi, IV, 1120. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, 1989, p. 35.

⁹⁶Theodosius II's letter contains instructions for his delegate, who had the authority to represent the Emperor, not to act as an emperor. The status of 'universal bishop' had been applied only to emperors. Therefore Meyendorff's conclusion is not consistent when he attributes the limits of an imperial delegate to the Emperor himself.

⁹⁷C. Konstantinidis, 'Authority in the Orthodox Church', in *Sobornost*, 3, 2 (1981), p. 203.

⁹⁸S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity*, p. 57.

⁹⁹Meyendorff affirms that the Ecumenical Councils were an imperial method to maintain the politico-religious unity of the Empire. See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 34; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 21; Eusebius, *The Life of Constantine*, III, 10 and 15.

¹⁰⁰Nobody questioned the imperial authority to convoke councils or to remove disobedient bishops, not even Athanasius, who was a direct victim of Constantine's turn-about in favour of Arianism. Furthermore, when addressing Constantius II, in 355, who was not yet baptized and was giving systematic support to Arianism, he called him 'very pious', 'friend of truth', 'a worshipper of God', 'beloved of God', and 'a successor of David and Solomon'. (Athanasius, *Apologia ad Constantium*, 2,3,9,14, in *NPNF*, vol. IV, pp. 238-239; 241-243). Similarly Gregory of Nazianzus reflecting the mentality of the Cappadocians, writes of Constantius: 'No one surely was ever possessed with so fervent a desire for any object as was the emperor for the aggrandizement of the Christians and their advancement to the crest of glory and power... For though he did slightly vex them (a mild reference to Constantius' Arianism! P.N), yet he did so not from spite or insolence,... but so that we should become united and unanimous instead of being divided and rent by schism.' (Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or. IV, contra Julianum*, 37; *PG*, 35, 564).

¹⁰¹The bishops of the Second Ecumenical Council (381) wrote to Theodosius I, 'we therefore ask your clemency, that letters of Your Piety should ratify the decrees of this Council. As you honoured the church by your letter of convocation, so also lend your authority to our decisions' (Mansi, III, 557).

¹⁰²Whenever there was disagreement within the Church over fundamental questions of dogma, it was the Emperor's duty to convoke and preside over a Council to settle the problem and to give its decisions the force of law. It was a reasonable system, in theory and practice. No bishop had greater charismatic authority than his fellows and none therefore qualified to be chairman. The obvious chairman was the Emperor as representing the whole Oecumene. Moreover, as he was the source of law, the Council's

bishops could not agree among themselves on doctrinal issues, the emperors were, in fact, 'forced into *choosing* between ecclesiastical factions and, therefore, interpreting conciliar formulae themselves.'¹⁰³ Very soon a new ecclesiastical office, that of the court bishops, was set up in order to provide counsel for the emperor in case of theological disputes.¹⁰⁴ Those court bishops played a very important role in influencing the emperor to support one party or another in their conflict.¹⁰⁵ The governing principle in resolving such doctrinal conflicts was not primarily the orthodoxy of the faith, but imperial interests.¹⁰⁶ Consequently, if it is true that one can argue that in Byzantium the emperor never performed priestly functions (sacraments), then one can also argue that the priests were devoid of their ruling (kingly) prerogatives, and that their teaching ministry was severely restricted by imperial interests. In such case the whole Byzantine doctrine of ministry, according to which the bishop at his election and consecration is endowed with the threefold power of ruling (king), teaching (prophet) and celebrating the sacraments (priest), had been essentially distorted by the theocratic state. The area of episcopal freedom to exercise their prerogatives was clearly circumscribed by the particular interests of the emperors. In the case of disobedience, the emperor could depose a bishop but there were no grounds for a bishop to discipline the emperor. Thus the late twelfth-century canonist, Theodore Balsamon, argued that when comparing the Emperor with the Patriarch,

...the service of the Emperors includes the enlightening and strengthening of both body and soul. The dignity of the Patriarchs is limited to the benefit of the soul and that alone.... though the clergy ought not to perform secular duties, the Emperor can by his Economy dispense with this ban, and can also, if need be, intervene in the elections not only of Patriarchs but of bishops as well.¹⁰⁷

In other words, the emperor was *above* the church and not *in* the church. Therefore, when Meyendorff affirms that 'there is no real contrast between

canons could not be implemented without his help' (S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity*, p. 57).

¹⁰³J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁴J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, pp. 33-34.

¹⁰⁵A clear illustration of the role of the imperial advisors is offered by Hosius of Cordoba and Eusebius of Caesarea in the Arian crisis. See H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, pp. 129-130.

¹⁰⁶It is for this reason, argues Meyendorff, 'that Constantine and Constantius gave their support to Arians; that Theodosius I in 380 opted not only for Nicene Orthodoxy, but also against the "super-Orthodox" (or "Old Nicaeans") attitude of Rome and Alexandria; that Theodosius II supported Cyril against Nestorius in 431, and Dioscorus against Flavian in 499; that Marcian and Pulcheria turned the tide again, and sanctioned the Chalcedonian definition in 451; but because such was their-and their episcopal advisors'-interpretation of the mind of the Church which alone was able, in their opinion, to secure the *pax romana* again. The imperial constitution on the faith issued by Zeno, Anastasius and Justinian went a step further: they tried to impose imperial interpretations of earlier conciliar statements without new conciliar procedures, endeavouring to achieve episcopal consensus afterwards' (J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 35).

¹⁰⁷Theodore Balsamon, *Opera*; PG, 138, 93, 1017-1018.

East and West in the fifth century in the prevailing understanding of the role of the emperor in Church affairs, but rather the same lack of clear legal definitions and the same inconsistencies',¹⁰⁸ he is only partly right, because St. Ambrose (339-387) overtly disciplined Theodosius and affirmed that 'the emperor was within the church and not over it',¹⁰⁹ and Augustine too, in his *The City of God* made a distinction between the kingdom of this world (the Empire) and the kingdom of God.¹¹⁰

Similarly, Schmemmann's attempt to demonstrate that the Iconoclastic controversy represents the end of the theocratic synthesis between Church and State in unconvincing;¹¹¹ the controversy was in fact only a partial revolt of some prominent church leaders¹¹² against the abuses of the emperors and not a final separation from them. A clear illustration of the fact that the essentials of the 'symphonic' model had not been changed is offered both by the active role played by the empresses Irene (780-802) and Theodora (843) in the final victory of the Iconodules and by the subsequent historical events in which emperors continued to appoint and depose patriarchs and bishops. Commenting on the events which led to the resignation of Patriarch Ignatius of Constantinople in 857 and the appointment of Photius, Meyendorff affirms that 'the imperial government was of course responsible for that change, but at Byzantium as elsewhere in the West at this time no one questioned the right of the emperor to decide who was to sit on the patriarchal throne.'¹¹³

Another sociological implication of the Byzantine Church-State model was the dramatic change in the status of the clergy within society. From a persecuted group, the bishops joined the company of the emperor¹¹⁴ and received public offices and honour. In particular the merging of the Church and State demanded 'that the Church adapt its institutions, or create new ones, which would respond to the need of its own new dominant position within society... to establish a parallelism between the institutions of the Church and the structures of the Roman state.'¹¹⁵ Consequently, in contrast to having a bishop in each local community in the early period, in the fourth century episcopal functions became closely associated with the city, which was the administrative and social centre controlling the region around it.

¹⁰⁸J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 38.

¹⁰⁹C. Vella-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*, p. 20.

¹¹⁰See R.W. Battenhause, ed., *A Companion to the Study of Augustine*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1979, p. 257.

¹¹¹A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 210.

¹¹²Among the prominent figures of the Iconodule party were: John of Damascus, Theodore of Studios, Patriarch Nicephorus and Patriarch Methodius. See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 204-214.

¹¹³J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 48.

¹¹⁴Eusebius, *The Life of Constantine*, III, 10; 15.

¹¹⁵J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 40.

This development 'implied a certain secularization of the episcopal office' and the new status was 'associated with wealth¹¹⁶ and social influence.'¹¹⁷

In the fifth century the major episcopal sees would dispose of immense riches, obviously helped by imperial gifts, tax exemptions and donations which followed the widespread teaching that a gift to the Church was a gift to God and therefore inalienable.¹¹⁸ Since the clergy, and particularly the bishops, practically controlled church property, various forms of bribery -or simony- crept into the life of the Church.¹¹⁹ In fact, Meyendorff clearly points out that the 'eschatological' dimension of the institutionalized Byzantine church was almost totally 'suffocated' by its historical dimension. And thus the Church lost not only its ontology and its specific role (economy), but also its independence; the Church became a part of the Empire and was subjected to the imperial authority. This mode of understanding of Church-State relations is so deeply rooted in the heart of the Orthodox Church that it continued under Turkish rule,¹²⁰ under the modern secular state¹²¹ and to a large extent even under modern Communism.

¹¹⁶See J. Chrysostom, *Hom. in Mat.*, 66; *PG*, 58, 630.

¹¹⁷'...in each city, the bishop, practically unmovable, invested with judicial authority by imperial law, controlling important financial means and administering a number of charitable institutions, often became, as the only locally-elected official, the very embodiment of urban self-government and identity' (J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 45).

¹¹⁸D.J. Constantelos, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare*, pp. 152-276.

¹¹⁹J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, p. 49.

¹²⁰For the Turks there was no distinction between religion and politics, between sacred and secular. Consequently, both from an ontological and practical point of view, the Church and the State were not two distinct realities, but one and the same. The only difference, however, was that when the Turks conquered Byzantium there were two main religions (Islam and Christianity) and one Empire. Islam was the first-class religion whilst Christianity was the second-class religion. Despite the fact that the Ottoman state was pagan, the Byzantine church did not reconsider the validity of the model of 'Symphony': on the contrary, the Patriarch became a kind of Christian caliph responsible to the sultan for all Christians. Thus the Church not only lost its *eschatological* dimension but was also 'historicized' and institutionally subjected to a Muslim state. See D. Knowles and D. Obolensky, *The Christian Centuries*, vol. 2, *The Middle Ages*, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1979; K.S. Latourette, *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, (seven volumes), Harper & Row, New York, 1937-45; W. Buhlmann, *The Coming of the Third Church*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y., 1977; T.H. Papadopoulos, *Studies and Documents Relative to the History of the Greek Church and People under Turkish Domination*, (Brussels, 1952), AMS Press, New York, 1973; C.H. Malik, 'The Orthodox Church', in A.J. Arberry, ed., *Religion in the Middle East*, vol.1, Arberry, CUP, Cambridge, 1976, pp. 299-311; J.M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1986, p. 285; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 86; G. Every, *Understanding Eastern Christianity*, SCM, London, 1980, pp. 75-99; S. Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople 1453*, CUP, Cambridge, 1965.

¹²¹In Russia Peter the Great transformed the Church into a state department. See J. Cracraft, *The Church Reform of Peter the Great*, Macmillan, London, 1971.

The Cross and the Sceptre in Romania

3.1 Between Theocracy and Absolutism

By the time Moldavia and Wallachia became principalities in the fourteenth century by rebelling against their suzerain the king of Hungary, the Romanians rejected not only the Hungarian political structures but also their religion.¹²² Already during the tenth century the Romanian population, under Bulgarian influence, had adopted the Byzantine religion.¹²³ During the initial period (15th-18th centuries) of the Byzantine model of 'symphony'¹²⁴ the Church in Moldavia and Wallachia became very rich due to the generous gifts made by almost every ruling prince.¹²⁵ Thus, in addition

¹²²For an account of the attempts of the Catholic kings of Hungary to maintain their political sovereignty over the Romanian territories and also to impose their Catholic faith, see I. Szentpétery, *Scriptorum rerum hungaricum*, Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, Budapest, 1938, vol. 2, pp. 33-117; G. Gyorffy, 'Formation d'état au IX-ème siècle suivant les *Gesta Hungarorum du notaire Anonyme*', in *Nouvelles études historiques*, 1 (1965), pp. 27-53; I. Donat, 'Așezările din Țara Românească în secolele XIV-XVI', in *Studii*, 11/6 (1956) pp. 75-93; S. Olteanu, 'State Formations on the Territory of Romania', in M. Constantinescu, S. Pascu, and P. Diaconu, eds., *Relations between the Autochthonous Populations and the Migratory Populations on the Territory of Romania*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1975, pp. 35-53; V. Spinei, *Moldavia in the XIth-XIVth Centuries*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1986, pp. 57-58, 104-108, 130; V. Spinei, *Realități etnice și politice în Moldova meridională în secolele X-XIII*, Ed. Junimea, Iași, 1985, pp. 87-89; N. Iorga, *Istoria Romanilor*, vol. 3, București, 1936, pp. 12-26, 35-52, 143-252; G. Popa-Lisseanu, *Isoarele istoriei romanilor*, Ed. Bucovina, Bucharest, 1934; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians: A History*, p. 33.

¹²³See also A. Armbruster, *La romanité des Roumains: Histoire d'une idée*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1977, pp. 140-141; L. Makkai, *Histoire de la Transylvanie*, Presse Universitaire de France, Paris, 1945, pp. 24-29, 67-72; L. Barzu, *Continuitatea populației autohtone în Transilvania în secolele IV-V: Cimitirul dela Bratei*, Ed. Academiei, București, 1973, pp. 79-97; I. Fodor, *In Search of a New Homeland: The Prehistory of the Hungarian People*, Ed. Corvina, Budapest, 1982, pp. 278-285; B. Kopeczi, ed., *Erdély története*, Akadémia, Budapest, 1986, vol. 1, pp. 71-106; J. Dujcev, ed., *Histoire de la Bulgarie*, Horvath, Roanne, 1977, pp. 49-170; D. Onciul, *Originile principatelor romane*, în *Opere Complete*, tom. I, ed. A. Sacerdoțeanu, București, 1968, pp. 560-715; A. Sacerdoțeanu, 'Organizarea Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane în secolele al IX-lea-al XIII-lea' în *Studii Teologice*, an. XX, 3-4 (1968), 242-257; M. Lascaris et A. Valliant, 'La date de la conversion des bulgares', in *Revue des études slaves*, XIII (1933), 5-15; N. Bănescu, *Vechiul stat bulgar și Țările române*, Analele Academiei Române, M.S.I., s. III, t. XXIX), București, 1947.

¹²⁴Georgescu considers that, 'The Byzantine model had an imperial glitter and the additional advantage of being borrowed from a far-off land with no political presence in the region. The Romanians first copied Constantinople's religious hierarchy and structure, joining the family of Orthodox countries-with significant consequences both for politics and for culture and civilization' (V. Georgescu, *The Romanians: A History*, p. 33).

¹²⁵See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 1, pp. 295-307; 308-318; 334-355; 539-553; *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe*, vol. 2, pp. 216-229; 560-578.

to a large number of impressive church buildings and monasteries, the Orthodox Church controlled about one quarter of the entire land of the two principalities.¹²⁶ Yet the Church had to conform itself to the will of autocratic princes¹²⁷ who exercised the final authority in both appointing and deposing the Church's hierarchs.¹²⁸

In this context the relation between Church and State was characterised by the absolute authority of the princes over the Church, while, by virtue of their divinely ordained power, the princes saw themselves as the defenders of the Church.¹²⁹ Consequently, the relation between *imperium* and *sacerdotium* followed the same asymmetric model of 'symphony'. The Church, however, did not attempt to evaluate this model critically either during this

¹²⁶B. Jelavich, *Russia and the Formation of the Romanian National State 1821-1879*, CUP, Cambridge, 1984, p. 130.

¹²⁷As soon as Wallachia and Moldavia emerged as autonomous principalities, the organization of the Church and the appointment of the hierarchy became a prerogative of the ruling princes, who subsequently asked for the recognition of the Ecumenical Patriarch. Acting as 'God's anointed', the princes imitated the Byzantine emperors assuming both secular and ecclesiastical responsibilities. In particular, during the power struggle between princes and boyars (nobles) between 1418 and 1711, almost every new prince deposed the former hierarch and appointed his own men. See N. Iorga, *Byzance après Byzance*, Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Européen, Bucharest, 1971; A. Pipidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină în Țările române în secolele XVI-XVIII*, Ed. Academiei, București, 1983, pp. 184-189; C.C. Giurescu, *Țara Românească în secolele XIV-XV*, Ed. Științifică, București, 1973; *Documente privitoare la istoria Romanilor în Colecția E, de Hurmuzaky*, Bucharest (1887-1942), 2/1:415-416 (henceforth *Hurmuzaky*); M. Neagoe, *Problema centralizării statelor feudale românești*, Scrisul Romanesc, Craiova, 1977, pp. 133-150; S. Papacostea, 'La fondation de la Valachie et de la Moldavie et les roumains de Transylvanie', in *Revue roumaine d'histoire*, 18:3 (1978), pp. 390-401; D.M. Sturdza, 'Grandes familles de Grèce, d'Albanie et de la Constantinople', in *Dictionnaire historique et généalogique*, Imprimerie Aleconnaise, Paris, 1983, pp. 127-158.

¹²⁸The form of government in the two principalities was 'from the start absolute monarchy'. Their absolutism was reaffirmed by all the rulers from Basarab I (prince of Wallachia, c. 1310-1352) to Constantin Brancoveanu (prince of Wallachia, 1688-1714) and Dimitrie Cantemir (prince of Moldavia, 1710-11). Although the prince lacked the advantage of investiture by Rome or Constantinople (kings of Hungary and Bulgaria possessed this privilege), his absolute power was held to be divinely ordained. V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 33-34. This claim of the princes was generally accepted by Church and people alike and the chroniclers reflected this idea in their writings. Grigore Ureche, for example, expressing the view on the origin of state authority, said of the prince: 'God has given him the right and his heavenly kingdom on earth' (G. Ureche, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei*, Ed. P.P. Panaitescu, ESPLA, 2nd ed. București, 1959. Cf. V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 35). A. Bantaș, *The Romanian Orthodox Church: Yesterday and Today*, p. 18; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 1, pp. 239-595.

¹²⁹Particularly after the fall of Constantinople and other Balkan states to the Ottoman Turks, the ever-larger number of Orthodox refugees from Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia fuelled this view that the Romanian princes were the representatives of an imperial tradition with the task of protecting the true (Orthodox) faith. See N. Iorga, *Byzance après Byzance*; M. Berindei and G. Venstein, *L'empire ottoman et les pays roumains, 1544-45; Etudes et documents*, Editions de l'Ecole des hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1987; A. Pipidi, *Tradiția politică bizantină*, pp. 184-189.

period or during the Phanariot rule, when the gift of imperium was conferred upon the Romanian rulers by the Turkish Sultan.¹³⁰

3.2 Between Absolutism and Democracy: Organic Statutes

If during the first part of the Phanariot period (1711-1770) conservatism, anti-Western traditionalism and political allegiance to the Porte dominated the political, religio-cultural and social life of the Principalities,¹³¹ during the second part (1770-1821) the ideas of the Western Enlightenment gave rise to a desire for European types of reforms.¹³² In particular, during the Russian protectorate after the treaty of Adrianople (1829),¹³³ the Romanian Principalities were organized politico-administratively according to a constitution called *Regulament Organic* (Organic Statutes).¹³⁴ If politically the new constitution introduced the concept of a separation of powers in the state into the executive (the prince and his cabinet of six to eight ministers)¹³⁵ and the legislative (the ordinary and extraordinary General Assemblies),¹³⁶ from an administrative point of view it placed the entire society, including the Church, under strict State control. Thus the election of the hierarchs,¹³⁷ Church administration,¹³⁸ religious education¹³⁹ and civil

¹³⁰See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 79.

¹³¹A.D. Xenopol, *Epoca fanariotă (1711-1821)*, Bucharest, 1892; N. Iorga, 'Le despotisme éclairé dans les pays roumains au XVIIIème siècle', in *Bulletin of the International Committee of Historical Sciences*, 1 (1973) F. Constantiniu and S. Papacostea, 'Les réformes des premiers princes phanariotes en Moldavie et en Valachie: Essai d'interprétation', *Balkan Studies*, 13 (1972); V. Georgescu, *Political Ideas and the Enlightenment in the Romanian Principalities, 1750-1831*, East-European Monographs, Boulder, Colo., 1971.

¹³²V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 75; 113. See also, A. Camarino-Cioran, *Les académies princières de Bucharest et de Iassy*, Institute for Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki, 1974, pp. 279-280, 356-362; C. Tomescu, *Istoria cărții românești de la începuturi pînă la 1918*, Ed. Științifică, Bucharest, 1968, p. 87; V. Georgescu, *Din corespondența diplomatică a Țării Românești, 1823-1878*, Muzeul Romano-Rus, Bucharest, 1962, p. 121; Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, pp. 337-342; A. Alexianu, *Mode și vesminte din trecut*, Ed. Meridiane, Bucharest, 1971, vol. 2, p. 90; *Catalogue of the Rosseti-Rosnoveanu Library, 1827*, Arhivele Statului, Bucharest, A.N. 260/16; P. Poenaru, *Catalog de cărțile ce s-au găsit în biblioteca Sfintei Mitropolii, 1836*, Librăria Academiei, Bucharest, MSS. Rom. no. 2683; V.A. Urechia, *Istoria Românilor*, C. Goebel, Bucharest, 1891-1902, vol. 1, pp. 83-84.

¹³³This treaty ended the Russo-Turkish war (1828-1829). Subsequently General Kiseleff, the envoy of the Russian tsar, was the supreme authority over the two national assemblies of Moldavia and Wallachia. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 26.

¹³⁴The constitution was drafted by a committee of four members and a secretary in each principality under the presidency of the Russian General Council, Minciaki. In each committee two members were appointed by the National Assembly of the boyars and two by Russia; the secretaries were appointed by the president. See C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, pp. 344-345.

¹³⁵C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, p. 345.

¹³⁶The General Assembly (Parliament) of each principality was presided by the respective metropolitan. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 27.

¹³⁷The religious reforms stipulated, that the metropolitans were to be elected by the general assembly (parliament), which at such occasions would also invite all the great

offenses committed by clergy¹⁴⁰ were totally submitted to State control and approval.¹⁴¹ After minor opposition from the two metropolitans of Moldova¹⁴² and Wallachia,¹⁴³ the respective princes succeeded in transforming the Church into a State controlled institution.

boyars. Subsequently the election had to be approved by the prince. Further, the newly elected metropolitan had to be approved, for canonical reasons, by the Ecumenical Patriarch. It is true that the Church was represented in the national assemblies both by metropolitans as presidents and by the titular bishops, but these national assemblies were primarily political and not ecclesiastical bodies. Moreover, the prince had the right, for political reasons to depose any hierarch. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, pp. 27-28; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 135.

¹³⁸The State took the initiative in regulating the life of the Church in the areas of personnel and property through the Department of State for Religion ('Marei Lofeții a credinței', in Wallachia; and 'Vornicia averilor bisericesti', in Moldavia). According to this regulation, no clergy could be consecrated unless approved by the prince. Consequently, the Department of State for Religion had to periodically submit to the prince the list with all the candidates for the priesthood. A degree in theology from a State accredited seminary was obligatory in order to receive the prince's approval. Additionally, in order to control the entire administration of the Church, the Department of Religion was also empowered to administrate all the properties of the Church and of the monasteries, and the revenue was to be given to the treasury. Subsequently, the State distributed the money as was needed for education, charity, and the salaries of the clergy. Churches and monasteries were prohibited from any borrowing without the approval of the national assembly, and the existing debts had to be paid within ten years. Furthermore, clergy were exempted from taxes, and in the same time, according to the Organic Statutes, the government established the fees that clergy could charge for private religious services (marriages, funerals, etc.) and the obligation of the estates toward clergy, as well. In addition, the government provided one year financial support from the budget for widows and orphans from priestly families. M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 28-29; S. Buzan, 'Regulamentele organice și însemnătatea lor pentru dezvoltarea organizației Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane', în *ST*, an. VIII, 5-6 (1956), 363-365; T.D. Valdman, 'Chestiuni privitoare la organizarea și lucrarea Bisericii în legiurile Moldovei din prima jumătate a veacului al XIX-lea', *MMS*, an. XLVII, 3-4 (1971), 182-191.

¹³⁹Since the State was the agency empowered to examine the incumbents for the priesthood, the State took upon itself the responsibility to found and to subsidize theological schools. However, the theological schools remained under the ecclesiastical authority of the metropolitans and bishops, whilst the State exercised its right of control over the curriculum and the administration of these schools. M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 28-29.

¹⁴⁰In case of civil crimes, clergy were brought under the civil court's authority, whilst purely religious charges were left under the jurisdiction of the religious courts. M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, p. 28.

¹⁴¹See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 107-108.

¹⁴²During the following years, the government of Prince Mihail Sturza (1834-1849) of Moldavia implemented these new Church reforms largely following Peter the Great's strategy. Thus, after the resignation of Veniamin, the prince weakened the power of the Church by delaying the election of a new metropolitan, preferring instead to appoint vicars. Meanwhile the prince strengthened the power of the State in order to undertake the administration of the estates of the Moldavian metropolitanate and monasteries. Unlike Peter the Great, however, Prince Sturza did not abolish the metropolitanate of Moldavia, but appointed as metropolitan a weak man who endorsed 'canonically' all the secular methods of the State to control the Church. Consequently, with the blessing of Metropolitan Meletie Lefter, the State succeeded in bringing under its administration all the properties, personnel and policy of the Church. The prince was also responsible for

3.3 Between Democracy and Absolutism: Secular Reform

The next step towards the transformation of the Church into a department of state came with Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866) after the union of Moldova and Wallachia (1859). Under the influence of the French Enlightenment,¹⁴⁴ and particularly of French anti-clericalism, Prince Cuza expanded the Church reform of the Organic Statutes to all the Church's spheres of activity.¹⁴⁵ Thus, after curbing the opposition of Metropolitan Nifon of Wallachia,¹⁴⁶ Cuza confiscated (in 1859 in Moldova, and in 1860 in Wallachia) the printing shops,¹⁴⁷ manufacturing shops and the estates of several monasteries.¹⁴⁸ Additionally, in 1862, the government introduced a ten percent tax on all the income of the monasteries, churches, bishoprics, metropolitanates, schools and charitable institutions. This income, together with the entire revenue of the estates of the monasteries, was deposited in the national treasury.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, Cuza's government secularized religious

appointing all the abbots of the monasteries, and offered them a fixed salary of 2000 lei per annum. See. M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 30-31.

¹⁴³In Wallachia, when the Russian tsar deposed and exiled (in 1829) metropolitan Grigorie Dascălul (appointed in 1823 by Prince Grigorie Ghica) on the grounds that he resisted the new reforms. Subsequently the metropolitan see remained vacant until 1840, when the national assembly and Prince Alexandru Ghica (1834-1842) appointed bishop Neofit of Râmnic as metropolitan. Neofit accepted not only the reforms stipulated in the Organic Statutes but also the subsequent amendments (1840, 1842 and 1847) which granted to the state even greater authority over the Church. See. I. Ionașcu, 'Mitropolitul Grigorie IV și întrebuintarea unor venituri în vremea păstoriei lui (1823-1834)', in *Raze de lumină*, București, an. X, 9-10 (1938), pp. 270-301; T.G. Bulat, 'Mănăstirile pămîntene din Țara Românească în epoca Regulamentului organic', in *BOR*, an. XCIII, 9-10 (1975) pp. 1165-1176; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 49-53.

¹⁴⁴See A. Oțetea, ed., *Documente privind istoria României: Răscoala din 1821*, Ed. Academiei, București, 1959-1962, vol. 1, pp. 187-197; D. Goleșcu, *Insemnare a călătoriei mele, 1826*, Ed. Minerva, Bucharest, 1915, p. 65; C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria romanilor*, pp. 372-373; G. Brătianu, *Sfatul domnesc și adunarea stărilor în Principatele Romane*, Academia Romana, Bucharest, 1977, p. 414.

¹⁴⁵See G. Castellan, *A History of the Romanians*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1989, pp. 123-133; G. Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii Romane de la Origini pîna în Prezent*, Ed. Minerva, Bucharest, 1986, p. 62.

¹⁴⁶In order to prevent any opposition of the Church towards his reforms, Prince Cuza postponed the election of hierarchs (metropolitans or bishops), preferring instead, in the case of a vacancy, to appoint vicars. This method proved very effective in achieving a rapid and complete submission of the Church to the State. The few attempts of opposition were easily suppressed. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 113-114.

¹⁴⁷From Neamț Monastery and from the Metropolitan see in Moldavia.

¹⁴⁸In 1859 the government confiscated the estates from the Neamț, Secu, Agapia Văratec, Adam and Vorona monasteries; in 1860 Doljești, Zagravia together with another 31 smaller monasteries, in Moldavia, were closed. Similar decisions were also taken in Wallachia. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 114.

¹⁴⁹See S. Berechet, 'Dovezi asupra secularizării averilor mănăstirești', in *BOR*, an. XLI, 14 (1923), 1041-1053.

education,¹⁵⁰ introduced the liturgy in the Romanian language,¹⁵¹ secularized the estates of all the monasteries in Romania,¹⁵² reformed the electoral law,¹⁵³ monasteries,¹⁵⁴ religious and civil services,¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰According to a law issued in 1859, all the primary theological schools (schools of catechism) were transformed into compulsory public schools whilst the theological seminaries were integrated into the universities of Iași (1860) and Bucharest (1864). The curriculum in the theological seminaries had to include secular courses such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, agronomy and 'popular medicine'. The number of students in these universities also grew steadily from their modest beginnings. See *Anuarul statistic al României*, 1904, pp. 79,92; *Contribuții la istoria dezvoltării universității din Iași*, 1960, vol. 1, pp. 82-83, 215. All these schools were subsidized and controlled by the government through the Ministry of Education. In order to maximize the impact of the education reform, Cuza allowed the graduates of the theological schools to teach also in public schools. Although on the surface the reform of education appears to offer a greater space for religion in education, in reality Cuza's reform laid down the foundation for the secularization of education, particularly if we bear in mind that the model of education that he followed was the French one. See A.D. Sturdza, ed. *Acte și documente relative la istoria renașterii României*, Bucharest, 1889-1909, 6/1, pp. 160-169; M. Kogălniceanu, *Discursuri parlamentare unirii*, Ed. Științifică, Bucharest, 1959, pp. 66-78; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 177; *Hurmuzaki*, 18:383; C. Tomescu, *Istoria cărții românești*, p. 129; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 115-116.

¹⁵¹Under the influence of the ideas of 'national identity' and 'national revival', Cuza's government also issued a law (1863) which established that the liturgy should be celebrated only in the Romanian language, excepting the churches of Sf. Ioan cel Mare (Bucharest), Sf. Arhangheli (Brăila) and Dancu (Iași), where the liturgy could be celebrated in Greek for the Greek communities in these cities. Until 1863 in many churches and monasteries dedicated to the Holy Places the liturgy was celebrated only in Greek. A.D. Sturdza, *Acte și documente*, 11/1; M. Kogălniceanu, 'Cuvînt pentru deschiderea cursului de istorie națională', in A. Oțetea, ed., *Opere*, Imprimeria Națională, București, 1946, vol. 1, pp. 117-142; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 116.

¹⁵²Another area which concerned Cuza's government was the situation of the Dedicated Monasteries. These were dedicated by the Romanian princes or boyars to certain Holy Places, such as Mt. Athos, Jerusalem, Alexandria, the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Antioch. In addition to placing them under the protection of these places, the Dedicated Monasteries were intended for charitable purposes such as hospitals, schools and homes for the aged in the principalities, with only a certain percentage of their income was to be donated to the Holy Places. According to Păcurariu, in 1855 in Wallachia the Dedicated Monasteries owned 27.69% of the land. Also in Moldavia the Dedicated Monasteries controlled 22.31% of the land and possessed 215 estates (101 for Jerusalem, 87 for Mt. Athos, 12 for Mt. Sinai, 5 for Constantinople, and 3 for Alexandria. In addition, these monasteries owned 62 mills, 22 fishing ponds, 166 restaurants and motels and a large number a shops. (M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 120). Consequently Cuza decided to secularize the estates of all the monasteries in Romania, Dedicated or not. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 75; C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, pp. 375-376; B. Jelavich, *Russia and the Formation of the Romanian National State 1821-1879*, CUP, Cambridge, 1984, p. 130; Șt. Berechet, 'Reformele bisericesti sub Cuza Vodă după presa streină', în *BOR*, an XLIII, 8 (1925), pp. 475-479; C.C. Giurescu, *Viața și opera lui Cuza-Vodă*, 2nd ed., Ed. Științifică (2nd ed.), București, 1970, pp. 149-164, 199-210, 338-339; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 118.

¹⁵³Concerning the election of hierarchy, in 1865 Prince Cuza issued a law in three articles which affirmed that: (art.1) 'The metropolitans and the titular bishops in Romania are appointed by the Prince upon the presentation of the Minister of Religion who had previously consulted the Council of Ministers'; (art.2) 'The metropolitans and the bishops

united the churches of Moldavia and Wallachia and declared the Romanian Orthodox Church autocephalous.¹⁵⁶

These laws, together with the secularization of the estates of the Dedicated Monasteries, led to open conflict between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Romania.¹⁵⁷ However, as a result of the growing political power of the Romanian state,¹⁵⁸ in 1885 the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III formally recognised the autocephaly of the Romanian Orthodox Church.¹⁵⁹ Being exclusively under the control of the Romanian government, in 1893 the Romanian Church was further subjected to state control. The government

are appointed from among the Romanian monastic clergy, providing that the metropolitans are at least 40 years old, and the bishops 35 years old, and they are known for godliness, education and competence'; (art. 3) 'The metropolitans and the bishops are under the jurisdiction of the Synod for religious crimes and before the Civil Court (*Curtea de Casație*) for any other crime' (*Legea pentru numirea de mitropoliți și episcopi eparhioți în România*, 11 Mai 1865).

¹⁵⁴The priests who served in monasteries whose properties were secularised were subsequently paid by the State. On the other hand, in 1864 Cuza issued a law which stipulated that each community be responsible for supporting financially its own priest and church. In the same year (1864) Cuza issued another law (*Legea călugăriei* or *Decretul organic pentru reglementarea schimei monahicești*) which established that monasteries would be entitled to receive monks only from among the 'monastic students' (theological studies) irrespective of their age. If lay people were to enter the monastery, then men had to be over sixty and women over fifty years of age. However, there were no such restrictions for handicapped people and for those suffering from terminal illnesses. Not only had the number and the age of the monks and nuns to be decided by the government, but also the place where each was to be assigned and the budget allocated for every monastery. M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol.3, pp. 121-122.

¹⁵⁵Further, Prince Cuza established rules for religious and civil services. Thus, all funerals had to take place in cemeteries especially set up at least two hundred metres away from communities; funerals inside churches or monasteries were prohibited. Also the government established only the civil marriage ceremony as compulsory, the religious ceremony being optional. Similarly, cases of divorce were to be decided by civil courts. Additionally, all identity documents and certificates of birth, marriage and death previously under the responsibility of the parish priests were transferred to local civil servants. *Legea pentru înmormântări*, 18th March, 1864; *Codul civil*, 4 December, 1864; *Legea comunală*, 31st March, 1864.

¹⁵⁶In 1864 Cuza issued a law which, firstly, unified the two churches (Moldova and Wallachia) under the authority of a 'Central Synod', and secondly, declared the Romanian Orthodox Church autocephalous. *Decretul organic pentru înființarea unei autorități sinodale centrale*, Bucharest, 3 December, 1864. Cuza allowed the two metropolitans to have 'local synods'. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 122; *Monitorul Oficial*, no. 273, 6 December 1864, pp. 1297-1298; AS, București, Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice România, *Dosar* no. 1536-1864; G. Vasilescu, 'Autocefalia Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane', in Patriarch Teoctist, ed., *Centenarul Autocefaliei Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane 1885-1895*, Ed. IMB al BOR, București, 1987, pp. 167-168. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 122; N. Șerbănescu, 'Autocefalia Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane cu Prilejul Centenarului 1885-25 Aprilie-1985', în Patriarch Teoctist, ed., *Centenarul*, p. 91.

¹⁵⁷For an account of the arguments raised by both sides, see Arhiva Sfântului Sinod (ASS) *Dosar*, no. 75, f.3, 28, 46 v., 93 v.; 122 v.

¹⁵⁸In 1877 under King Carol, Romania won its political independence. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 186-187.

¹⁵⁹See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 133-134.

issued 'The Law of clergy and schools',¹⁶⁰ which stipulated that: all clergy would be paid by the government;¹⁶¹ the government would decide the number of parishes and priests;¹⁶² each church unit should have a committee responsible for the administration of its assets; special courts should resolve the crimes committed by clergy; and finally, education reform would be under the control of the Ministry of Education.¹⁶³ Consequently, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the Romanian Orthodox Church had been transformed into a department of State and subjected to the political power.¹⁶⁴

3.4 Catholic Absolutism: Orthodox Reform

Because in Transylvania religious and national identity were held together as the basis of political and civil rights, and since that the Romanians, being Orthodox believers, received neither, the relation between the Orthodox Church and the State took a different form.¹⁶⁵ Thus, whilst one part of the Romanian Orthodox united with Rome (1698-1700), thereby establishing the Uniate Church,¹⁶⁶ another part, under the leadership of

¹⁶⁰*Legea clerului mirean și al seminariilor*. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 135.

¹⁶¹Salaries were established according the academic degree; place of work (town or village). See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 135-136.

¹⁶²In 1893 the government established 386 urban parishes and 3,226 rural parishes with a possibility of starting at most 20 new parishes every year. In 1914 there were 6,768 churches and 3,800 priests in Romania. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, p. 137.

¹⁶³Metropolitan Iosif Gheorghian, who opposed such regulation, was forced to resign on 23 March 1893, and had to withdraw to Căldărușani Monastery. Subsequently the government implemented this Law, and as Păcurariu points out: 'Thus, the Law of clergy introduced a series of changes into the life of our Church, changes which had been necessary to raise the priests from their low status. It is true, however, that the state had now the right to have its say in almost all the Church's problems; a fact with negative consequences for the life of our Church' (M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 138).

¹⁶⁴V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 180.

¹⁶⁵E. Tappe, 'The Romanian Orthodox Church and the West', in Derek Baker, ed., *Studies in Church History*, vol. 13, Blackwell, Oxford, 1976, p. 285; N. Iorga, *Istoria Poporului Romanesc*, E.S.E., Bucharest, 1985, p. 542; F. Sugar, eds., *A History of Hungary*, I.B. Tauris, London, 1990, p. 123; S. Papacostea, 'La fondation de Valachie et de la Moldavie et les roumains de Transylvanie', in *Revue roumaine d'histoire*, 18, 3 (1978), 390-401; N. Stoicescu, *Continuitatea romanilor*, Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucharest, 1980, p. 60; R. Popa, 'Structures socio-politiques roumaines au sud de la Transylvanie au commencement du Moyen-Age', in *Revue roumaine d'histoire*, 14, 2 (1975), 293-314; R. Popa, *Țara Maramureșului în secolul al XIV-lea*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1970, pp. 50-53, 192, 232-233.

¹⁶⁶Whilst changing their religion, the Uniates made significant progress toward the affirmation of the 'Rumanian nation', both from a cultural and a political point of view. Thus they elaborated the theory of a Romanian nationality of Latin origin, produced the first modern grammars of the Romanian language and the first modern histories of the Romanian people. On the political level their theories were first published in the *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, which set forth a well-documented basis for the recognition of the

Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna (1808-1873), decided to fight for their national and religious identity.¹⁶⁷ In this context,¹⁶⁸ Şaguna considered it of vital importance, both to secure the autonomy of the Church in its relation with the State, and to organize the internal life of the Church in such a way as to enable it to carry its mission to the nation.¹⁶⁹

Firstly, although Şaguna speaks of a harmony between Church and State, in reality his concept has a different connotation from the Byzantine model of symphony between *imperium* and *sacerdotium*. Since Church and State have different origins, different spheres of activity and different laws,¹⁷⁰ it follows that ontologically they are distinct, and historically the Church is not to be subject to the State.¹⁷¹

Romanian nation (in an ethnic sense) as a full partner of the Hungarians and the German-Saxons in governing Transylvania. See K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality: Andrei Şaguna and the Romanians of Transylvania, 1846-1873*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1977. pp. 4-5.

¹⁶⁷See V. Papahagi, 'Les Roumains d'Albanie et le commerce vénétien aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles', in *Mélanges de l'École Roumaine en France*, 9 (1939), 48, 112-116; V. Papahagi, 'Familia Şaguna în documente veneţiene din secolul al XVIII-lea', in *Revista Istorică*, 18 (1932), pp. 1-5; I. Lupaş and E. Todoran, 'Documente Istorice: I. Acte privitoare la lupta Anastasiei Şaguna pentru apărarea copiilor săi şi a credinţei strămoşeşti', in *Transilvania*, 41, no. 4 (1910), 185-194; I. Lupaş, 'Anastasia Şaguna', *Convorbiri Literare*, 42, no. 12 (1908), pp. 595-603; E. Todoran, 'Documente istorice. Acte privitoare la reîntoarcerea lui Atanasiu Şaguna în sânul bisericii strămoşeşti', in *Transilvania*, 41, no. 6 (1910), pp. 455-460; M. D. Peyfuss, 'Rom oder Byzanz', in *Österreichische Osthefte*, 12, no. 6 (1970), pp. 337-351; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, pp. 92-93; K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, pp. 2-4.

¹⁶⁸The Orthodox leaders had been subordinated either to a Calvinist superintendent (initially) or to the Catholic State during the Counter-Reformation, and moreover the Orthodox Church lacked the material resources and the political power necessary to carry out its social mission. Orthodox believers were also considered as serfs by the ruling classes. However, during Şaguna's episcopate the condition of the Orthodox Church changed significantly, and subsequently its claim to represent the Romanian nation had a more substantial base. See K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁹*Arhiva Bibliotecii Mitropoliei (ABM)*, Sibiu, *Şaguna Collection*, no. 1447.

¹⁷⁰Şaguna held the view that the Catholic State of the Austrian Empire and the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania are not co-extensive; on the contrary, he argued that the Church and the State have distinct spheres of jurisdiction and of activity and that neither party should intrude into the other's sphere. However, this approach requires a clear circumscription of the boundaries between civil and ecclesial administration. This distinction flows, according to Şaguna, from the fact that the origins and nature of the Church and the State are different. The Church was founded by Christ, and its purpose is to impart to the faithful a sense of morality and spirituality in order to prepare them to secure eternal salvation. The means whereby this salvation is appropriated are the Word of God and the sacraments. The State, on the other hand, was created by a union of families under a commonly accepted leader with the specific purpose of maintaining order among its citizens and of protecting their lives, their honour and their property, its main instruments being political and judicial. See A. Şaguna, *Compendium des kanonischen Rechtes der einen, heiligen, allgemeinen und apostolischen Kirche*, Hermannstadt (Sibiu), 1868, pp. 284-285.

¹⁷¹Şaguna considered the status of the Orthodox Church within the Austro-Hungarian Empire as anti-canonical due to the subjection of the Church to political forces, and argued that a real autonomy can be achieved only by bringing the government of the

[T]he legal foundations of church autonomy were Holy Scripture, the canons, and 'local church requirements'; in all matters relating to the church the canon had the same force of law as secular legislation, but whenever there was a conflict between the two, canon law took precedence; when canonical sources offered no guidance, Roman-Byzantine law, in so far as it corresponded to the principles of the Orthodox Church, was to be consulted.¹⁷²

However, Şaguna affirmed that the ideal relation between Church and State is one of harmony and cooperation in furthering the general welfare of the Christian community rather than one of hostility and rivalry; although each had its own sphere of activity, neither could accomplish its goal in isolation.¹⁷³

Secondly, Şaguna was aware that authentic Church autonomy (in relation with the State) is organically linked with the Church's constitution. Consequently, he also turned his attention to the internal organization of the Church according to canonical principle.¹⁷⁴ The key to this problem, as Şaguna saw it, was the restoration of the Orthodox metropolis at Alba Iulia

Church into full conformity with the canon law of the Eastern Church. K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, p. 224.

¹⁷²K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, p. 227. See also *ABM*, Sibiu, Şaguna Collection, no. 1927, Şaguna to Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, January, 17, 1864.

¹⁷³The State provides the Church's material support and respects the autonomy of its institutions as well as the liberty of conscience of its faithful, whilst the Church offers the State (regardless of its form-absolutist, constitutional or republican) its moral support and 'spiritual rest', which makes people loyal subjects and law-abiding citizens, goals which are unattainable through political and economic power only. (A. Şaguna, *Compendium*, p. 280). However, when Şaguna looked for practical ways to bring about a fruitful harmony between Church and State, he was less specific and more pragmatic. Thus in a preliminary draft of a Church constitution (1864), Şaguna recognized the right of the emperor the exercise 'supreme inspection' over the Church and to sanction the election of new bishops or metropolitans. Exercising its power, affirmed Şaguna, the State is to respect the law of the land and to guarantee the Church the right to administer its life in accordance with its canon law. See A. Şaguna, *Proiectu de unu Regulamentu pentru organizarea trebiloru bisericesci, scolare, si fundationale romane de Releaga greco-orientale in Statele austriace*, Sibiu, 1864, pp. 83-84. In this context, Şaguna considered it natural to ask for State subsidies to pay the salaries of the priests or to provide religious education in schools, because the Church was not merely a receiver of State beneficence; it, too, had something to offer. Şaguna promised the State a devoted clergy capable to using its almost unlimited influence among the peasant masses to enhance the position of the dynasty and ensure obedience to its law. Moreover, argued Şaguna, increased material support from the State would enable the clergy to perform these and other public services more effectively, and hence with greater benefit to the State. In building up his case, Şaguna went as far as to affirm that the loyalty offered by the Orthodox Church to the State is more trustworthy than the Roman Catholic one, because his Church could not appeal to a higher authority outside the monarchy as was the case with the Catholic Church which could appeal to Rome. See *ABM*, Sibiu, Şaguna Collection, no. 975, Şaguna to Protopope Moise Fulea, July 29, 1854, no. 988.

¹⁷⁴*ABM*, Şaguna Collection, no. 1064, Şaguna to Karl Schwarzenberg, August 27, 1855; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 67; K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, p. 228.

with its canonical metropolitan synod.¹⁷⁵ In order to achieve the restoration of the Orthodox metropolis, Şaguna relied heavily on the support of the Imperial Court and of the Transylvanian government,¹⁷⁶ whereas for the internal reform of his diocese he attempted to gather the Romanian community around the Orthodox Church.¹⁷⁷ Consequently, in spite of some governmental opposition¹⁷⁸ and of disagreements between Şaguna and Romanian lay intellectuals concerning lay participation in the life of the Church,¹⁷⁹ the two parties finally agreed to a division of the consistory into

¹⁷⁵See *ABM, Sibiu, Şaguna Collection*, no. 100: session of the Orthodox consistory, September 10/22, 1848; *Memoriile Arhiepiscopului și Mitropolitului Andrei Şaguna din anii 1846-1871*, Sibiu, 1923, p. 42; K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, p. 224.

¹⁷⁶In spite of the strong opposition of the Orthodox consistory in Sibiu, upon the recommendation of the Serbian metropolitan of Carlovitz, Rajacic, who exercised jurisdiction over the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania, Şaguna was preferred by the Court of Vienna as the vicar of the Sibiu diocese (27 June, 1846) to Ioan Popasu, protopope of Braşov and Ioan Moga and Moise Fulea, protopopes of Sibiu. See K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, pp. 17-38.

¹⁷⁷Since 1698-1700 the Romanian community in Transylvania has been divided between the Uniate Church (Greek Catholic) and the Orthodox Church. However, due to the privileges granted by the Court of Vienna to the Uniate clergy and believers, the Orthodox Church was in danger of losing its members. See E. Tappe, 'The Romanian Orthodox...', p. 285; G. Castellan, *A History of the Romanians*, p. 105; P.F. Sugar, *A History of Hungary*, pp. 116-120; M. Constantinescu, eds., *Unification of the Romanian National State: The Union of Transylvania with Old Romania*, The Romanian Academy, Bucharest, 1971, pp. 40-41; H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *The History of the Church: The Church Between Revolution and Restoration*, vol. 7, Burns & Oates, London, 1981, p. 195.

¹⁷⁸Although initially his idea of broad lay representation in the synod faced the opposition of the Austrian authority on the grounds of being too great a concession to liberalism, eventually, for political reasons, Governor Wohlgemoth gave Şaguna a limited freedom to summit an Orthodox National Congress in 1868. See A. Jivi, 'Relațiile Mitropoliei din Carloviț cu Biserica Ortodoxă Română din Transilvania în secolul al XVIII-lea', în *BOR*, 88, 5-6 (1970), 587-596; M. Păcurariu, '100 de ani de la reînființarea Mitropoliei Ardealului', în *MA*, 9, 11-12 (1964), 810-840; K. Hitchins, 'Andrei Şaguna and the Restoration of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis in Transylvania, 1864-1868', in *Balkan Studies*, 6 (1965), 1-20; 'Şaguna to Karl Schwarzenberg, August 27, 1855', in *ABM, Şaguna Collection*, no. 1064.

¹⁷⁹At the opening session of the Congress, Şaguna presented a draft of a church constitution in which he allowed laymen extensive participation in various branches of church administration. Thus, from the village parish to the synod, all the constituent organs of the Church would have lay representation, particularly in church administration, education and finance. However, Şaguna, believed that the clergy should stand at the head of all of these constituent organs on the grounds of their [the clergy's] canonical power. Thus, all matters concerning dogma and ecclesiastical justice were to be the exclusive prerogatives of the clergy. The bishop exercised this authority through his right to ordain priests and assign them to parishes regardless of the wishes of the parishioners, and through his power to appoint members of the consistory and the protopopiate council, a judicial body of first instance at the district level. At the diocesan level, the bishop as the head of the clergy and the body of the faithful, was responsible for the proper functioning of every unit of church government. At the metropolitan level final authority was concentrated in the episcopal synod, which would decide all cases involving dogma, act as the final judicial body for both clergy and laity, settle the most important administrative matters, and represent the Church in its relations with the State. However, when Şaguna submitted this draft constitution to the National Church Congress, the lay majority (from among ninety delegates, sixty were laymen and thirty

three separate committees: ecclesiastical, educational, and administrative. The first was to be responsible for dogma, ritual and the discipline of the clergy, and was to be composed only of clergy appointed by the bishop. On the second and third committees, laymen would outnumber clergy in the proportion of two to one and would consequently dominate them.¹⁸⁰

The National Church Congress adopted the document (October 19, 1868) which became known as the 'Organic Statutes', and submitted it to the government (the ministry of religion and education) for approval. After some further amendments, of which the rights of the emperor to 'supreme inspection' of Church affairs was the most important one, Şaguna's Organic Statutes was approved by the government and subsequently sanctioned by the Emperor on May 28, 1869.¹⁸¹ Păcurariu considers that Şaguna's greatest contribution to the development of the Transylvanian Orthodox Church was to underline in its Organic Statutes the Church's autonomy in relation to the State and its synodality in the relation between clergy and laity.¹⁸² In other words, Şaguna attempted to create space between both Church and State, and hierarchy and laity in order to emphasize the eschatological nature of the ecclesial community.

3.5 Between Democracy and Dictatorship

At the end of the First World War the political spectrum broadened as new political parties formed on the extreme right and left.¹⁸³ However, in contrast to other Eastern European countries like Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, where both Communists and Socialists had some influence, left-wing parties had little voice in Romania.¹⁸⁴ In fact the Romanian

were priests) succeeded, to a certain degree, in altering the basis of Şaguna's draft by substituting lay for hierarchical initiative in certain key areas of church government. Thus, the Committee of Twenty-Seven, appointed by the Congress to amend Şaguna's draft, proposed that the episcopal synod, now composed of two-thirds laymen and one-third clergy, become the National Church Congress, the supreme legislative organ of the metropolis. Further, the Church consistory conceived by Şaguna as an advisory body composed exclusively of clergy appointed by the bishop in each diocese, was transformed into an executive committee of the diocese, elected by the National Church Congress (the same two to one, lay/priestly representation), and whose decisions, expressed through the vote of the majority, were binding upon the bishop. See D. Staniloae, *In zadar: Statutul Organic e Şagunian*, Tipografia Arhidiecezeană, Sibiu, 1933, pp. 5-32; K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, pp. 245-246.

¹⁸⁰For an account of the confrontation between Şaguna and the lay intellectuals, see P. Cosma, 'Statutul Organic', in *Enciclopedia Română*, ed., C. Diaconovich, vol.3, Sibiu, 1904, pp. 1009-1012; D. Staniloae, *In zadar*, pp. 5-32.

¹⁸¹See Ioan cavalier de Puşcariu, *Notițe despre întâmplările contemporane*, Sibiu, 1913, p. 135.

¹⁸²See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 3, p. 389.

¹⁸³See S. Manuilă and D.C. Georgescu, *Populația României*, Imprimeria Națională, Bucharest, 1937, pp. 17-20; *Anuarul Statistic al României*, 1937 and 1938, pp. 34-35; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp 191-192.

¹⁸⁴See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 193.

Communist Party, created in 1921 remained a small¹⁸⁵ and marginal party until 1944.¹⁸⁶ However, the right wing movement, called the Iron Guard,¹⁸⁷ nationalistic, anti-Semitic, anti-Western, messianic, and with a cult of the leader...grew steadily in popularity, aided by the economic crisis, the rise of anti-semitism, the corruption of the ruling classes, and the incapacity of the old parties to solve the country's problems'.¹⁸⁸ Whilst attempting to resolve both domestic and foreign problems, in 1938 King Carol II of Romania abolished the autonomy of parliament, the separation of powers in the state and the constitution of 1923, dissolved the political parties, and introduced a royal dictatorship.¹⁸⁹ Although the royal dictatorship was not fascist or Nazi but 'a kind of monarchic missionary zeal for domestic peace and harmony',¹⁹⁰ pressured by Nazi Germany it tilted ever further to the right until eventually the king was forced to abdicate (1940) and left the country under the leadership of General Ion Antonescu who on 13 September 1940 brought the Iron Guard into the government and declared Romania 'a national legionary state.'¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁵The membership of the Communist Party was about 2,000 at the time of its second Congress (1922) a subsequently it dropped to 1,500 in 1931 and less than 1,000 during World War II. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 193.

¹⁸⁶The party fell into line with Soviet views and promoted an anti-Romanian and pro-minorities policy (Hungarians, Jews, Bulgarians), who all opposed Greater Romania. Since 1923 the Communist Party had adopted the Cominform's position (engineered by Nikolay I. Bukharin) on nationalism and self-determination in Romania, and declared Romania a multinational state artificially created by Western imperialism. See *Documente din istoria Partidului Communist din Romania*, Ed. P.M.R., Bucharest, 1951, pp. 37-38, 49-51, 70-76, 112-133, 266-268; *Congresul al V-lea al P.C.R.*, Ed. P.C.R., Bucharest, 1932, pp. 35-37; N. Petraşcu, *Evoluţia politică a României în ultimii 20 de ani, 1918-1938*, Ed. Bucovina, Bucharest, 1939, pp. 139-140; M. Muşat and I. Ardeleanu, *Romania după marea unire*, Ed. Ştiinţifică, Bucharest, 1986, pp. 195-196; R. King, *History of the Romanian Communist Party*, Hoover Institution Press, 1980, pp. 22-36.

¹⁸⁷The legionary movement had its beginnings in 1922-1923, when Corneliu Zelea Codreanu formed first the Association of Christian Students, and then with Alexandru C. Cuza the National Christian Defense League. The movement was officially established in 1927 when the 'Legion of the Archangel Michael' was founded. Initially it had no links with the Nazis or the Italian Fascists, but following the growing influence of Germany Codreanu declared in 1937, 'I am against the great democracies of the West. I have no use for the League of Nations. Within forty-eight ours of the triumph of the Legionary movement, Romania will have a close alliance with Rome and with Berlin.' C.Z. Codreanu, *Eiserne Garde*, Brunnen, Berlin, 1939, pp. 440-441.

¹⁸⁸V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 195-195. In 1937, thirteen major parties and fifty-three secondary organizations ran in the election. See N. Petraşcu, *Evoluţia politică a României*, pp. 139-40.

¹⁸⁹V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, 196-198, 207; 'Noua constituţie promulgată la 27 februarie 1938', in N. Petraşcu, *Evoluţia politică a României*, supp. 4:142.

¹⁹⁰V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 208.

¹⁹¹See B. Vago, *The Shadow of the Swastika: The Rise of Fascism and Anti-Semitism in the Danube Basin, 1936-1939*, Saxon House, published for the Institute of Jewish Affairs, Farnborough, England, 1975, p. 71; G. Barbul, *Mémorial Antonescu, le troisième homme de l'Axe*, Editions de la Couronne, 1950, p. 82; *Pe marginea prăpastiei*, Ed. Ministerul de Propagandă Naţională, Bucharest, 1942, vol. I, pp. 144-161; E. Weber,

When World War II broke out, fearing more the threats from the East (Soviet Union) than from the West,¹⁹² Romania entered the war on the German side and began its offensive into the Soviet Union (1941).¹⁹³ However, in the summer of 1944, when it became clear that Germany was losing the war and facing the risk of being overtaken by the Red Army,¹⁹⁴ Romania changed sides (23 August 1944) and continued to fight alongside the Allied troops (of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the USA) in Transylvania, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile the Red Army took control of Romania (by 10 September 1944), and subsequently at the end of the war Stalin expressed the condition¹⁹⁵ of the Armistice: 'This war is not like those in the past: whoever occupies a territory imposes his own social system on it.'¹⁹⁶ Only a month later, after the Treaty of Yalta (February 1945), General Andrei I. Vyshinsky visited Bucharest to oversee the appointment of Petru Groza, the Prime Minister chosen by Moscow, imposing thus the Soviet political system on Romania.¹⁹⁷

Whilst affecting the entire Romanian society,¹⁹⁸ this political development reflects the context in which the Orthodox Church organized its internal life and established its relation with the State. Firstly, the Orthodox attempt to realize the unity of the Church following the union of Transylvania,

'Romania', in E. Weber and H. Rogger, *The European Right*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1965, 560-561.

¹⁹²Initially Romania declared itself neutral, but the swift German offensive (May 1940) and the fall of France (June 1940) took Bucharest by surprise, leaving the country without allies and at the mercy of Hitler and Stalin, who agreed (in August 1939) to divide Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. Consequently, in June 1940 Stalin, with the Reich's agreement, annexed Bessarabia and northern Bucovina and in August 1940 Bulgaria with German approval annexed southern Dobrudja. On 30 August 1940, under German military threat, Romania was forced to cede northern Transylvania to Hungary. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 209-210; V. Moisiuc, *Diplomația României și problema apărării suveranității și independenței naționale în perioada martie-mai 1940*, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1971.

¹⁹³On 10 October 1940, Antonescu admitted German troops to Romania and after brief visits to Mussolini and Hitler (23 November 1940), he signed a Tripartite Pact. See G. Barbul, *Mémorial Antonescu*, pp. 140-141; A. Cretzianu, *The Lost Opportunity*, J. Cape, London, 1957; N. Penescu, *La Roumanie de la démocratie au totalitarisme*, Contrepoint, Paris, 1981, pp. 24-25, 38ff.

¹⁹⁴See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 220-221.

¹⁹⁵For an account of the negotiation of the Armistice conditions between the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and Romania, see *Foreign Relations of the United States*, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C., 1944, Vol. 4, pp. 236-237; Vol. 5, p. 550; W. Churchill, *The Second World War: Triumph and Tragedy*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1953, p. 227; L. Holborn, *War and Peace: Aims of the United Nations, 1943-1945*, World Peace Foundation, Boston, 1948, Vol. 2, pp. 353-354.

¹⁹⁶M. Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin*, Harcourt, Brace and World, New York, 1962, p. 114.

¹⁹⁷V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 223-231.

¹⁹⁸Passionate disagreements about ideas like the relationship between traditionalism and Modernism, nationalism and internationalism and the role of the Orthodox religion in Romanian society, characterize this period. See G. Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii Române de la Origini până în Prezent*, Ed. Minerva, Bucharest, 1986, pp. 799-960; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, 204-207.

Bessarabia and Bucovina with Romania at the end of the First World War, was confronted with the existence of different models such as: 'hierarchic absolutism and total subjection to the state' in Romania, 'hyper-hierarchical and subordinate to the Court of Vienna' in Bucovina, 'tsarist absolutism' in Bessarabia and 'conciliar and autonomous' in Transylvania.¹⁹⁹ However, after strong disagreements between the Transylvanian²⁰⁰ and Old Romanian Kingdom hierarchs and theologians²⁰¹ concerning lay participation in the life of the Church,²⁰² eventually all parties involved reached an agreement (in March 1925) to adopt Şaguna's model of Church organization.²⁰³ Moreover, in addition to the canonical-administrative unity of the Church,²⁰⁴ the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church elevated (1925) the Metropolitan Primate see to Patriarchate.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁹In the Church in Romania there existed a true hierarchic absolutism, and a total dependence and subjection to the state. In the absence of a clear status or prerogatives of the state toward the Church, or the other way around, the Church's life was in a continuous tension and instability. In the Church in Bucovina there existed a hyper-hierarchical and subordinationalist mentality to the emperor in Vienna through the so called "Church Fund" (this fund was set up by the Habsburgs for the churches in this region), in so far that the Church leadership was almost exclusively in the hands of the Austrian state. In another part of the country [Bessarabia], the Church adopted typical Russian forms, a legacy of the tsarist absolutism. The Orthodox Church in Transylvania had an appropriate organization, enshrined in the Organic Statutes of Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna. His basic principles were *autonomy* in relation with the state, which was to protect it [the Church] from any interference or subjection to the worldly leaders and *synodality*, co-operation between clergy (1/3) and laity (2/3) in leading all aspects of Church life, which was to protect it from any attempt to hierarchic absolutism' (M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, p. 390).

²⁰⁰Following the decision of the metropolitan synod of Transylvania (23 April 1919) to join the Holy Synod of Bucharest and similarly, of the Orthodox Church of Transylvania to unite with the Romanian Orthodox Church (the Mother Church), the Superior Consistory of the Church decided (in May 1919) to set up a special committee composed of representatives of all the bishoprics, which met on 12-15 June 1919 in Sinaia, under the presidency of Metropolitan Pimen of Moldavia in order to decide upon the principle of Church union and organization. The Consistory recommended Şaguna's Organic Statutes, and subsequently all the metropolitans, bishops and their vicars convened the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Romanian Orthodox Church (17-30 December 1919) and decided to adopt Şaguna's Organic Statutes as the foundation of the Church's organization. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, pp. 390-391.

²⁰¹It refers here to Romania before the union with Transylvania.

²⁰²See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, pp. 390-391.

²⁰³The pro-Şaguna party strengthened its position after the election of bishop Miron Cristea of Caransebeş as the Metropolitan Primate of All Romania (18-31 December 1919). See *Actele Congresului Național Bisericesc al Mitropoliei Ardealului*, Sibiu, 1920-1933; *Actele Congresului Național Bisericesc al Patriarhiei României*, București, 1925-1938; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, pp. 391-392; *Constituțiunea*, promulgated with the High Royal Decree Nr. 1360/923, in *Monitorul Oficial*, Nr. 282, 29 March, 1923.

²⁰⁴The Romanian Patriarchate comprised in its canonic-administrative structure: I. the Metropolis of Ungrovlahia, with five eparchs (Archbishopric of Bucharest, the bishoprics of Râmnicului-Noul Severin, Buzăului, Argeşului, and Tomisului-Constanța); II. the Metropolis of Moldova and Suceava, with four eparchs (Archbishopric of Iași, the bishoprics of Roman, Huși, and Dunărea de Jos-Galați); III. the Metropolis of Transylvania (Ardeal) with five eparchs (the Archbishopric of Sibiu and Alba Iulia, the

However, whilst these institutional measures were intended to strengthen the Orthodox community by promoting lay participation, in reality they diminished it because the life of the Church was regulated by far too many committees, commissions, assemblies and congresses without clear relation between themselves.²⁰⁶ Secondly, being declared by the Romanian

bishoprics of Arad, Caransebeș, Oradea and Cluj); IV. the Metropolis of Bucovina with two eparchs (the Archbishopric of Cernăuți, and the Bishopric of Hotin-Balși); the Metropolis of Bessarabia (since 1927), with two eparchs (the Archbishopric of Chisinev, and the Bishopric of Cetatea Albă-Ismail). In addition, there was the Bishopric of the Army founded in 1921. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, Vol. 3, p. 395.

²⁰⁵Pondering the needs to strengthen the unity of the Romanian Church as well as its prestige in relation with other Orthodox Churches, the Holy Synod (on 4 February 1925) considered the institution of the Romanian patriarchate to be a matter of 'national necessity'. Subsequently, the Synod submitted to the Parliament the document of the institution of the Patriarchate (*Actul de înființare a Patriarhatului orthodox român*); the document was sanctioned on 23 February 1925. See 'Legea pentru ridicarea scaunului arhiepiscopal și mitropolitan al Ungrovlahiei, ca primat al României, la rangul de Scaun patriarhal', in *Monitorul Oficial*, 25 February, 1925; G. Sereda, 'De la Biserica autocefală la Patriarhia română', in *Ortodoxia*, II, 2 (1950), 325-336; N. Șerbănescu, 'Înființarea Patriarhiei Române', in *BOR*, XCIII, 11-12 (1975), 1384-1400.

²⁰⁶The highest dogmatic and canonical authority within the Church was the Holy Synod, presided by the patriarch and composed of all metropolitans, diocesan bishops and suffragan bishops. The legislative of the Church was the National Church Congress composed of six representatives of each diocese elected for a period of six years (2/4 clergy/lay), which met once every three years. However, the legislative body was responsible only for the administrative, cultural and financial departments of the Church. The executive body of the Holy Synod and of the National Church Congress was the Central Church Council composed of fifteen members (1/2 clergy/lay), three from each metropolis. The clerics were full-time employees of the Council, whilst the lay people served on an honorary basis. The administration of the Church properties and of the state subsidies was under a special committee (*Eforie a Bisericii*) composed of three members (one clergy two lay). The parish, protopopiate, bishopric (archbishopric) and metropolis as constitutive parts of the Church, also had legislative and executive bodies. The parish assembly was composed of all adult members and represented the legislative body, whilst the executive body, the Parish Council was composed of ten to thirty members (according to the number of believers). The administration of parish property was entrusted to another committee of three or five members, and the social-cultural activities (the decoration of the church, church choir and charity) were entrusted to yet another committee, called the Parish Committee. The protopopiate, composed of twenty and fifty parishes, led by a protopope elected from the clergy with a degree in theology (*licențiat*), and with at least five years practice, had as legislative body the Protopopiate Assembly, which constituted by between 15 and 24 members (1/2 clergy/lay), which in turn elected the Protopopiate Council as the executive body constituted of six members (1/2 clergy/lay), and an administrative committee (*epitropi protopopești*) with four members responsible for the administration of the protopopiate properties. The diocese or archdiocese led by a bishop or an archbishop had as its deliberative body the Diocesan Assembly with forty-five to sixty members (1/2 clergy/lay), and an executive body (Diocesan Council) with three sub-committees of six councillors for each of the three sections: administrative, socio-cultural, and financial. Each bishop was entitled to have a priest or a monk as vicar, but under special circumstances (age or illness), the Holy Synod had the right to appoint a suffragan bishop. Further, the metropolitan was entitled to have one suffragan bishop and the patriarch two suffragan bishops. The Church constitution (1925) also established the judicial system. Thus, there were the

Constitution of 1923 as 'the prevailing Church',²⁰⁷ the Orthodox Church was granted both the allegiance of the king and his descendants,²⁰⁸ and the *ex officio* right of the patriarch to be Regent during the Prince's minority, or vacancy of the throne. Consequently between 1927 and 1930 during the minority of the presently exiled King Michael (Mihai), Patriarch Miron Cristea was one of the three Regents of the Kingdom, and in 1938, during an acute political crisis, the same patriarch took over the office of Prime Minister.²⁰⁹ Moreover, the patriarch, the metropolitans and all the diocesan bishops were *de jure* members of the Romanian Senate.²¹⁰ The State, however, had its own control over the Church through the 'Electoral College',²¹¹ theological education and Church-administration. The presence of a large number of politicians in the elective bodies of the Church not only transformed these bodies into political agencies, but also 'historicized' the Church at the expense of its eschatological dimension.²¹² This process is further reflected by the fact that both Orthodox clergy and, except for

Protopopiate court (three clergy), the Spiritual Diocesan Consistory (three clergy), the Spiritual Metropolitan Consistory for the metropolis of Bucharest, Iași, and Sibiu constituted of one elected (by the Diocesan Assembly) representative from each diocese, and the Central Spiritual Consistory, with five members and five associate members appointed by the Holy Synod; one from each metropolis. All the members of the above-mentioned bodies (deliberative, executive, administrative and judicial) were elected for a period of six years by the duly established assemblies. See 'Organizarea Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane după Întregirea Neamului', in D. Gusti, ed., *Enciclopedia României*, Imprimeria Națională, 1939, pp. 421-422; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, pp. 396-397.

²⁰⁷H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *The History of the Church*, Vol. X, *The Church in the Modern Age*, Burns & Oates, London, 1981, p. 487.

²⁰⁸See R. Tobias, *Communist-Christian Encounter in East Europe*, School of Religious Press, Indianapolis, USA, 1956, p. 319.

²⁰⁹See H. Jedin and J. Dolan, eds., *The Church in the Modern Age*, p. 487; R. Tobias, *Christian-Communist Encounter*, p. 318.

²¹⁰See 'Organizarea', in *Enciclopedia României*, p. 422.

²¹¹The bishops and the archbishops were elected by a so-called 'Electoral College' constituted of the National Church Congress, the Diocesan Assembly of the respective diocese, plus, *de jure*, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Religion, the President of the Senate, the President of the House of Deputies, the President of the Supreme Court, the President of the Romanian Academy, the presidents of the Romanian universities and the deans of the theological seminaries, providing they were Orthodox believers. The body empowered to elect the patriarch was composed of the National Church Congress, the Bucharest Archdiocese Assembly and all the Orthodox members of the Senate and the House of Deputies. Subsequently, the Holy Synod proceeded to a canonical examination of the incumbent, followed by the sanction of the head of State and then the formal induction. Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan of Transylvania insisted initially on the principle of Church autonomy in relations with the State, but eventually in Synod he gave way on this issue. See 'Organizarea', in *Enciclopedia României*, pp. 421-422; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, pp. 391-397.

²¹²Păcurariu affirms that 'in the diocesan assemblies and in the National Church Congress had been elected so many times all kinds of politicians who had nothing in common with the Church and thus did not contribute to its development' (M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, p. 397).

Transylvania,²¹³ theological schools were subsidized by the State. Further, the government exercised its control over the Church's budget through the Church's General Fund placed under the administration of a special committee (*Eforie*).²¹⁴ Thus, generally speaking, the Church was part of the State and the State part of the Church in such an inextricable way that, in the Romanian Encyclopedia of 1938, Gusti affirms:

The Romanian Orthodox Church was throughout the centuries the soul and the instrument of the State...the Romanian State is *par excellence* Christian Orthodoxy.²¹⁵

The fact that the Church was considered to be the instrument of the State became more obvious during the rule of the National Legionary State (13 September 1940-23 August 1944). Antonescu's government immediately suppressed all the free churches and announced its intention to purge the Orthodox Church of all unreliable clergy, whilst at the same time supporting the Orthodox Church on the grounds that Romania was a Christian state.²¹⁶ In response, the Holy Synod (in October 1940) through Patriarch Nicodim Munteanu pledged the loyalty of the Orthodox Church to the Legionary State.²¹⁷ This loyalty included the right of State representatives both to participate in higher Church governing bodies and to control Church finance. Further, the State proceeded (in December 1940) to replace older bishops with Nazi-selected hierarchy, and to re-organize theological education.²¹⁸

3.6 Observations:

3.6.1 Methodological: Whilst the Orthodox churches of Moldavia and Wallachia followed uncritically the Byzantine model of asymmetric symphony,²¹⁹ the Orthodox Church in Transylvania under the leadership of

²¹³Metropolitan Bălan of Transylvania introduced a motion in the Synod (1927) requesting that all theological schools be under the Church's control. Although the Synod unanimously approved this motion, the professors of Theology and the National Association of the Clergy (1930), heavily dominated by those from Old Romania, decided to have the theological schools under State control. The disagreement continued until 1948 when the Communist régime separated the Church from public education. M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 3, pp. 432-433.

²¹⁴In 1936-37, for example, the State allocated 418,896,584 lei for 8,257 Orthodox clergy. The average income in Romania during that time was about 40,000 lei. See V. Madgearu, *Evoluția economiei românești după primul război mondial*, *Independența Economică*, Bucharest, 1940, pp. 137-146; *Anuarul statistic al României*, 1937-1938; D. Gusti, ed., *Enciclopedia României*, p. 422.

²¹⁵See 'Organizarea', *Enciclopedia Română*, pp. 422-423.

²¹⁶See *ICIPIS*, no. 27, July, 1940. Cf. R. Tobias, *Communist-Christian Encounter*, p. 320.

²¹⁷See *ICIPIS*, No. 11, March, 1941.

²¹⁸See *ICIPIS*, Nos. 41 and 43, November, 1940.

²¹⁹The right of the *imperium* to control the *sacerdotium* was not questioned either during the period of theocratic absolutism, or during Turkish imposed rule and the secular reforms imposed by Russian rule or by Prince Cuza. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 79; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 3, pp. 30-138; N. Șerbănescu,

Şaguna attempted to establish both the ontological and 'economic' distinctions between Church and State.²²⁰ However, the Romanian Orthodox Church failed to see the implications of Şaguna's model for the relation between the Church and the State. Neither did the 'Lord's Army' on the other hand develop a clear theological construct of a Church-State relation; therefore its contribution to conceptual clarification is limited, more or less, to its example.

3.6.2 Theological: Şaguna's theological task was to develop a theory concerning the relation between the Orthodox Church and a Catholic state. Consequently, whilst affirming a pragmatic approach on the 'economic' level, Şaguna advocated the ontological distinction of the primacy of the Church over against the State. Hence Şaguna developed the idea that if Church canons and State legislation were to come into conflict, the former were to be followed.²²¹ However, this distinction has not been extended by the Romanian Orthodox Church to any other form of government, be it theocratic or secular or right or left-wing dictatorship.

3.6.3 Sociological: Whilst some Orthodox hierarchs such as Metropolitan Veniamin of Moldavia,²²² Grigorie Dascălul of Valachia²²³ and Sofronie Miculescu²²⁴ opposed the attempt of the State to shackle the Church, the overall majority of Orthodox clergy and believers accepted uncritically the preeminence of *imperium* over and against *sacerdotium*. Hence, in the absence of a clear space between Church and State, the latter had a relatively easy task both in removing the 'dissenting' hierarchy and to 'historicize' the Church. However, the 'Lord's Army' movement continued its 'charismatic' work in spite of the decision of the Synod to defrock Trifa and of the Court in Sibiu to confiscate his printing press (1938). The number of those who had already joined the movement was, according to Dorz, about 300,000.²²⁵ Whilst the restrictions²²⁶ and the severe persecutions²²⁷

'Autocefalia Bisericii Orthodoxe Romane cu Prilejul Centenarului 1885-1895', in *Centenarul*, pp. 93-94.

²²⁰See A. Şaguna, *Compendium*, pp. 284-285.

²²¹K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality*, p. 227; *AMS, Şaguna Collection*, no. 1927.

²²²After opposing Prince Mihail Sturza's (1834-1849) attempts to introduce the Church reforms stipulated in the *Organic Statute*, Metropolitan Veniamin was forced to retire. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Orthodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 30-31.

²²³Metropolitan Grigorie was deposed and exiled in 1829 by the Russian tsar on the grounds that he resisted the new Church reforms. See I. Ionaşcu, 'Mitropolitul Grigorie IV şi întrebuintarea unor venituri în vremea păstoriei lui (1823-1834)', in *Raze de Lumină*, Bucureşti, X, 9-10 (1938), pp. 270-301; T.G. Bulat, 'Mănăstirile Pămîntene din Ţara Românească în epoca Regulamentului organic', in *BOR*, XCIII, 9-10 (1975), pp. 1165-1176.

²²⁴Metropolitan Sofronie was deposed by Price Cuza on the grounds that he opposed the secularization of the estates of the Church. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Orthodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 114.

²²⁵Dorz, vol. 2, p. 5.

²²⁶In particular, restrictions on publishing and public meetings had negative results in the life of a movement built *par excellence* around such activities. Thus in March 1938 *The Voice of Truth* (Sibiu) was banned; in July 1938 *The Lord's Army Victor* was founded (Sibiu) and banned after the first number was published; in October 1938 *The Lord's*

imposed by the Legionary State affected the work of the 'Lord's Army', it did not change its *charismatic* features. Yet, Dorz argues that the very absence of an organization weakened the movement, and eventually some decided to join either the 'official' Orthodox Church or the 'sects'.²²⁸ However, the large majority of the 'Lord's Army' continued their work despite severe persecution between 1943 and 1944 when the movement went underground. Clergy and laity held meetings in hiding, and as Dorz points out, 'they were like the early Christians in the catacombs, ready for suffering'.²²⁹ However, if because of its *charismatic* features the 'Lord's Army' was not entangled in the political manoeuvres of the time, an over-emphasis on the *charismatic* and eschatological aspects of the movement led it to reject social-political realities as being 'worldly'.²³⁰

Field was founded (Oradea) and banned after the first number was published; in January 1939 *Christian Life* was founded (Cluj) and immediately banned. During the war, in January 1940, *The Christian Missionary Life* was founded, but was banned in September of the same year. Between June 1941 and May 1943 the 'Lord's Army' published the paper *The Christian Family*. See Dorz, vol. 2, p. 6; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 207.

²²⁷During the rule of the Legionary Government, due to the link between the Synod and the Government, the 'Lord's Army' leaders were severely persecuted. Particularly during the anti-semitic campaign, the leaders of the 'Lord's Army' were accused of cooperation with Jewish Missionary Agency in Bucharest. See Dorz, vol. 2, pp. 408, 417.

²²⁸Dorz, vol. 2, p. 424.

²²⁹Dorz, vol. 2, p. 427.

²³⁰Dorz, vol. 2, pp. 384-450.

The Cross, the Hammer and the Sickle

The relation of the Church and State during the Communist regime in Romania must be addressed in the context of both the Soviet influence²³¹ and specific Romanian realities towards the end of World War II (1944).²³² However, in order to understand the dynamic of history and *eschata* during the Communist rule, one has to understand first the basic Communist view on religion, and secondly, the form that the Church-State relation had taken during and after the Bolshevik takeover in Russia.

4.1 Marxism and Religion

Communism is not simply another politico-economic system with a nationalized and strictly centralized planned economy. Although that is true, the essence of Communism lies in its Marxist-Leninist philosophy.²³³ Marxism is a 'world view (*Weltanschauung*)...which provides the individual with answers in every sphere of life and which denies the validity of alternative answers in every sphere as well.'²³⁴ The French sociologist J. Mennerot described Marxism as a 'new Islam', that is, a religion which, if necessary, would be spread by use of the sword.²³⁵ Similarly, Bockmuehl describes Marxism as a sort of 'secularized vision of the kingdom of God. It is the kingdom of men.'²³⁶ In order to realize this kingdom, Marxists

²³¹Because Communism was brought to Romania, somewhat unexpectedly, by the Red Army at the end of World War II, it followed to a large degree, at least during the initial stages, the Soviet model. However, following the Sino-Soviet schism, Romania began to affirm its own Communist society. See R.V. Daniels, *A Documentary: History of Communism*, vol. 2. *Communism in the World*, I.B. Tauris, London, 1985, pp. 214, 220, 306-309, 351.

²³²The socio-political realities at the end of World War II were different from those at the beginning of Bolshevik rule in 1917. These differences were also reflected in the Church-State relation between 1944 and 1989, when the Communist régimes of Eastern Europe were finally overthrown. See M. Glenny, *The Rebirth of History: Eastern Europe in the Age of Democracy*, Penguin Books, London, 1990.

²³³According to Marxist philosophy, Communism is the final stage of the revolutionary process which begins with Socialism. See 'Communism', in P. Apostol, eds., *Dicționar de Filozofie*, Ed. Politică, București, 1978, pp. 132-133.

²³⁴K. Bockmuehl, *The Challenge of Marxism*, IVP, Leicester, 1980, p. 16.

²³⁵See J. Mennerot, *Sociology of Communism*, (Tr. J. Degras and R. Rees), George Allen and Unwin, London, 1953, pp. 8ff.

²³⁶It [Marxism] has a creation doctrine of its own, that is a doctrine of the genesis of the world and humanity, as well as a doctrine of some kind of original sin [the division of labour] from which the whole of humanity is still suffering. Marxism affirms a pronounced doctrine of salvation which includes belief in a redeemer of mankind, namely the proletariat. It moreover has a doctrine of the church, which is an association of the first fruits of the new mankind (the Party). Finally, it holds a doctrine of the so-called last

consider the 'assumption of power' to be essential.²³⁷ The way to the 'assumption of power' is, for Marx, the way of atheism.²³⁸ Consequently, the critique of religion is the prerequisite, the condition and the foundation of the entire Marxist philosophy. Only when man is liberated from the bondage of religion is man truly free to be himself. Marx wrote: 'The more man puts into God, the less he retains in himself.'²³⁹ Therefore God must be eliminated.²⁴⁰ Further, Marx argued that as long as man believes in God he cannot achieve his independence.²⁴¹ Only when God and His Kingdom are abolished will man be totally free to build his kingdom.²⁴² This change from one kingdom to the other will come about through the proletarian revolution, since the proletarians, the working class, are the most likely to develop that class awareness which eventually leads to revolution. Thus the exploited class becomes the vanguard of the movement toward the kingdom of men. Accordingly, Marxist praxiology is:

[N]othing less than a program for creating a new humanity and a new world in which all present conflicts will be solved, a world in which humanity will totally rule over nature and at the same time be totally reconciled to it. To shape a society of - paradoxically - total individual freedom and, at the same time, the complete realization of communal life.²⁴³

The question that arises is how this change can take place. The initial answer provided by Marx and Engels was based upon the presupposition that the principles of dialectic materialism could be applied to society (historical materialism), and thus suggested that changes could arise from

things, a doctrine of the purpose and aim of history, an eschatology which, though not developed in detail, is proclaimed with emphasis...One cannot go far wrong in assuming that Marxism is a secularized vision of the kingdom of God. It is the kingdom of men' (K. Bockmuehl, *Marxism*, p. 17).

²³⁷See H. Ralfes, *Der Sinn des Lebens im marxistischen Denken*, Patmos, Dusseldorf, 1971, p. 200.

²³⁸In his *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction* (1844), Marx argues that 'for Germany the *criticism of religion* is the the premise of all criticism... Criticism's essential sentiment is *indignation*, its essential activity is *denunciation*' (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, International Publications, New York, 1975, pp. 175, 177; K. Marx, *Early Writings*, (Tr. R. Livingstone and G. Benton), Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1975, pp. 342, 346.

²³⁹K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, p. 272; K. Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 324.

²⁴⁰'Is God sovereign', continues Marx, 'or is man? One of the two is an untruth, even if an existing untruth' (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, p. 28; K. Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 86).

²⁴¹'A being only considers himself independent when he stands on his own feet; and he only stands on his own feet when he owes his existence to himself. A man who lives by the grace of another regards himself as a dependent being. But I live completely by the grace of another if I owe him not only the maintenance of my life, but if he has, moreover, created my life' (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, p. 304; K. Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 356).

²⁴²Marx fully agreed with Bakunin, his colleague at the beginning of the international labour movement, who asserted that, 'if God really existed, it would be necessary to abolish him' (M. Bakunin, *Selected Writings*, ed., A. Lehning, (Tr. S. Cox and O. Stevens), Jonathan Cape, London, 1973, pp. 125, 128).

²⁴³K. Bockmuehl, *Marxism*, p. 17.

the 'natural' laws of the dialectic between 'social existence and social consciousness.'²⁴⁴ According to the theory of historical materialism, religion as part of the 'superstructure' (ideologies, beliefs and values) is determined by the economic base of society,²⁴⁵ and consequently at some time in the future will wither away once capitalist society is replaced by a socialist and eventually communist one.²⁴⁶ For Marx the 'Kingdom of God' is nothing other than a historically determined form of bondage used by the ruling classes to defend their advantages. This 'Kingdom' will be replaced by the true 'kingdom of men' brought about by the progressive forces of the working class - the proletariat. To this end the 'enlightened' representatives of the proletariat must continue to 'expose the old world to the full light of the day and shape a new one in a positive way.'²⁴⁷ In its classical form, then, Marxist philosophy advocates an ideological war on religion, assuming that the 'Kingdom of God' can be replaced by the 'kingdom of men'.

4.2 Leninism and Religion

Whilst fully accepting Marx's philosophy and his view of religion,²⁴⁸ Lenin considered that those who already have achieved that freedom (class consciousness) must take action and bring about the proletarian revolution rather than just wait for it to come about through some historical law. Therefore Lenin's constant concern was to precipitate the revolution: 'We must allow this moment to ripen, we must systematically 'force it to ripen'.²⁴⁹ The revolution is, for Lenin, self-determining and self-limiting: its only rules are those it creates for its own purpose. The highest principle of any revolutionary action is its aim. Primarily, the aim is the revolution itself, and secondarily, it is the ideal state which is to be achieved through revolution.²⁵⁰ His determination to usher in the revolution and his strategy of political development led Lenin to postulate the principle of formation of the 'cadre Party' of professional revolutionaries. The Party is needed because the revolution must be organized purposefully.²⁵¹ Since the aim of the

²⁴⁴See 'Materialismul Istoric', in P. Apostol, eds., *Dicționar de Filozofie*, Ed. Politică, București, 1978, pp. 444-445.

²⁴⁵In those societies based upon exploitation and limited scientific knowledge, religion appeared as a 'distorted' mode of relation between men and the world. See 'Religie', in P. Apostol, eds., *Dicționar*, pp. 593-595.

²⁴⁶See J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, Routledge, London, 1988, p. 251.

²⁴⁷K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, p. 141; K. Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 206.

²⁴⁸See V. U. Lenin, *On Religion*, Progress, (3rd ed.), Moscow, 1969, pp. 70-71.

²⁴⁹See L.B. Schapiro and P. Reddaway, eds., *Lenin, the Man, the Theorist, the Leader: a Reappraisal*, Praeger, New York, 1967, p. 147; N.K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, (Tr. B. Isaacs), International Publishers, New York, 1975, pp. 11-12, 294.

²⁵⁰See W. Gautschi, *Lenin als Emigrant in der Schweiz*, Ex. Libris, Zurich, 1975, pp. 80ff.

²⁵¹The members of the Party, however, would consist of a minority who were truly class-conscious because of their training. Such a party would be able to lead the masses as long as it were able to answer each major political question that arose. Within the Party itself, Lenin advocated the installation of 'a strong authoritative organ;' 'a party centre which will have the confidence of the party membership.' This 'cadre principle' governed by an 'iron discipline bordering [on] military discipline', was for Lenin the answer to the

revolution is the supreme authority, everything else has to be adjusted along this line; there are no limitations on what can or cannot be done as long as the revolutionaries pursue the aim. And this is the main role of the Party; to focus the energies of the working class toward the aim of the revolution regardless of the costs, methods or mores. Lenin argued that,

...anything is moral which serves the destruction of the old exploiters and the alliance of all working people around the proletariat which builds the new, the community society.²⁵²

45
In other words, Lenin affirmed that, 'in politics there exists no morality, only expediency... We must understand to adapt our tactics and our immediate task, to the peculiarities of each given situation.'²⁵³ Except for the goal of the revolution, nothing is good or evil. That means that at times, if necessary, a Communist can compromise and even make an alliance with a declared enemy, because the end justifies the means.²⁵⁴ Consequently, the Party (and very soon the Party-State) is fully warranted to use any method, even assassination in order to achieve its aim. In this context, Lenin's view of the relation between the Church and the State was that the two had to be radically separated, and subsequently religion had to be eliminated at any price.²⁵⁵

The combination of these two theories (Marxist and Leninist) shaped the religious policy of the Communist parties in Russia and Eastern European countries in a very dynamic way. Under a Leninist regime this led to more violent attacks upon the Church, whilst under Marxism a more 'dialectical' approach would be advocated.

At this point, however, we turn to the Church-State relation in the context of the 'ideal state' created by the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 in Russia until the *Sovietization* of the other Eastern European countries at the end of World War II.²⁵⁶

question of the leadership of the Party. See A.V. Thiesen, *Lenins politische Ethik nach den Prinzipien seiner politischen Doktrin*, A. Pustet, Salzburg, 1965, pp. 212-213.

²⁵²Lenin addressed this issue in 1920 in a speech before the Communist Youth Movement: 'Is there such a thing as Communist morality? Of course there is a Communist morality. But it is not like the morality of the bourgeoisie, which is oriented toward eternal laws handed down from heaven. We say, our morality is completely subjected to the interests of the proletarian class struggle...We subordinate our morality to this task' (V. U. Lenin, *Ueber kommunistische Moral (On Communist Morality)*, Dietz, East Berlin, 1965, pp. 17-18).

²⁵³Cf. A.V. Thiesen, *Lenins politische*, p. 130.

²⁵⁴See. V.U. Lenin, *Ueber kommunistische Moral*, pp. 153-154.

²⁵⁵See Lenin's secret letter to Molotov, 'TOP SECRET: To Comrade Molotov, for Members of the Politburo', in *Ruskaya Mysl*, No. 2836, 1 April, 1975.

²⁵⁶For an account of the Yalta Agreement in February 1945 and the Communist take over in Eastern Europe see J. Rupkin, *The Other Europe*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1988, pp. 63-108.

4.3 Bolshevism and Religion

The Byzantine view of 'one kingdom' in which *imperium* and *sacerdotium* work in harmony because both are God's gift, encountered the Marxist view of 'one kingdom' in which the *imperium* comes from the proletariat through the Party and consequently there is no need for *sacerdotium*. In other words, the Communists affirm that the State is not a gift of God but the institutional expression of the will of the ruling atheistic class - the proletariat.²⁵⁷

Inspired by the Marxist view of religion as 'the opium of the people',²⁵⁸ and as the reminiscence of a bourgeois mentality which acts as a barrier on the road to revolution, Lenin resorted to all revolutionary methods in order to extirpate religion from society.²⁵⁹ Similarly, Stalin affirmed that 'the Party cannot be neutral toward religion. It conducts an anti-religious struggle against all and any religious prejudice.'²⁶⁰ Therefore the Communists made no secret of their plan to use all possible means to eradicate all form of religion.²⁶¹ The ultimate goal of the Communist regime was to replace *homo religiosus*, who believes in otherness, sacredness and ultimacy,²⁶² with *homo sovieticus* (the new man), who believes only in 'the here and now' of Marxist-Leninist values.²⁶³ In other words, a Communist State does not allow space for the 'otherness' of the Church; its eschatological dimension has to be totally 'historicized'.²⁶⁴ Consequently, the Communist State

²⁵⁷For an analysis of the structuralist Marxist view of society, see A.B. Carter, *Marx: A Radical Critique*, Wheatsheaf Books, Brighton, 1988, pp. 132ff; K. Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1967.

²⁵⁸K. Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 244. See also K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, p. 207.

²⁵⁹For an analysis of the Marxist view of religion, see A. MacIntyre, *Marxism and Christianity*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968; J.M. Bonina, *Christians and Marxists: The Mutual Challenge to Revolution*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1976, pp. 43ff.

²⁶⁰I.V. Stalin, *Works*, vol. X, Progress, Moscow, 1953, p. 153.

²⁶¹See J. Ellis, *The Russian*, p. 251. Ware affirms that, 'A communist government cannot rest satisfied merely with a separation of Church and State, but it seeks either by direct or indirect means to overthrow all organized Church life and to extirpate all religious belief' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 152).

²⁶²See W.G. Comstock, eds., *Religion and Men: An Introduction*, Harper and Row, New York, 1971, pp. 21-25; R. Robertson, *The Sociological Interpretation of Religion*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1970; P. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1969; W.E. Paden, *Religious Worlds: The Comparative Study of Religion*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1988, pp. 10-11; D. Cutler, ed., *The Religious Situation*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969.

²⁶³V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 239.

²⁶⁴There is a significant difference between the Communist persecution and any other previous persecutions which Christianity underwent. As Ware puts it: 'The Roman Empire, although it persecuted Christians, was not an atheist state, opposed to all religion as such. The Turks, while non-Christians, were still worshippers of One God and, as we have seen, allowed the Church a large measure of toleration' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 152). In other words, although other forms of government before the Communists persecuted the Church they nevertheless left a minimum space for the Church to exist. On the contrary, the Communist régime, which on the grounds of the

activated simultaneously all its constitutional, political, ideological, institutional and administrative forces in order to eliminate the eschatological nature of the Church,²⁶⁵ and then to bring the whole society under control.²⁶⁶

One of the first steps in the Communist attack on the Church was the publication of the decree of the separation of Church and State (20 January 1918). Thus, for the first time since the days of Constantine, the State overtly and formally separated itself from the Church.²⁶⁷ The initial response of the Church to these attacks was theologically confused and practically disorganized.²⁶⁸ However, the first attempt at theological clarification came three months after the October Revolution when in response to a violent attack on the Church, Patriarch Tikhon²⁶⁹ described the Bolsheviks²⁷⁰ as 'the enemies of Christ' and 'the godless rulers of the darkness of our time',²⁷¹ and, consequently, he excommunicated and anathematized all Bolsheviks on the grounds that they were atheists. According to Ware, the excommunication was subsequently confirmed by the All-Russian Council (1917-1918), and has never been revoked.²⁷² The text of the excommunication demonstrates Tikhon's endeavour to define the Church as an alternative, prophetic and eschatological community which finds its

scientific laws of dialectic and historical materialism, on the one hand, and of the authority of the aim of the revolution, on the other, viewed itself as the only warranted system to rule on earth.

²⁶⁵J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 125-132; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 152-158; R.V. Daniels, *A Documentary*, pp. 80-85; D. Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization*, pp. 4-8.

²⁶⁶In order to achieve their goal, the Bolsheviks created the Secret Police, (known under different names; Cheka (1917), GPU (1922), NKVD (1934), MVD and MGB (1944-1945), KGB (since 1953). See R.V. Davies, *A Documentary*, pp. 69-144.

²⁶⁷The publication of the decree of separation between Church and State generated numerous anti-religious outbursts inspired or carried out by local Communist leaders. See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 126.

²⁶⁸Whilst a delegation of the Synod went to the Kremlin (on two occasions: November 4-8, 1917 and March 15, 1918) to negotiate an agreement with the government (but were rejected each time by the Communists), another clerical party sided with the White armies in fighting the Bolsheviks (the Red). The name 'White' was given to the armed anti-Communist opposition, which led to the outbreak of civil war in 1918. See J. Bunyan, *Intervention, Civil War, and Communism in Russia, April-December 1918*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1936, pp. 191ff; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 127.

²⁶⁹After two hundred years since Peter the Great had abolished the Patriarchate, on 15 August 1917 the Russian Church convened a Synod in order to restore the Patriarchate and also to introduce a programme of Church reforms. On 5 November 1917 Tikhon, the Metropolitan of Moscow (1866-1925), was elected Patriarch. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 137-138; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 122.

²⁷⁰Following the Second Congress of the Socialist Democratic Party when Lenin lost his slim majority, he proceeded to organize an insurgent group (Geneva (1904) in opposition to the dominant 'Menshevik' leadership. This faction called 'Bolsheviks', eventually seized power during the Revolution of 1917. See R.W. Daniels, *A Documentary History of Communism*, vol. 1, I.B. Tauris, London, 1985, pp. 22-85.

²⁷¹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 158.

²⁷²See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 158.

strength in the eschatological Spirit and in the promises of Christ.²⁷³ Unfortunately, neither Tikhon nor his successors have developed further a critical theological analysis of the Orthodox tradition of Church-State relations.²⁷⁴ In the absence of such an approach, Meyendorff asserts that Church-State relations were determined primarily by pragmatic concerns.²⁷⁵ Consequently, after a period of brutal persecution Tikhon himself made steps towards accommodation to the Communist State.²⁷⁶ Whilst these steps represent the bowing of the Cross before the Hammer and the Sickle, it would be untrue, however, to infer that Tikhon surrendered totally to the Communists. He continued for some time, although with diminishing intensity and a growing compromising overtone, to criticise the Bolsheviks' atrocities. Eventually, 'the godless rulers of the darkness' were described as 'the servant of God', proving thus that praxis without theological clarification leads too easily to accommodation.²⁷⁷ Finally, despite numerous martyrs who refused to compromise with the Communist regime,²⁷⁸ in its pragmatic approach to Church-State relations, the Russian Church under Patriarch

²⁷³By the authority conferred upon us by God we forbid you to approach the Holy Sacraments, and if you still call yourselves Christians we anathematize you...As for you, faithful sons of the Church, we call upon you to stand in defense of our holy Mother, now outraged and oppressed... and should it become necessary to suffer for the cause of Christ, we call upon you to follow us on the way of suffering... And you, my brother bishops and priests...without delay organize religious associations, call upon them to range themselves among the spiritual combatants who will resist physical force with the power of the Spirit. We firmly believe that the enemies of the Church of Christ will be broken and scattered by the power of the Cross, for the promise of Him who bore the Cross is unalterable: *I will build my Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it* (Matthew XVI,18) Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 158.

²⁷⁴Meyendorff points out that 'most members of the council of 1917-1918 and the majority of Russians at large lacked any clear ideas on what the proper relations between the Church and the new Russian state should be. During the brief reign of Kerensky, there was an intense longing on the part of church leaders for some form of independence, but this longing was not identified with any particular theory regarding the exact nature of future Church-state relations' (J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 123).

²⁷⁵J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 123.

²⁷⁶In a letter addressed directly to Lenin on the first anniversary of the October Revolution, Tikhon wrote: 'It does not pertain to us to judge the earthly power; all power permitted by God shall have our blessing bestowed on it, if it truly shows itself the 'servant of God, for the good of the governed' (Rom. XIII.4)... As for you, we address to you this admonition: celebrate your anniversary of your assumption to power by releasing prisoners, by ceasing to shed blood, by abandoning violence and placing restrictions on the faith; cease to destroy, in order to organize order and justice, give the people the respite they are longing for... Otherwise, all the just blood that you have shed will cry against you and you will perish by the sword, you who have taken the sword (Matt. XXVI.52)' (J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 129-130).

²⁷⁷Further, in September 1919, Tikhon and several other bishops called upon the faithful to 'refrain from every act which might arouse the suspicions of the Soviet authorities and to obey all the regulations provided they were not opposed to the faith and true piety' (J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 130). See also, J.S. Curtis, *The Russian Church and the Communist State*, Little, Brown, Boston, 1953, p. 339; N. Struve, *Christians in Contemporary Russia*, Harvill Press, London, 1967, p. 38.

²⁷⁸T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 155-156.

Sergius (1925-1943)²⁷⁹ affirmed its loyalty to the Communist government:²⁸⁰

We wish to be Orthodox, while at the same time recognizing the Soviet Union as our country. We wish its joys and successes to be our joys and successes and its defeats to be our defeats. Every blow directed against the Union... we regard as a blow direct against us. ²⁸¹

Additionally, in 1927 Sergius officially asked the NKVD to legalize the existence of the Moscow patriarchate with its Synod, and in his desire to assure the Communists of the Church's loyalty he asked all Orthodox clergy, even those abroad, to give a written promise of their complete loyalty to the Soviet government.²⁸²

Although Sergius was severely criticized for identifying the Church so closely with the Soviet State,²⁸³ his critics not only failed to offer an alternative

²⁷⁹In a final attempt to prevent the Bolsheviks from appointing their own man as patriarch after his death, Tikhon designated three possible *locum tenentes* to succeed him: the Metropolitans Cyril, Agathangelos and Peter. Since the first two were already in prison, Peter was recognized as *locum tenens*. However, eight months later, before he was exiled to Siberia, Peter appointed his successor, Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni Novgorod, as deputy *locum tenentes*. See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 134-135.

²⁸⁰Before his imprisonment (December 1926-March 1927), Sergius was a strong advocate of Church-State separation, because he wanted to keep the Church out of politics. Moreover, Sergius argued that Christianity and Communism were irreconcilable. 'Far from promising reconciliation with the irreconcilable and from pretending to adapt our faith to communism, we will remain from the religious point of view what we are, that is, members of the traditional Church.' T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 161.

²⁸¹The text of Sergius' statement may be found in *Le Patriarche Serge et son héritage spirituel*, Publication of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1947. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 135.

²⁸²See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 135; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 162.

²⁸³Reflecting upon Sergius' declaration, Ware comments: 'It seemed that Sergius had compromised the Church in a way that Tikhon had never done. In identifying the Church so closely with a government dedicated wholeheartedly to the overthrow of all religion, he appeared to be attempting the very thing which in 1926 he had refused to do-to reconcile the irreconcilable. The victory of atheism would certainly be a joy and success for the Soviet State: would it also be a joy and success for the Church? The dissolution of the League of Militant Atheists would be a blow to the communist government, but scarcely a blow to the Church' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 162-163). The presiding Bishop of the Russian Church in Exile wrote to Sergius quoting 2 Corinthians VI, 14-15: 'Can light consort with darkness? Can Christ agree with Belial, or a believer with an unbeliever? The Church cannot bless anti-Christian, much less atheistic politics' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 163). Metropolitan Peter, one of the patriarchal *locum tenens*, supposedly wrote to Sergius: 'If you yourself lack the strength to protect the Church, you should step aside and turn over your office to a stronger person.' Among those who opposed Sergius were: Cyril, Metropolitan of Kazan; Agathangel, Metropolitan of Yaroslavl; Joseph, Metropolitan of Saint Petersburg; and Seraphim, Archbishop of Kostroma. On the other hand a group of bishops, deported at Solovoky on the White Sea, issued a statement which affirmed both their complete loyalty to the state in *secular matters* their demand for a separation of Church and State, such as should respect the internal freedom of the Church. At the same time the bishops emphasized the basic incompatibility between Communist ideology and Christian faith. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 163.

model of Church-State relations but also did not observe that in one breath Sergius had merged the 'Soviet Union' with the 'fatherland'.

The implications of this combination in the areas of ontology and of political theology are of paramount importance. Thus the Church is ontologically linked to the nation and at the same time its continuity and unity with 'our fatherland' warrants a place for the Church in the life of the nation.²⁸⁴

For some Russian believers such a step was understood as a total incorporation of the Church into the world (historicization), and consequently, on the grounds that the hierarchy had sacrificed the integrity of the Church, they took a different route: the underground Church.²⁸⁵

However, from a pragmatic point of view, Sergius' strategy began to work²⁸⁶ during World War II, when under the threat of a swift advance of the Nazis into Russia and the massive desertion of the Russian people to the German side due, among other things, to their tolerant attitude towards religion, Stalin felt it advisable to treat the Church more generously.²⁸⁷ Thus, after issuing a patriotic message to the Russian people on the very day of the German invasion (June 22, 1941) Sergius and his Church received a certain amount of freedom, and subsequently he and two other metropolitans were officially invited by Stalin to attend a reception at the Kremlin.²⁸⁸ Practising his revolutionary ethic of political expediency,²⁸⁹ Stalin allowed

²⁸⁴In the following decades, this line of thought took the form of 'religious nationalism'. For an account of Russian religious nationalism in recent times, see J. Ellis, *The Russian*, pp. 295-300.

²⁸⁵The leader of the movement, Bishop Maximus of Serpukhov, was a close friend of Tikhon and according to his own declaration, before his death Tikhon had prophesied that the Communist persecution and interference in Church life would increase and consequently had asked Maximus to form an underground religious organization. Though Maximus was put to death in 1930, the movement continued to grow as a large number of bishops, monks and married clergy, under the cover of ordinary secular jobs during the day, held secret services by night or early in the morning. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 164.

²⁸⁶Regelson is unreservedly opposed to Sergius and strongly questions his model of Church-state relation. See L. Regelson, *The Tragedy of the Russian Church*, YMCA Press, Paris, 1977.

²⁸⁷In the Kiev diocese, for example, from about 1,710 parishes before 1917 only two were officially functioning in 1939. After one year of German occupation, 708 churches had been reopened. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 166.

²⁸⁸See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 136-137.

²⁸⁹Stalin's motive was to mobilise traditionalist support for his régime, as well as to counteract collaborationist sentiment in the German-occupied part of the country. 'On September 4 the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of USSR, Comrade J.V. Stalin, held a reception, during which a conversation took place with the Acting Patriarch Metropolitan Sergei, Metropolitan Alexei of Leningrad, and Metropolitan Nikolai of Kiev and Galicia, Exarch of Ukraine. During the conversation Metropolitan Sergei made it known to the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars that in the governing circles of the Orthodox Church there was an intention in the near future to convene a Council of Bishops to elect a Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia and to form the Holy Synod under the Patriarch. Head of government Comrade J.V. Stalin responded sympathetically to this proposal and stated that on the part of government there would be no opposition. Also present in this conversation was Deputy Chairman of the Council

Sergius to hold a Synod at which he was 'unanimously elected' Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.²⁹⁰ Subsequently, in a letter sent to the Soviet Government, the Synod praised Stalin in a way which echoes the words of Eusebius to Constantine.²⁹¹

Further, the Synod issued a document 'Condemnation of Traitors to the Faith and the Fatherland', demonstrating thus the loyalty of the Church to the country and its government.²⁹² What is surprising about this document is not the condemnation of Fascists and those who supported them, but a reductionist and uncritical identification of Christ, the Church, faith and the 'motherland' with the Communist State, to the point of sacrificing the prophetic and eschatological Spirit within the Church. However, from 1943 until Gorbachev's *perestroika*, the Church and the State reached a dynamic *modus vivendi*.²⁹³ As Ware comments:

(1) The church is 'loyal' to the Soviet government. This means not only that it refrains from any criticism of the authorities, but also that it is pledged *actively* to support communist policies and propaganda at home and abroad, particularly communist foreign policy (Greek civil war, Korea, Hungary, and so on). (2) In return the State has greatly relaxed direct forms of persecutions, although such persecution has not entirely ceased. The forced closing of Churches and the imprisonment of clergy still continue, but since 1945 cases have occurred less frequently, and there have been far fewer instances of actual martyrdom. (3) The policy of cultural strangulation has not been abandoned. The Soviet government continues to regard religion as an enemy to be combated on the ideological level, while the Church is not allowed to hit back. (4) In theory the Church is granted 'freedom of inner government.' In

of People's Commissars of the USSR Comrade V.A. Molotov' (R.V. Daniels, *A Documentary*, Vol. I, pp. 288-289).

²⁹⁰On 8 September in Moscow there was held the Council of Bishops of the Orthodox Church, convened to elect a Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and to form a Holy Synod under the Patriarch. The Council of Bishops unanimously elected Metropolitan Sergei as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia' (R.V. Daniels, *A Documentary*, p. 289).

²⁹¹'Deeply moved by the sympathetic attitude of our national Leader and Head of the Soviet Government, J.V. Stalin, towards the needs of the Russian Orthodox Church and toward our modest work, we, his humble servants, express to the Government our Council's sincere gratitude and joyful conviction that, encouraged by this sympathy, we will redouble our share of work in the nationwide struggle for the salvation of the motherland. Let the Heavenly Head of the Church bless the work of the Government with the Creator's blessing and let him crown our struggle in a just cause with the victory we long for and the liberation of suffering humanity from the dark bondage of fascism.(Signed by Sergei, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, and eighteen other metropolitans, archbishops and bishops)' (R.V. Daniels, *A Documentary*, Vol.I, pp. 282-290).

²⁹²See R.V. Daniels, *A Documentary*, Vol. I, p. 290.

²⁹³See P. Remet, ed., *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC, 1989; D. Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime, 1917-1982*, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1984; B. Bociurkiw and J.W. Strong, eds., *Religion and Atheism in the USSR and Eastern Europe*, Macmillan, London, 1975.

practice the State has many means whereby it can interfere in religious affairs.²⁹⁴

However, it has to be mentioned that the Russian Church had another wing during this period; those who constantly fought to maintain or to recover the lost space between the Church and the State.²⁹⁵ Since the monastic movements of the early stages until the 'dissenters' of the last decades of Communist oppression there have been many martyrs and 'heroes of faith'.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 157-158; N.S. Timasheff, 'The Russian Orthodox Church Today', in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 3 (1958), 40-50.

²⁹⁵Metropolitan Anastasy, the head of the Russian Church in Exile, considers that Sergius involved the Russian Church in soul-destroying duplicity: 'Our descendants will be ashamed when they compare the language of our chief hierarchy at the present day, when addressing those in power, with the language of the first Christians to the Emperors of Rome and their representatives...To please the Soviet power, the chief hierarchy are not ashamed to propagate a flagrant lie that there have never been religious persecutions in Russia under the Soviet power. In this way they commit sacrilege, by turning to derision the multitude of Russian martyrs, openly calling them political criminals. A lie is always abominable and repugnant.... If one who is called to be a faithful witness to Christ lies knowingly to his conscience, to men, and to God, he becomes in truth guilty of contempt of the Holy Spirit...It is not without reason that the expression "Soviet Church" and "Soviet Patriarch" have now become common in the mouth of Russians' (The full text is in *Russie et Chrétienté*, 1 (1946), pp. 123-130). For Metropolitan Anastasy a Communist State controlled Church (institution) with its hierarchy is not a Spirit-filled but a Spirit-contempting institution. Consequently, the authority of the Spirit is replaced by the authority of the State and the eschatological voice of the Church gives place to the voice of an atheistic State. See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 165.

²⁹⁶For a very well documented account of Orthodox dissent in the late 70s and 80s see J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, pp. 405-454.

Chapter 5

The Cross, the Hammer and the Sickle: A Romanian Synthesis

Generally speaking, there are disagreements among scholars concerning the nature of Church-State relations in Romania.²⁹⁷ Opinions range from a perspective of gloom to a bright description of a happy marriage between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Communist State. Thus, Cockburn²⁹⁸ and Detzler²⁹⁹ affirm that, compared to other Communist countries, the situation of the Church in Romania is far from the worst. However, Beeson³⁰⁰ and Ware³⁰¹ argue that the relation between Church and State in Romania is one of 'merry ambiguities', whilst Hutten³⁰² and Lamont³⁰³

²⁹⁷The bibliographical resources of scholarly investigation into the life of the Church under Communism are still very limited. Mojzes affirms that, 'Most of those who were instrumental in inflicting this trauma have little desire to allow extensive investigation of the relationships between the societies which they controlled and the churches. Thus a body of literature arose that is often characterised by propaganda, half-truths, exaggerations, animosity, pain, manipulation and other aspects that make the discovery of truth difficult. But careful, balanced works are not entirely missing.' P. Mojzes, *Church and State in Postwar Eastern Europe*, Greenwood Press, London, 1987, p. IX.

²⁹⁸Romania in its Church-State relationship outdoes Russia in severity of control; if other States in Europe have "cribbed, cabined and confined" their Churches, the State in Romania has tussed and bound its Churches; if in other countries there was opposition by the Churches in the early days, there was none in Romania; if some Churches within the Iron Curtain show their awareness of the deep issues at stake, the Romanian Churches are silent in their misery, and are so separated from Western Churches that little is known beyond the official statements of propaganda and the terms of the legal enactments' (J.H. Cockburn, *Religious Freedom in Eastern Europe*, John Knox Press, Richmond, VA., 1951, p. 99).

²⁹⁹W.A. Detzler, *The Changing Church in Europe*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1979, p. 148.

³⁰⁰T. Beeson, *Discretion and Valour*, Collins, Fontana Books, Glasgow, 1974, pp. 300-301.

³⁰¹The *Church of Romania* from 1948 onwards followed a policy of close cooperation with the communist authorities; at the same time, spiritually and theologically it underwent a major renewal. In Romania, curiously enough, there has never been a formal act of separation between Church and State; the *Europa Year Book* for 1960 not inappropriately sums up the situation by saying: "Religion in Romania is disestablished, but the Romanian Orthodox Church is recognized as the national Church." Justinian, Patriarch from 1948 until his death in 1977, at times identified himself to a surprising degree with Marxist ideology; but he was also a devout pastor, deeply loved by his Orthodox flock. His successor Justin continues to work in close cooperation with the State' (T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 175).

³⁰²K. Hutten, *Iron Curtain Christians*, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1967, pp. 386, 388.

³⁰³The state supervises the church through the Department of Cults and pays part of the salary of priests and theological professors. Under the constitution there is freedom of religion, and Patriarch Justinian found no difficulty in reaching accommodation with

describe the Church-State relation as a benevolent one. The list continues with many other names, but, generally speaking, each one follows, more or less, one of the three alternatives mentioned above. However, the question at hand concerns the reason behind such contradictory reports.

First, most scholars who have attempted to write on Church-State issues in Romania adopted either a pragmatic or a sociological approach; and second, the possibilities for academic research in this field have been severely restricted by the Communist authorities, and consequently the bibliography available does not always present well-documented facts. A pragmatic approach can be significantly influenced by events which on the surface might give the impression of a positive relation between Church and State, whilst in reality the 'alliance' between the two could be totally 'unholy'. Similarly, a purely sociological approach can identify interesting models of social constructs, but in the absence of a doctrinal framework their real significance might, at least partially, be lost. On the other hand, the Church with its dogmas cannot exist on earth in a 'disincarnated' mode, but only in real historical circumstances. Consequently, a sociological-theological synthesis offers a more balanced approach to the subject of Church-State relations in Romania.

The doctrine of the Church-State relationship professed by the Romanian Church when the Communists seized power in 1944 was the Byzantine theory of symphony: one kingdom and two offices, *imperium* and *sacerdotium*. We already noted that along with the positive aspect of bringing together in a dialectical tension *eschata* and history, the divine and the human, this model also runs the risk of losing the balance between the two and thus of sacrificing the space between *imperium* and *sacerdotium* to the point where the two spheres either merge, or the one enslaves the other.

In the Soviet model of separation between Church and State the risk was that the Communist State would fill the whole space to the point of totally eliminating the Church from society. In Romania after the Soviet takeover the Bolshevik model of one kingdom and one office overlapped the Byzantine one without totally annulling it. Consequently, the outcome was a Soviet-Byzantine synthesis in which there is but one kingdom and one power, and yet the Church is allowed to exist providing it submits to the Communist power. This Soviet-Byzantine Church-State relation is far from being static or linear; on the contrary it is complex, confused and dynamic, according to the socio-political circumstances which varied significantly from one period to another. Generally speaking, however, Communist rule in Romania can be divided from a socio-historical perspective into three major periods: Stalinism (1944-1955), Détente (1956-1974), and Neo-Stalinism (1974-1989).

Ceauşescu nor has his successor Justin since" (S. Lamont, *Church and State: Uneasy Alliances*, The Bodley Head, London, 1989, p. 142).

5.1 Towards Stalinism

The Stalinist period is marked by the Soviet occupation of Romania towards the end of World War II (August 1944) and by the signing of the Warsaw Pact by Romania in 1955, an act which actually marked the total integration of Romania into the Communist political, economic and military bloc.³⁰⁴ With small differences, primarily in tactics and not in strategy, the Soviet model of Church-State relations was brought to Romania as early as the summer of 1944.

However, the subjection of *sacerdotium* by *imperium* was complicated by the fact that, on the one hand, Communist atheism and internationalism contrasted with Legionary Orthodox nationalism,³⁰⁵ and on the other, until 30 December 1947 the Communist regime was still struggling to consolidate its power in Romania.³⁰⁶ Consequently the relation between Church and State during this period developed from one of pragmatism to one of legalism and then totalitarianism.

5.1.1 Pragmatism: Within the Soviet Legation in Bucharest a special department was set up empowered to deal with religious affairs in the Balkans. The famous 'Vyshinsky Plan' had, in addition to its military and political agenda, the following provision for religion:

- (1) control of clergy and religious leaders by controlling or providing their stipends; (2) compromising of clergy and church leaders; (3) liquidation of undesirable leaders and planting of Soviet-trained religious leaders in key positions; (4) forbidding any church or religious activity except worship and the liturgy (i.e. within church walls); (5) creation of a loyal Orthodox front against Western churches under the leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate.³⁰⁷

The Communists were aware that in order to implement such a complex plan they needed both time and popular support. Consequently, practising their 'revolutionary strategy', in August 1944 the Soviet high command of the Southeast European Front issued an order, apparently in favour of religion,

³⁰⁴See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 218-220, 242-243.

³⁰⁵The pro-Nazi Antonescu government already had declared itself to be a Christian State before the Orthodox Synod pledged its loyalty to it. Additionally, the Legionary movement had from the very beginning a prominent Orthodox and national overtone which cleared the ground for the institutionalized co-operation between Church and State. As such, although dictatorial, the Legionary State strengthened the institutional aspect of the Church and enabled it to fight against 'dissenting' groups such as the 'Lord's Army' and the 'sects'. See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, pp. 320-321; See T. Dorz, *Istoria*, vol. 2; A. Popovici, *Istoria Bap̃tiștilor din Romania 1919-1944*, vol. 2, pp. 437-463; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 193-205.

³⁰⁶See L. Holborn, *War and Peace: Aims of the United Nations, 1943-1945*, vol. 2, World Peace Foundations, Boston, 1948, pp. 353-354; A.S. Gould Lee, *Crown against Sickle: The Story of King Michael of Romania*, Hutchinson, London, 1950, pp. 134-135; P. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania: British and American Policies towards Romania, 1938-1947*, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Oakland, CA., 1977, p. 143; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 224-231.

³⁰⁷R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 321.

[T]hat the clergy should keep their services going and their churches open, that they should collaborate in all social activities, especially the relief of the poor, and that they should not boycott the regime; Soviet troops were ordered to return all confiscated church property.³⁰⁸

The plan to control the clergy was immediately set in motion and by the autumn of 1944 two projects were operational simultaneously: firstly, the Communists began bi-monthly secret investigations of Church leaders, and secondly, it set up an organization of social assistance called the 'Patriotic Defense'. Clergy were required to register and participate in all the sessions of the 'Patriotic Defence', and subsequently to organize all their charity work only through this agency. Those who registered, be they from the adherents of the former 'Iron Guard' or from other 'guilty' groups were assured livelihood and rehabilitation.³⁰⁹ The Communists instructed the executive bodies of the 'Patriotic Defense' to overcome clerical resistance 'by conciliation, exempting parish houses from requisition, restoring land taken from rural churches by local Soviets, granting churches funds to repair war damages.'³¹⁰ Subsequently, under the umbrella of religious support and popular economic reforms,³¹¹ the Communists began their program of deportation to Russia of undesirable political and religious leaders.³¹² Further, in order to control any form of opposition among Christians, the Minister of Cults (Religion)³¹³ organized the 'Union of Democratic Clergy' as a forum where representatives of religions could present their views and discuss their part 'in the restoration of civil liberties'.³¹⁴ In response, Patriarch Nicodim 'exhorted the people to forget their divisions of the past, and to support the new Government of Prime Minister Groza in setting up a legal and just administration.'³¹⁵

However, in 1946, whilst the Communist authorities were still playing the role of the guarantors of religious freedom,³¹⁶ religious publications were

³⁰⁸R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 321.

³⁰⁹R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 322.

³¹⁰R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 323.

³¹¹ At its National Conference in October 1945, the Romanian Communist Party adopted an ambitious modernization programme including an end to class differences, accelerated development of heavy industry, nationwide electrification, extensive agrarian reforms, a bolstering of private enterprise in all domains, and permission for foreign investment in industry - a program which by promising everything to everybody attracted general interest. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 231.

³¹² From January 1945 the Soviets began to deport to Russia Lutheran pastors (twenty-six) and laymen (hundreds), as well as Uniate priests on the grounds that they opposed Russian policy. See *Christian Century*, March 16, 1949; R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 322; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 228.

³¹³ A former Iron Guard priest, Burducea. See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 332.

³¹⁴R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 322.

³¹⁵ICPIS, No. 12, March, 1945.

³¹⁶ The Papal Nuncio, Mgr. Cassulo, was permitted to send messages to the Vatican, and the Romanian Legate to the Holy See denied a report that the government requested the withdrawal of the Apostolic Nuncio from Bucharest, although Mgr. Cassulo was in fact replaced by Bishop O'Hara of the USA. Meanwhile, the Orthodox Church was encouraged

restricted by censorship imposed by the Ministry of Information, all religious meetings were to be cleared through the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Cults began censorship of the Patriarchate and other religious central bodies' mail, and finally the government granted subsidies to priests and pastors on certification of allegiance.³¹⁷

As part of the 'Vyshinsky Plan' to create a loyal 'Orthodox front', Patriarch Nicodim visited Moscow (1946) 'to consolidate Russian-Romanian good relations.'³¹⁸ Before his visit to Moscow, the Patriarch met the Prime Minister Groza and other cabinet ministers. The Communist leaders stressed the fact that the ties between the Orthodox Church and the government were very close given the fact that the Prime Minister was the son of an Orthodox priest and a professing Orthodox, the Minister of Education was an Orthodox priest and the Minister of Propaganda a professor of theology.³¹⁹ Additionally, the Romanian delegation was instructed to ask for Russian aid for their Church. Consequently, whilst in Moscow, Nicodim stated that although the Romanian Orthodox were autonomous, they would be guided in World Council relationships by Moscow.³²⁰ The relations with Moscow were further consolidated during Patriarch Alexei of Moscow's visit to Romania in 1947. On this occasion Alexei emphasised the necessity of 'an all-powerful Orthodox front.'³²¹

During this period, however, there were no attempts at theological clarification concerning the relation between Christianity and Marxism as ideologies, or between Church and State as institutions promoting different world views. Whilst both Church and State adopted a pragmatic approach, the Church's pragmatism was very crude since it failed to decipher obvious signs such as the attacks on opposition parties, the secret investigation of the clergy and the restrictions on publications and public meetings as reflecting a Communist hidden agenda.

5.1.2 Legalism: The Communists achieved full power in 1947 after two years of manoeuvring for supremacy in the left-wing coalition which replaced the Legionary government in 1945. On December 30 1947, King Michael was

to organized a pan-Orthodox theological conference, and further to promote an increasing role for the ecumenical movement as a platform for 'international friendship'. See *ICPIS*, No. 21, May 1946; No. 39, November 1946.

³¹⁷R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 323.

³¹⁸The relations between the Russian and the Romanian Orthodox Churches were severed after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. In fact, the last official contact between the two churches took place at the Russian Synod which elected Tikhon as Patriarch. Romania was represented at that Synod by the then *locum tenens* of the Moldavian Metropolitan office, Nicodim Munteanu. Nicodim was elected Patriarch of Romania in 1935, and during his last years in office the Romanian and Russian churches resumed their relation. Thus in February 1945 a Romanian delegation led by Bishop Iosif Gafton of Argeş participated in the election of Alexei as Patriarch of Russia, followed by the visit of Nicodim himself in 1946. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, p. 414.

³¹⁹See *ICPIS*, No. 21, May 1946; No. 42, November, 1946.

³²⁰See *ICPIS*, No. 42, November, 1946.

³²¹R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 323.

forced to abdicate and on the same day the Romanian People's Republic was proclaimed.³²² By this time, despite some vague protests from the USA and Great Britain concerning the fact that the Communist government did not respect democratic principles and human rights,³²³ the Allies had already recognized the Communist government (4 February 1946).³²⁴ As soon as the Communists had international recognition they dissolved all opposition political parties and imprisoned or deported their respective leaders,³²⁵ thus paving the way towards the 'Party-State', which ignored all traditional attributes of democracy such as the separation of powers, elected popular representation, the freedom from political control of various areas of social and cultural life and human rights.³²⁶ As Rupnik puts it:

The ideological justification for the confiscation of politics is the theory of substitution: the working class is the better self of the nation; the Party is the vanguard of the working class; and the Party leadership knows best which way the wind of history is blowing. The Communists therefore are convinced that their rule is not only necessary, but also irreversible.³²⁷

Once the 'people's democracy' was established, the Romanian Communists turned their total attention toward the Church. Thus far, the Communists had requested 'the neutrality of the Church in the coming political changes.'³²⁸ In order to encourage such 'neutrality',³²⁹ Prime Minister Groza, the Minister of Cults, S. Stoian, and the Presidium of the Republic³³⁰ paid a

³²²See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 232; T. Beeson, *Discretion and Valour*, p. 301.

³²³'Truman to Stalin', in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. 5, US Department of State, Washington D.C., 1945, p. 550.

³²⁴See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 230.

³²⁵Georgescu asserts that 'political Stalinism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the monopoly of power by a single party, the restriction of civil rights, the continual "intensification" of the class struggle, the liquidation by terrorist means of the old political and cultural elites and of all other opposition, all in the name of building a new society and a new men, had already begun before 1948 when the leaders of the Antonescu régime were arrested, and the most important executed, followed by the leaders of the National Peasant Party, most of whom were arrested in 1947' (V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 236).

³²⁶See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 230-231.

³²⁷J. Rupnik, *The Other Europe*, p. 131.

³²⁸The Minister of Religion addressed the Orthodox Synod late Fall, 1946. *EPS*, No. 4, January 1947; R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 323.

³²⁹From this point on there is a significant distinction between the government attitude towards the Orthodox and non-Orthodox denominations. Whilst the Orthodox church was primarily submitted to 'constitutional reforms', the non-Orthodox were primarily submitted to political and administrative measures. Thus, the German Evangelicals were accused of being 'Germanic sympathizers', and consequently their institutions were placed 'under supervision'; the Roman Catholic hospitals, charities and schools were taken over by the government; the leaders of the Free Evangelical churches were arrested and charged with receiving money from the World Council of Churches to organize a resistance movement, and therefore were 'Imperialist agents'. When the Catholic bishops protested to Groza regarding political arrests, the Prime Minister silenced them by asking if they had protested when Communists had been arrested by Rightists some years earlier. See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, pp. 323-324.

³³⁰The Council of five set up after King Michael's abdication.

visit to the Patriarch (January, 1947). During the discussion, Groza affirmed:

The Church is an institution with permanent usefulness in the life of the people. It is part of the State itself keeping pace with the spirit of the times. The Orthodox Christian Church, having always understood this, will surely understand it this time.³³¹

The 'neutrality' of the Church was further encouraged when the government submitted to Parliament two specific laws concerning, first, the pensioning of priests, and second, the redistribution of the episcopal sees, including new rules for episcopal assemblies. When the first law was issued in 1947, the government removed both the Metropolitan of Moldavia, who was in line for election to the office of Patriarch, and three other bishops.³³² The second law (March, 1947) established that the episcopal assemblies would not be composed as before, but that the majority of these assemblies had to be composed of members of Parliament, ministers of state, and state under-secretaries belonging to the diocese.³³³ The Communists explained:

The guidance of the countries' destinies having been taken up by the hands of the working class and of democratic organizations, special attention is being given to the renewal of the high cadres of the church. This was evidenced by the elections which took place in November, 1947, when three hierarchs of the people entered the synod. This concern of the working class for the destinies of the church culminated on May 24, 1948, when the new Patriarch of the Romanian People's Republic was elected in the person of His Holiness Justinian.³³⁴

Thus, the Church's hierarchy became a reflection of the will of the working class, which had been entrusted the leadership of the country not only in secular but also in religious affairs. The Minister of Finance, Luca, explained in November, 1947 the will of the working class concerning the Church:

The altar must remain the altar and not become a reactionary political club. There can be no state within a state...There can be no turning back. The democratic Romanian State cannot be asked to permit confessional schools to preach anti-democratic policy.³³⁵

Consequently, the entire personnel of all the recognized religions in Romania were summoned to Bucharest to take an oath of allegiance (using the same formula of allegiance as State employees) to the new Republic.³³⁶ The terms of this loyalty were soon to become public when the new Constitution, the Education Act and the Law of the General Regime of Religion were published. Thus the 'Constitution of the People's Republic of Romania', ratified on 13 April, 1948, stipulates:

³³¹EPS, No. 3, January 30, 1949.

³³²In his place was appointed Justinian Marina, later to be patriarch. See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 324.

³³³See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, pp. 323-324.

³³⁴*Universul*, 28 August, 1948.

³³⁵R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 324.

³³⁶See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 324.

All citizens of the People's Republic of Romania, irrespective of sex, nationality, race, religion or educational qualifications are equal before law (Art.16). Freedom of conscience and freedom of worship are guaranteed by the State. Religious creeds are free to organize themselves and can freely function provided their ritual and practices are not contrary to the Constitution, public security or morality. No religious denomination, congregation or community can open or maintain institutions of general education, but may only run special schools for training personnel necessary to the cult under state control. The Romanian Orthodox Church has its own head and is unitary in its organization. The way of organizing and functioning of the religious creeds will be established by law (Art.27).³³⁷

In contrast to the Bolshevik Constitution, which sanctioned³³⁸ the separation of Church and State and deprived clergy (along with capitalists, criminals and imbeciles) of the right to vote or to hold office in the State,³³⁹ the Romanian Constitution not only stipulated no separation of Church and State, but positively affirmed the equality before the law of all citizens 'irrespective of sex, nationality, race, religion or educational qualifications.' In fact, the Romanian Communist regime has never published a decree concerning the separation of Church and State.³⁴⁰ On the contrary, in Romania official legislation established a new relation between *imperium* and *sacerdotium*. Thus the government decreed that all private health institutions, orphanages and charities pass to the property of the State, allowing the Church only the freedom of worship within the boundaries set up by Communist law.³⁴¹ Additionally, the 'Education Reform Act' stipulated that education was secular, separate from the Church and totally under State control. Consequently, all religious schools were compulsorily transferred to the State.³⁴² However, the fact that the Church was not separated from the State but denied the rights to engage in education and social activities, raises the question of the space left for the Church. The answer to this question was given by the Law of the General Regime of Religion, which stipulated that the entire life of the Church, that is, the areas of doctrine, organization, activity, personnel, education, ecumenical and foreign contacts and property, were under state control.³⁴³ The governmental agency empowered to control the entire religious life was the 'Ministry of Religion', or the 'Ministry of Cults'.³⁴⁴ This agency supervised

³³⁷*The Constitution of the People's Republic of Romania*, Bucharest, 13 April, 1948.

³³⁸Meyendorff gives 23 January 1918 as the date when the decree was issued, and Ware gives the day (5 February, 1918) when the decree was published. See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 125; T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 155.

³³⁹See T. Beeson, *Discretion*, pp. 37-38; J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 125-136.

³⁴⁰J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 165.

³⁴¹See *Tableta*, 25 February, 1950.

³⁴²See 'Education Reform Act' (August 3, 1948), in *Monitorul Oficial*, No. 178, 4th August, 1948.

³⁴³'General Regime of Religion' (Decree 177/1948), in *Monitorul Oficial*, No. 178, 4th August, 1948. See Appendix I for the text of the Law.

³⁴⁴According to Hutten, in 1967 the Ministry had over a hundred field inspectors throughout the country, in addition to personnel in the Central Office in Bucharest. See K. Hutten, *Iron Curtain Christians*, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota,

and controlled all religious bodies and their institutions, communities, associations, orders, congregations and foundations of a religious nature, whatever kind they may be; it supervised and controlled special religious education for training personnel of all religious denominations; it approved the founding of new religious communities, parishes and administrative units, the creation of new personnel posts, and the appointment, whether paid by the State or not, in the services of the various denominations; it supervised and controlled all funds and possessions, whatever their origin and nature, of all religious cults; it assured the task of watching over the relations and correspondence between the cults of the country and those abroad; it had various other tasks in connection with religious cults.³⁴⁵

According to the Law of the General Regime of Religion all religious bodies were required within three months from publication to submit their constitutions and statements of faith for approval.³⁴⁶ The Orthodox Constitution was approved in the Fall of 1948. However, whilst Păcurariu claims that it follows the principles of Şaguna's *Organic Statutes*, in reality the Orthodox Constitution of 1948 endorses the right of the State to control the entire life of the Church.³⁴⁷ In order to maximize the State's control over the Church, Art. 30, paragraph O of the Constitution stipulates the Patriarch's right of devolution. Accordingly, he is empowered to remove from office (*ex officio*) any other hierarch or parish clergy.³⁴⁸ Thus, Şaguna's view of the Church's autonomy in relation to the State and of synodality within the Church was replaced by Justinian's view of the Church as an expression of the will of the working class, whose ecclesiastical organ is the hierarchy. This raises, however, the question of the Church's response to such a massive State interference. We already saw that both the Church through Patriarch Nicodim and the government through Prime Minister Groza affirmed their willingness to cooperate. After the death of Nicodim in February, 1948, the Communists³⁴⁹ appointed Justinian, the Metropolitan of Moldavia to the patriarchal throne of Romania (24 May, 1948). Whilst his loyalty to the Communist regime was already known,³⁵⁰ the depth of

1967, p. 388. The total number of the Ministry's personnel was reduced to sixty-seven in 1990 after the anti-Communist revolution of December 1989. See the 'Decree Concerning the Organization and Function of the Department of State for Cults (Religion)', in *Monitorul Oficial*, No. 94, (14 May, 1992), p. 2.

³⁴⁵'Decretul No. 37/1949', in *Monitorul Oficial*, 30 (5 February, 1949).

³⁴⁶See K. Hutten, *Iron Curtain Christians*, p. 386.

³⁴⁷See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 466-477; L. Stan, 'Legislația Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane în timpul arhipăstoririi Prea Fericitului Părinte Patriarh Justinian', in *Ortodoxia*, XX, 2 (1968), pp. 276-296.

³⁴⁸I. Floca, 'Bazele Canonice ale Organizării și Funcționării Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane', in *Centenarul*, p. 180.

³⁴⁹Justinian proved himself to be a strong supporter of the Communist, and under pressure from Moscow, who refused to accept any other incumbent, even the Church's constitution was amended so that he could qualify for the office. See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 327.

³⁵⁰His loyalty to the Communist régime was expressed publicly in February 1948, when acting as *locum tenens* of the office of Patriarch, Justinian praised the new draft of the Constitution, thus clearing the ground for its publication. Therefore, on the occasion of

Justinian's personal relationship with the Communists came to the surface during his installation (6 June 1948), which took place not in the Orthodox Cathedral in Bucharest, as was customary, but in the Chamber of Deputies,³⁵¹ in the presence of the Presidium of the State Council, the diplomatic representatives of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and other governments.³⁵² In his inaugural speech, Justinian stated:

The priests of our Church, who work in the midst of our people, have been trained in the mentality and atmosphere of the past. This being so, they are an obstacle to the new social activity of the Church. Our people must be guided, oriented and convinced of the social apostleship required by men of the new times. For this work a well thought-out programme and a body of well-trained guides are necessary. It is necessary, therefore, to select and promote those elements which have proved themselves capable of the new mission and to eliminate³⁵³ those who no longer correspond to their evangelical mission. Secondly, the Romanian Orthodox Church must reform its monasteries in accordance with canonical and monastic law, and reorganize them on the new basis in order that they may respond to the ideals and aspirations of our people. Thirdly, the weapons of our priests must be reviewed and they must be armed with the weapons of the new spirit, so that they can assist the new man in his aspirations...³⁵⁴

The Patriarch expresses here the Church's allegiance to the Communist State, even to the point of sacrificing its own priests if they do not correspond to the revolutionary standards of the working class. Since the Church is committed to remaining within the same 'kingdom' as the State, albeit as an earthly kingdom, the Church is also willing to pay the price. The paradox of this period lies in the fact that the Church wholeheartedly helped to built up the regime which was committed to destroy its eschatological constitution.³⁵⁵

5.1.3 Totalitarianism: Further, Justinian joined the government's campaign of diverting the people's attention from the real threat posed by Communist oppression towards the external 'imperialist' danger for the

the ratification of the Constitution, Gheorghiu-Dej, the Secretary General of the Communist Party, being sure of Orthodox loyalty, directed his attacks only towards the Catholic Church and particularly the Vatican. This official speech, followed shortly by other inflammatory speeches by Stanciu Stoian and Patriarch Justinian, precipitated the violent attacks upon Roman Catholic churches, Greek Catholic (Uniate) churches and the Ecumenical Movement on the grounds that they represented American and British imperialism, with the Pope as their agent. See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, pp. 325-327.

³⁵¹J.H. Cockburn, *Religious Freedom in Eastern Europe*, p. 101.

³⁵²See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 326.

³⁵³italics mine.

³⁵⁴'Press Review', in *Semnalul*, No. 129-133 (1948), p. 74; R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, pp. 326-327.

³⁵⁵For an analysis of Justinian's Socialist views, see A. Scarfe, 'Patriarch Justinian of Romania: His Early Social Thought', in *RCL*, 5, 3 (1977), 164-169.

'revolution'.³⁵⁶ Thus, whilst the Communists had already restricted Orthodox religious publications to a single journal (*Journal of the Holy Synod*)³⁵⁷ and abolished two Orthodox dioceses (September 1948),³⁵⁸ Justinian devoted himself to introducing the socialist spirit within the Orthodox Church and to joining the government in the campaign against the Vatican and the World Council of Churches. It is true that by identifying the Orthodox Church with the 'spirit of the working class', Justinian subtly managed to remove the close association of the Orthodox Church with the Iron Guard³⁵⁹ and the pre-Communist regimes.³⁶⁰ However, this was done at the expense of transforming the Church into an instrument of the new regime. To this end, Justinian commissioned a select group of priests to initiate a movement for incorporating the Romanian Orthodox Church into the Russian Church.³⁶¹ In fact, Justinian himself publicly endorsed a Communist article from the official newspaper *Scînteia* (The Spark)³⁶² which affirmed that 'our clergy has before it the example of the Orthodox clergy of the Soviet Union.'³⁶³ This allegiance of the Church to the Communist plan was expressed by Justinian in spite of the ideological incompatibility between the Church's doctrine and the 'scientific education' promoted by the Communist Party. Thus the article argued that the role of the Church must be reduced to the private sphere of prayer and religious belief:³⁶⁴

Obviously, there is a profound difference between the religious conception of the world and the scientific conception of dialectic and historical materialism of the origins of the world and of life, and of the causes of various natural and social phenomena. But the masses can learn the materialist dialectic conception only as the result of work for raising their level by widespread scientific knowledge, certainly not by restriction of the liberty of conscience and of religious freedom...³⁶⁵

³⁵⁶For an analysis of the 'internal' or 'external' oriented revolutions, see D. Martin, *A General Theory*, pp. 107-108.

³⁵⁷See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 325.

³⁵⁸R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 328.

³⁵⁹See D. Martin, *A General Theory*, p. 105.

³⁶⁰But all evils come to an end. The last pillar of the Caesarian Papacy and of imperialism in this part of the world, the last Hohenzollern [King Michael] has abdicated. We know all about the latest attempts to maintain the schism between brothers and to use the Greek Catholic clergy - their only hope - as an instrument to serve the dominating aims in our country.' (From Justinian's inaugural speech as Patriarch). See 'Press Review', in *Semnalul*, No. 129-133 (1948), p. 74.

³⁶¹R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 327.

³⁶²Official Statement - In the Matter of Religious Liberties', *Scînteia*, February 22, 1949. Subsequently, both in a pastoral letter and in an open address to five hundred priests in Bucharest, Justinian exhorted the clergy to abstain from 'hampering the activity of the State' (J. H. Cockburn, *Religious Freedom*, p. 103). See also R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 332.

³⁶³In the Matter of Religious Liberties', in *Scînteia*, February 22, 1949.

³⁶⁴See 'In the Matter of Religious Liberties', in *Scînteia*, February 22, 1949.

³⁶⁵In the Matter of Religious Liberties', in *Scînteia*, February 22, 1949.

However, whilst holding to its view of 'one kingdom', the Orthodox Church found it difficult to handle the theory of two ideologies within 'one kingdom'. Consequently, the response of the Orthodox Church concerning its new place and role given by the Communist State emphasizes, on the one hand, the Church's gratitude towards 'the regime of popular democracy in our country[which] assures us full freedom of organization and action',³⁶⁶ and on the other, its effort to accommodate the two ideologies: Christian and Marxist. Thus, in May 1949, at the opening³⁶⁷ of the Orthodox Theological Institute and in the presence of Patriarch Justinian and the bishops of Buzău, Suceava, Oradea and Constanța, the Rector of the Institute affirmed:

To carry out their social apostolate, and to enable them to free themselves from the prejudices and mental confusions of the dark past, the priests must receive guidance. The professors must cleanse the minds and souls of the priests of all the filth of political, social and theological prejudices which have led them astray from the path of the Church and the Holy Gospel. The Scriptures must be rightly interpreted; it is the duty of the professors to develop social consciousness in the priests. Without this consciousness they cannot see the face of God. Christ in his nine beatitudes said that the peacemakers will be blessed. The magnificat of the Blessed Virgin Mary also shows that the happenings of today are in accordance with the prophecies of the Bible. *There is no contradiction between the will of the working people and the Holy Scriptures.* The Romanian Orthodox Church must support the struggle for social justice and peace. It cannot associate itself with the imperialist papal Church, nor with the different sects which exist in Romania. These are agents of the Anglo-American imperialists, who aim at undermining the achievements of the working class...³⁶⁸

The ideological differences are, according to Nicolaescu, not the consequences of a fundamental distinction between Christianity and Communism, but primarily the outcome of the anomaly within the Church itself. Moreover, the assertion that there is no contradiction between the will of the proletariat and the Scriptures goes beyond a simple hermeneutical shift; it is, in fact an attempt to merge ontologically the Communist regime with the Messianic Kingdom. Since the Patriarch shared the same views as the Rector, the former in his address contended that the new courses would permit the priests to benefit from the pastoral experience of the professors who had reached a high degree of political development. Further, whilst condemning priests who 'were not at the level of the present situation', Justinian affirmed that they would be suspended and excluded from the Orthodox Church.³⁶⁹

Thus in this Soviet-Byzantine synthesis, the Church transformed the Communist State into the 'prophesied messianic kingdom', whilst the State transformed the Church (with the active support of Justinian) into 'an

³⁶⁶From Justinian's pastoral letter, February 1949. Cf. R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 332.

³⁶⁷At the same time about 120 priests were enrolled for 'orientation' courses at the Orthodox Institute in Cluj. See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 333.

³⁶⁸Cf. R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 333.

³⁶⁹See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 333.

association of believers on an equal footing with other associations... whose activity is subject to civil power', whose clergy must do its share in the maintaining of peace and 'defend the sovereignty and national independence of the people, combat superstitions and deleterious sects, expose the intrigues of the Vatican and work against chauvinism, anti-semitism, race hatred and so on. If it does this, the clergy will be serving its God and its people.'³⁷⁰

Further, the determination of the Communist regime to eliminate the 'eschatological' dimension from the life of the Church is even more clearly illustrated in the monastic reforms. Meyendorff points out that whenever the Church succumbed to the pressure of this world, there were people who,

Preferred to flee to the desert and show in this way that the Kingdom of God is a future Kingdom that is to come and that the Church cannot find any permanent refuge here below... Byzantine monasticism even became the support of the Church when the latter was hard pressed by willful emperors and helped to prevent it from being transformed into an imperial (state) Church.³⁷¹

However, under Communist control, Patriarch Justinian was committed to 'historicizing' even the monasteries.³⁷² Consequently, according to his monastic reform (1950), monks and nuns were required to learn a trade and, equipped with some workshops, monasteries were encouraged to engage in some projects either for the religious community or for society at large.³⁷³ Furthermore, in November 1950 the Holy Synod approved the collectivization of life in the monasteries, and authorized priests to

³⁷⁰Moscow appears to have been pleased with Church-State relations in Romania, for in an article published by the *Moscow Patriarchal Journal* it comments: 'The relations of Church and State in Romania are characterized by "the liberation of religious consciousness among the Orthodox clergy from the injurious survivals of the old order of State and society", which has thus "brought to the mass of the believers freedom of religion and of conscience"... The State regards the Church as "an association of believers on an equal footing with other associations whose rights before the law are recognized and whose activity is subject to civil power"... In an article by the head of the Romanian Government, Dr. Peter Groza, "what the State asks of the Church" is described as follows: The State, "which seeks to co-ordinate all the democratic forces of the country, counts the Church also as a concrete phenomenon of life. If the new patterns of life do not force the Church out of its way, the Church has no right to impede the development of the people, but must keep pace with a genuine unfolding of life arising from objective reality." The basic prerequisite for good relations between Church and State is therefore "the co-ordination of freedom of belief and conscience with civic rights and duties"' ('Position of Orthodox Church and Romanian State', in *The Moscow Patriarchal Journal*, No. IV, 1949).

³⁷¹J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 78.

³⁷²T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 311.

³⁷³Several monasteries have registered as co-operatives and have workshops for weaving and other rural arts; other are involved in farming or the servicing of agricultural machinery... Monasteries without extensive outside commitments usually have their own workshops in which they do printing and needlework and make the various accessories of the Church's liturgy' (T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 312).

participate in the kolkhozes, 'accepting the obligation of executing such manual labour as should be assigned to them.'³⁷⁴

However, for its contribution to the Communists' programme, particularly for exposing the intrigues of the Vatican, the Orthodox Church received its reward. Thus, after the Concordat with the Vatican was repealed (17 July 1948)³⁷⁵ and the Uniate Church dissolved on 1st December 1948,³⁷⁶ the Uniate's confiscated properties were divided between the State and the Orthodox Church.³⁷⁷

However, there were a significant number of Orthodox clergy and believers who opposed the 'Red Captivity', preferring instead prison or even martyrdom. Tobias, in his 'Chronicle of Events' of that period, mentions that in February 1949 fifteen Orthodox priests were removed from office on the grounds that they opposed the incorporation of the Romanian Church into the Russian Church. Similarly, in December 1950, sixty Orthodox priests were arrested for refusal to cooperate with the Communist sponsored 'Committees for Peace'.³⁷⁸ Hutten mentions seventy-six Orthodox priests who refused to take over Uniate churches, and thus preferred to be arrested themselves.³⁷⁹ Thus, whilst the official voice of the Church reflects the total subjection of the institution to the Communist State, the voice of the martyrs reflects the eschatological dimension of Christianity which refuses to be swallowed up by history.

5.2 Détente

5.2.1 Internationalism and Nationalism: This period is marked by the beginning of Russian-Romanian discord on the one hand, and by the beginning of the 'cultural revolution' on the other. Stalin's death in March 1953 threw all Eastern Europe into a period of political uncertainty, which for Romania included the beginning of discord with the Soviets.³⁸⁰ In order

³⁷⁴R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 336.

³⁷⁵The Concordat had been signed between Romania and the Vatican in 1927 and ratified by the Romanian Parliament in 1929. See K. Hutten, *Iron*, p. 392.

³⁷⁶After years of brutal persecution against the Uniate Church, the government managed to force 423 priests out of 2,340 to sign a declaration of reunion with the Orthodox Church. Out of the 423 signatories, 38 were taken to Bucharest on 3 October 1948 to meet the Holy Synod and thus to formalize the union between the two churches. All the six Uniate bishops and about 450 Uniate clergy who opposed the union were arrested. Subsequently, the Uniate bishops were imprisoned and died as martyrs without compromising their faith. The priests were interned in a work-camp in Romania, but later about 210 were deported to the Soviet Union. See K. Hutten, *Iron*, pp. 390-396.

³⁷⁷See K. Hutten, *Iron*, p. 391; R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 347.

³⁷⁸See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, pp. 332, 336.

³⁷⁹K. Hutten, *Iron*, p. 392.

³⁸⁰Khrushchev's plan of de-Stalinization expanded into other Communist countries, and accordingly he tried to replace existing Communist leaders with his own men. Gheorghiu-Dej, the Romanian Communist leader, resisted such attempts, and subsequently made a

to counter the Soviet threat, Romania moved toward rapprochement with other countries,³⁸¹ whilst at home significant changes were introduced starting with economic liberalization and the relaxation of police rule. The authorities began to open political prisons (1962-1964) and about 4000 prisoners were released. Further, in order to win public support, Dej introduced a programme of de-Russification (which was completed in 1965),³⁸² and subsequently the Party gradually permitted the dissemination of such traditional values which posed no direct threat to its authority. However encouraging these changes might have been at that time they were primarily tactical and not a fundamental deviation from Marxist-Leninist philosophy. The only difference was that political discourse now concentrated more on 'national Communism' than on 'international Communism'.³⁸³ This political shift from 'universal' to 'particular' also influenced the Church-State relation.

5.2.2 Nationalist Pragmatism: First, the legal framework for religious freedom continued to underline the government's right to control the entire life and activity of religious bodies. The second Constitution of the People's Republic of Romania (1952) writes:

Freedom of conscience is guaranteed to all citizens of the Romanian People's Republic. The school is separated from the church. No denomination, no religious order or congregation may open institutions of general instruction and maintain them, but may open only special schools for the training of personnel needed for its specific cult. The nature of such organizations and the functioning of religious cults are regulated by law.³⁸⁴

Compared with the Constitution of 1948 the space allowed for religious freedom was now restricted to 'freedom of conscience' and the 'freedom of religious cults', whilst the freedom of worship was dropped completely. This change in legislation was intended to eradicate any form of unofficial religious activity. Amongst such groups special attention was given to the 'Lord's Army', which although it was officially dissolved in 1948, continued its work.

radical shift from 'international Communism' to 'national Communism'. Thus Dej spoke about the Romanian road to Socialism by adapting Marxism to local needs. The discord was further escalated when Khrushchev planned to introduce 'the division of labour' among the socialist countries. According to this plan the northern countries were to become responsible for industrial production whilst the southern countries were to become responsible for raw materials and agricultural production. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 242-246.

³⁸¹Romania sided with China in the Sino-Soviet conflict and increased its contacts with Yugoslavia, France, Great Britain, the USA and the United Nations in order to receive international support against Moscow. See R. Daniels, *A Documentary*, vol. 2, pp. 214-366; V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 246.

³⁸²This programme included the closing of all Russian institutions that had been created between 1946 and 1948, a public campaign against Moscow and the opening of traditional Romanian institutions. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 246-247.

³⁸³The Internationalist approach envisaged the creation of a monolithic Communist bloc led by Moscow.

³⁸⁴*The Constitution of the Romanian People's Republic*, Art. 84, Bucharest, 21 September, 1952.

The Lord's Army has awakened such enthusiasm and fervour, such capacity for sacrifice among even the most simple people that the coming to power of the present regime has not eliminated them. In spite of the risks and attacks it has incurred-or rather, because of them-the 'Lord's Army' has continued its intense activity without interruption, and on an increasing scale.³⁸⁵

Its leaders, who were imprisoned in 1948, were subsequently released in 1954 as part of a new Communist strategy to eliminate the movement. Thus in 1958, T. Dorz and S. Grosu were summoned by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Drăghici, who, in a seemingly friendly attitude, asked the two 'Lord's Army' leaders to draw up a constitution and to apply for the legalization of the movement. Further, the Minister suggested it important to list, in the draft, about twenty-two names of possible national and regional leaders. Within days, all twenty-two were arrested and imprisoned on the grounds that they belonged to an 'Army' organized for military combat. Consequently, during the following months, the Communist police also arrested about 500 'soldiers'.³⁸⁶

However, whilst the recognized religions were allowed to function, the government maximized its authority over them. Thus in 1955 the government introduced the so-called plan of *Regularization* and *Aroundation*.³⁸⁷ As soon as the plan began to operate, church services declined dramatically, both in numbers and in quality. Further, the government requested that the number of clerics should be also reduced, in order to match the reduction of parishes and religious services.³⁸⁸

Regularization and *Aroundation* came into effect in the Orthodox Church between 1958 and 1963 when about 1,500 priests, monks and lay people were arrested. In addition, 2,000 were compelled to leave the religious life and subsequently more than half the monasteries were closed. Further, the government closed (in 1959) the three monastic seminaries, thereby creating major problems for the training of novices and of all monks from among whom the new hierarchs were to be selected.³⁸⁹ Later (in 1966), when the government launched its massive industrialization programme, a new monastic regulation was issued which stipulated that all nuns under the age of 40 and all monks under the age of 50 had to leave their monasteries and take up a 'more socially useful' work. Scarfe affirms that during the monastic reform of 1966, Justinian was forced to close over a hundred monasteries and make more than 2,000 monks and nuns return to secular

³⁸⁵See ALRC, 'The "Lord's Army" Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 8:4 (1980), p. 314.

³⁸⁶See ALRC, 'The "Lord's Army"', in *RCL*, 8:4 (1980), p. 315.

³⁸⁷*Regularization* refers to reducing the number of the church services, and *Aroundation* refers to the closure of church buildings. Denominational leaders were forced to accept this plan and moreover they were coerced to write to the Ministry of Religions pretending that it is the demand of the respective denominations that the government should accept the *Regularization* and the *Aroundation*. See 'Baptists in Romania', in *RCL*, 1, 6 (1973), 19-22.

³⁸⁸See T. Beeson, *Discretion*, pp. 304-306.

³⁸⁹See T. Beeson, *Discretion*, pp. 310-311.

life.³⁹⁰ How far the reform reached into the monastic communities can be further illustrated by the following statistics: Beeson affirms that in 1956 there were about 200 monasteries with over 7,000 members, whilst in 1972 there were only 114 monastic foundations with a total number of 2,068 members. It appears, then, that membership dropped by about 5,000 between 1956 and 1972.³⁹¹ There is, however, today a small sign of increase in membership and numbers of monastic foundations. Thus the *Romanian Orthodox Church News* wrote that in 1975 there were about 122 monasteries and *skits* (hermitage) with approximately 2,200 monks and nuns.³⁹²

Additionally, the traditional monastic model of prayer and work was replaced by *serviciu* and *ascultare* (obedience); these two qualities were regarded as an expression of love not only for God and for one's fellow believers, but also for the nation as a whole.³⁹³ Concerning obedience, however, this was due to the State alone since according to the Romanian model of Church-State relation, it is the right of *imperium* to decide the place and the role of *sacerdotium*. Thus, obedience became the prerequisite of a 'relaxed' Church-State relation. In reality, the policy of relaxation was only the umbrella under which the government continued to develop its strategy of total control over the Church. This policy is clearly illustrated by the third Romanian Constitution (1965) after the Communist takeover, and the Decree 334/1970 'Concerning the Organization and Functioning of the Department of Cults'.³⁹⁴

The Constitution (1965) writes:

Freedom of conscience is guaranteed to all citizens of the Socialist Republic of Romania. Anybody is free to share or not to share a religious belief. The freedom of exercising a religious cult is guaranteed. The religious cults organize freely. The way of organizing and functioning of the religious cults is regulated by law. The school is separated from the Church. No religious confession, congregation or community can open or maintain any other teaching establishments than special schools for the training of the servants of the cult.³⁹⁵

The 'freedom of conscience' and the 'freedom of exercising a religious cult', which are enshrined in the Constitution, actually means that one can express, his or her religious views only within the boundaries of a 'religious cult' which is 'regulated by law'. Thus Decree 334/1970 states:

The Department of Cults, central body of the state administration, exercises the policy of the state concerning the organization and the activity of cults (Art.1)

Consequently, religion became a political issue which requires a political body (the Department of Cults) to control its life. Further, the Decree

³⁹⁰A. Scarfe, 'Patriarch Justinian', in *RCL*, 5, 3 (1977), p. 168.

³⁹¹See T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 303.

³⁹²See the *Romanian Orthodox Church News*, V, No. 4, (1975), p. 80.

³⁹³E. Mary SLG, 'Orthodox Monasticism in Romania Today', in *RCL*, 8, 1 (1980), p. 26.

³⁹⁴Published in *Buletinul Oficial*, No. 103, Bucharest, 13 July, 1970, pp. 826-828.

³⁹⁵*The Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Romania*, Art. 30, Bucharest, 1965.

specifically elaborates the rights and the modes of state control over every single aspect of religious life, including the introduction of a state-issued licence for the entire religious personnel.³⁹⁶ Thus before one could take office (ecclesiastic or administrative), one had to apply to the Department of Cults for a licence. Any person found performing a religious activity without an adequate licence was considered guilty of 'usurping a function' (performing a religious function without a licence), and consequently prosecuted.³⁹⁷

Nevertheless, for political reasons, especially during Dej's last year (1964-1965) and Ceaușescu's first years (1965-1972) in power, Romania enjoyed a short time of political relaxation and economic liberalization. In addition to economic and political contacts with the Western world, the government also encouraged religious and cultural contacts. However, those privileges were granted only to 'obedient' religious leaders, upon whose loyalty the government could rely.³⁹⁸ Moreover, the 'obedient' clergy received permission to erect or to renovate their church buildings, publish religious literature, study (even abroad) and preside over the liturgy on special public occasions.³⁹⁹

Skillfully, the government did not hesitate to use these 'significant achievements' of the Romanian churches as a major propaganda tool for the Western World. Consequently, inexperienced Western visitors began to question the validity of the 'underground Church' and of Christian opposition to the Communist State when the 'official' Church enjoyed so many privileges.⁴⁰⁰

During this time partisans of the pragmatic approach were held in high esteem not only at home but abroad as well. According to Păcurariu, Patriarch Justinian was a member of the Grand National Assembly (since 1957) and a member of the National Council of the Front of Democracy and Social Unity. In this capacity he represented Romania at international peace conferences, such as Stockholm 1958, Moscow 1962 and Helsinki 1965.⁴⁰¹ Similarly, other representatives of the Orthodox Church were members of local governments, thereby proving that the Church and the State were engaged in fruitful co-operation.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁶[I]t gives licences to the servants of the cults in order to exercise their respective functions '(Art. 5 paragraph i).

³⁹⁷See P. Booth, 'Romanian State Fears Too Much Believers' Independence', (Chronicle) in *RCL*, 12, 2 (1984), 204-205.

³⁹⁸See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 248-253.

³⁹⁹See P. Walters, 'Christians in Eastern Europe: a Decade of Aspirations and Frustrations', in *RCL*, 11, 1 (1983), p. 6.

⁴⁰⁰See T. Beeson, *Discretion*, pp. 312-320.

⁴⁰¹M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 465.

⁴⁰²M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, p. 511.

5.3 Neo-Stalinism

This period, which is marked by the rise (1974) and fall (1989) of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu, represents one of the most interesting chapters in the history of Church-State relations. Although Ceaușescu had been the Secretary General of the Communist Party since 1965, until 1974 he was only one of the team who remained in power after the death of Gheorghiu Dej (1965).⁴⁰³ However, it appears that, in 1971, there was a disagreement between Ceaușescu and Prime Minister Maurer over the issue of economic policy: Ceaușescu advocated a more centralized (Stalinist) economy,⁴⁰⁴ whilst Maurer was in favour of a more liberal approach. Ceaușescu's programme, known as the 'mini-cultural' revolution,⁴⁰⁵ advocated the prominence of ideology over against economics, and consequently he replaced the technocrats from the government with the party 'apparatchiks'.⁴⁰⁶ Additionally, the election of Ceaușescu as President of Romania in 1974 marked the final victory of the Romanian *conducător* (leader) over the 'cosmopolitans'.⁴⁰⁷ Subsequently, economic Stalinism was followed by Ceaușescu's 'cult of personality',⁴⁰⁸ and by grandiose foreign and domestic projects.⁴⁰⁹ However, his plan of massive industrialization⁴¹⁰ and

⁴⁰³There is general agreement that between 1965 and 1974 the Prime Minister, Maurer, was the main figure who shaped the 'liberal' policy of the Romanian government. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, pp. 254-256.

⁴⁰⁴For Ceaușescu's views about Stalin, see M. Almond, *The Rise and Fall of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu*, Chapman, London, 1992, p. 67.

⁴⁰⁵There is a close link between Ceaușescu's 'theses' and the Chinese cultural revolution. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 255.

⁴⁰⁶For an account of Ceaușescu's visit to China and North Korea and his subsequent preference for 'apparatchik', see M. Almond, *The Rise and Fall of Nicolae & Elena Ceaușescu*, pp. 70-71, 146-147.

⁴⁰⁷Ceaușescu was at the same time the head of the Party and of the State. Subsequently, Prime Minister Maurer was replaced by Ceaușescu's man, Manea Mănescu. Further, at the Eleventh Party Congress (November 1974), Ceaușescu managed to promote his own men to the Central Committee. See M. Almond, *The Rise*, pp. 46-72.

⁴⁰⁸As in the cases of Joseph Stalin, Kim Il Sung of North Korea, or Enver Hoxha of Albania, the president's personality went beyond the bounds of reality and took on mythic proportions. People made pilgrimages to his obscure home town and wove legends about it. The title *conducător* was always accompanied by extravagant adjectives. Ceaușescu's biography was constantly rewritten to improve the hagiography. Every 26 January the whole country celebrated the birthday of its 'most beloved son' with delirious joy, pride, and recognition approaching deification. 'He is ageless', 'he is Romania, we are his children', wrote the newspaper *Scînteia* on his birthday in 1983' (V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 258). See also 'The Cult of Personality', in M. Almond, *The Rise*, pp. 138-152.

⁴⁰⁹See M. Almond, *The Rise*, pp. 100-120; D. Funderburk, *Pinstripes and Reds*, Selous Foundation Press, Washington, D.C., 1987 (rep. 1988), pp. 39-62, 95-104; J. Rupnik, *The Other Europe*, pp. 150-158; R. Okey, *Eastern Europe 1740-1985*, Harper Collins, London, 1991, pp. 203-224; M. Gleny, *The Rebirth of History*, pp. 7, 10-13, 101-111, 206-208.

⁴¹⁰See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 253.

systematization⁴¹¹ eventually drained the economic resources of the country to the point of economic collapse, although this did not become apparent for several years.⁴¹² When, finally, it became apparent and the pauperized population began to show signs of discontent with the regime, Ceaușescu had already managed to bring the whole state apparatus under personal (family) control. Further, the propaganda apparatus set up to proclaim the successes of the *conducător* produced such an amount of 'documents' and mass media programmes that for some years the country was 'brainwashed'.⁴¹³

However, the gap between the official reports and the daily realities was so large that eventually the entire country sank into a sort of all-embracing schizophrenia. While, according to Georgescu,

News coming out of Romania in the mid-1980s seems to be from another world: official proposals to move old people out of the cities, families living for weeks in unheated apartments, ration cards for bread, a law forcing the registration of typewriters with the police, Bibles turned into toilet paper, sixteenth-century churches and nineteenth-century synagogues demolished to make room for the 'Victory of Socialism Boulevard',⁴¹⁴

an impoverished, hungry and dissatisfied population was forced to attend endless public spectacles and to declare that,

We have to be grateful for the providential existence of this man, so deeply attached to our ancestral soil, we have to be grateful for his eternal youth, we have to be grateful for being contemporaries and thank him for all this. It is only through his willingness that we are really masters in the house of our souls.⁴¹⁵

Helped by his repressive apparatus,⁴¹⁶ Ceaușescu imposed the same rule in the relation between the Church and the State. Thus, whilst the reports from believers and human rights agencies began to unveil the reality about restrictions, persecutions, imprisonment and martyrdom, the official reports from Church hierarchs spoke about the unrestricted religious freedom granted by Ceaușescu.⁴¹⁷ However, to prevent the spread of opposition, both legislation (religious and secular) and Church organization were conceived in such a way as to ensure absolute state control over religious life. Even the ideological differences between Christianity and Communism were strictly

⁴¹¹Only the Pentagon is bigger than Casa Republicii, Ceaușescu's Palace. For a record of Ceaușescu's plans to rebuild Bucharest and to destroy the villages in order to urbanize the whole country, see M. Almond, *The Rise*, pp. 153-190.

⁴¹²See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 253.

⁴¹³It was claimed, for example, that because Romanians have such high living standards, and particularly because they eat too much, it was necessary to introduce a 'Rational Eating Programme', conceived by Ceaușescu himself. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 260.

⁴¹⁴V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 267.

⁴¹⁵Extract from a eulogy dedicated to Ceaușescu, in J. Rupnik, *The Other Europe*, p. 152.

⁴¹⁶The secret behind such power to manipulate the masses lies with the all-powerful *Securitate* (Secret Police), which was responsible for keeping the whole country under control and for silencing any critic. See D. Funderburk, *Pinstripes*, XI.

⁴¹⁷See P. Walters, 'Christians in Eastern Europe', pp. 6-26.

controlled by the regime and even used for well-monitored external propaganda. Thus, in an interview with Dutch television (31 March, 1973) Ceaușescu commented:

In order to be clearer on the matter we shall start by saying that in Romania there are fourteen religious denominations. Certainly the main place is occupied by the Romanian Orthodox Church. All these religious denominations enjoy the full rights which enable them to develop their activity. We believe that there is no contradiction between the realisation of a socialist society and the existence of different religious communities, the right of our own citizens to hold religious beliefs. One cannot deny that there are differences in the way in which the Communist Party-and not only the Communist Party but all progressive forces-tackle the different problems and the Church. But tackling in one way or another a certain philosophical problem concerning the development of mankind cannot hinder the existence of freedom of a religious community.⁴¹⁸

Such comment has to be understood in the light of the powers given by Ceaușescu to the Department of Cults (Decree 334/1970) to control not only the administrative life of the Church, but also the 'purely religious matters such as religious services and the administration of the Sacrament.'⁴¹⁹ Thus, in spite of ideological differences, in practice, the Church as a State-run institution was asked to support Communist policy in realising a socialist society. The specific areas in which the Church was used by the regime included the fostering national spirit, being the spokesman for the government abroad, silencing dissidents and joining other agencies in praising Ceaușescu.

5.3.1 Nationalism. Once Romania distanced itself from Soviet 'internationalism',⁴²⁰ Ceaușescu adopted a nationalist-dictatorial style of governance.⁴²¹ Nationalism is also the main argument of the Romanian Orthodox Church for its claim to be the 'State Church' and to defend its autocephaly in relation to Constantinople.⁴²² Thus Ivan argues that the Orthodox Church is not only historically qualified for this place due to its role in protecting the national identity, but moreover, from a canonical point of view, nationhood (ethnicity) is a divine principle for the Church's autocephaly.⁴²³ Consequently, nationalism became a common ground for a Christian-Communist cooperation. Mojzes argues that,

⁴¹⁸Cf. T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 307.

⁴¹⁹O. Luchterhandt, 'State Authorities for Religious Affairs in Soviet Bloc Countries', in *RCL*, 13, 1 (1985), p. 58. See also *Südosteuropa-Handbuch*, vol. II (Romania), K.-D. Grothusen, Göttingen, 1977, pp. 471-472.

⁴²⁰See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 266.

⁴²¹J. Rupnik, *The Other Europe*, p. 156.

⁴²²See. Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan, 'Biserica și Națiunea', in N. Corneanu, ed., *Orthodoxia Românească*, Ed. IBM al BOR, Bucharest, 1992, pp. 35-39.

⁴²³The Romanian Orthodox Church argues that Canon 34 of the *Apostolic Canons* affirms that the Church should be organized on ethnic principles and not on regional. The bishops of every nation (*ethnos*) ought to know who is the first one (*protos*) among them, and to esteem him as their head, and not to do any great thing without his consent; but everyone to manage only the affairs that belong to his own diocese and the territory subject to it. But let him [the first one] not do anything without the consent of all the

While some people are ready to die for the Communist ideology, this could not be said of the majority. Many people undoubtedly should be willing to make the supreme sacrifice in the name of their religion, but they are not in the majority either. Nationalism (and in multinational states, ethnicity of the component national units) is probably the most potent motivator for the largest number of people.⁴²⁴

Particularly in Romania, the Christian and Communist appeal to nationalism met each other in that strange combination of *heroic* and *defiant* nationalism in which mythology stresses the successful struggle against external challenges, whilst at the same time the interested parties point toward the continuing existence of external threats; consequently, unity, sacrifice and vigilance are forcefully proclaimed.⁴²⁵ Obviously, for its part in this process, the Church received certain privileges. As Walter puts it:

The fostering of nationalism in Romania under Ceaușescu has led to greater freedoms for the Romanian Orthodox Church which is identified with the historical national aspirations of the Romanian people. The State supervises the Church through the Department of Cults and pays part of the salaries of priests and theological professors. Under Patriarch Justinian until 1977 and then under his successor Justin the Church as an institution has found very little difficulty in accommodating itself to the aims of a socialist society. In return, it has gained some real concessions in facilities for theological education and publication.⁴²⁶

In fact, Bociurkiw argues that in Romania 'since the early 1960's, the 'national-communist' line of the regime has upgraded the Church to a quasi-

others [bishops]; for it is by this means that there will be unanimity, and God will be glorified through Christ in the Holy Spirit.' The translation which affirms that the word *ethnos* means 'region' is rejected by the Romanians, who translate it by 'nation'. Upon this interpretation, the Romanian Orthodox Church builds up its argument in favour of a 'national Church'. See I. Ivan, 'Etnosul - Neamul - Temei Divin și Principiul Fundamental Canonic al Autocefaliei Bisericești', in N. Corneanu, ed., *Ortodoxia Romanească*, pp. 100-111; Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, 'Catolicitate și Etnicitate', in N. Corneanu, ed., *Ortodoxia Romanească*, pp. 20-34.

⁴²⁴P. Mojzes, *Church and State in Postwar Eastern Europe*, pp. 12-13.

⁴²⁵See S. Ramet, 'Politics and Religion in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union', in G. Moiser, ed., *Politics and Religion in the Modern World*, Routledge, London, 1991, pp. 67-92.

⁴²⁶P. Walters, 'Christians in Eastern Europe', in *RCL*, 11, 1 (1983), p. 20. 'State scholarships are awarded to students... and State funds are also used to finance the administrative personnel of the Patriarchate. With so much help from the State, the Church is able to organize for its clergy a complete Social Insurance scheme comparable to that of the State, with pensions, medical assistance, rest-homes by the sea and holiday houses in the mountains. Such facts are proof that the Church is not merely tolerated within an officially atheistic, communist State, but that it has a positive role which is recognized and encouraged by the secular leaders. The reasons for this are several; firstly, the Romanian Orthodox Church, in common with many other churches of Eastern Europe, is an intensely national Church. Its clergy, by participating in any event of any importance to an emerging nation ever since the fourteenth century, made a great contribution both to the moulding of a Romanian national consciousness, and to the formation of Romanian culture, especially through educational activities, and through the printing and dissemination of books' (M. Villiers, 'The Romanian Orthodox Church Today', in *RCL*, 1, 3 (1973), p. 4).

established status.⁴²⁷ However, in spite of the fact that this accommodation between Church and State secured a place for the Orthodox Church in present Romanian society,⁴²⁸ the price which has been paid by the Church is deeply damaging to the Church's prophetic ministry.⁴²⁹ Commenting on the situation of the Romanian Church, Meyendorff affirms:

By acquiescing in this state of affairs the Romanian hierarchy runs the risk of appearing in the eyes of its own faithful, and in those of the world at large, as a mere body of officials at the beck and call of the government, whose ultimate and avowed aim is the destruction of all 'religious prejudices'.⁴³⁰

5.3.2 Spokesmen. Since 1961, when Romania joined the World Council of Churches, in addition to participating at numerous international meetings the Romanian Orthodox hierarchy also held important offices in the leadership of the ecumenical movement.⁴³¹ These contacts have been further developed as a result of the visits of important religious leaders from other countries to Bucharest.⁴³² Consequently, the Ecumenical Council in cooperation with the Romanian Orthodox Church decided to build an ecumenical centre comprising a theological institute for some 300 students, with a chapel and ecumenical institute at Căldaruşani about 20 km. from Bucharest.⁴³³

However, once integrated into the international religious bodies, Walter argues that besides purely religious dialogue, 'the hierarchy of the churches are used systematically as spokesmen for government policies.'⁴³⁴ This aspect was obviously a very important aspect of Ceauşescu's international policy. For example, when the European Council of Churches met in England (27-29 October, 1977) to discuss WCC recommendations for initiatives to monitor human rights, the Romanian bishop, Antonie Plămădeală, succeeded in deferring action on the grounds that the new initiative was not sufficiently defined.⁴³⁵

⁴²⁷See B. Bociurkiw, 'Religion in Eastern Europe', in *RCL*, 1, 4-5 (1973), p. 10.

⁴²⁸See R. Okey, *Eastern Europe*, p. 221.

⁴²⁹M. Almond, *The Rise*, p. 202.

⁴³⁰J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 166.

⁴³¹The Romanian Orthodox Church sent delegations in 1961 to New Delhi, in 1968 to Uppsala, and in 1975 to Nairobi. Further, from 1961 to 1977 Justin served as a member of the Central Committee of the Ecumenical Council of Churches, and since 1975 Metropolitan Antonie has also been a member of this Committee. Other Romanian hierarchs serve as members of different commissions such as Faith and Order, and International Relations. Moreover, the Romanian Church participated at the meetings of the European Conference of Churches (Nyborg IV, 1964; V 1966; VI 1971; Engelberg VII 1974. Patriarch Justin has been a member of the Presidium of this organization since 1964. In addition, the Romanian hierarchs visited the USA, Germany, Austria, Canada, Switzerland and other countries. See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 494-508.

⁴³²See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, vol. 3, pp. 506-508.

⁴³³See 'Ecumenical Centre Planned', in *RCL*, 6, 2 (1978), p. 128.

⁴³⁴P. Walters, 'Christians in Eastern Europe', in *RCL*, 11:1 (1983), p. 11.

⁴³⁵See 'Romanian Religious Press Articles', in *RCL*, 8, 1 (1980), p. 68.

Two years later (April-May 1979) the Romanian Patriarch led a delegation of the Romanian Orthodox hierarchy in the USA and Canada where, at these top-level⁴³⁶ conferences, while Justin was speaking about religious freedoms in Romania, at home several priests, pastors and lay believers were in prison or in psychiatric hospitals.⁴³⁷ In time, not only the Orthodox hierarchs but also the leaders of the other denominations took on the same role of officially proclaiming the religious freedom granted by the Communist regime in Romania.⁴³⁸

One other area in which the Church has been actively involved since 1948 is what Patriarch Justinian called the 'new programme for peace'.⁴³⁹ Although there was initially opposition among Orthodox clergy to such programmes, following the 'firm response' of the Communist state in arresting sixty priests 'for refusal to cooperate',⁴⁴⁰ the following generations gave themselves wholeheartedly to the peace program. Thus, according to Păcurariu, not only at home but also abroad the Romanian Orthodox Church participated at peace conferences and campaigns.⁴⁴¹

5.3.3 Silencing the Dissidents. In Communist societies where the 'Party-State' claims to represent the will and the aspirations of the whole country, there is no space for pluralism; instead the official propaganda and

⁴³⁶Justin was received by President Carter and by Albert Schleger, Governor General of Canada. The delegation also held discussions with members of the USA Congress Helsinki Commission, with representatives of the State Department Bureau for human rights. See 'Religious Delegation Visit USA', in *RCL*, 8, 1 (1980), p. 62; *The Romanian Orthodox Church News* April-June, 1979.

⁴³⁷Among the prisoners there were Orthodox (Fr. Gheorghe Calciu, Dr. Ionel Cana and Gh. Braşoveanu), Baptists (Ionel Prejban, Nicolae Bogdan, Ian Samu, Dimitrie Ianculovici and Nicolae Rădoi), Seventh-Day Adventists (Mircea Dragomir, Gheorghe Angheluţ, Viorel Ardelean and Lucian Bistriţeanu and Pentecostals (Simion Holbură and Paramon Gagea). See 'Religious Prisoners', in *RCL*, 8, 1 (1980), p. 61.

⁴³⁸For example, when the Hungarian Bishop of America, Zoltan Beky, at the General Assembly of the WCC in Nairobi (1975), expressed his concern over the matter of denationalization and anti-Protestant attitudes in Romania, his view was refuted by a Hungarian ethnic from Romania, Professor Lengyel, of the Protestant Institute in Cluj. See 'Romanian Religious Press Articles', in *RCL*, 6, 3 (1978), p. 205. Similarly, in 1977 the leaders of the Pentecostal Church in Romania, P. Bochian (President) and A. Vamvu (General Secretary), sent a telegram to President Ceauşescu thanking him for religious freedom in Romania and further assuring the President of their support in rebuilding the nation. See 'Romanian Press Articles', in *RCL*, 5, 3 (1977), p. 203. During a visit to America (1978), the leaders of the Baptist and Orthodox churches openly praised Ceauşescu for religious freedom in Romania. See 'Romanian Press Articles', in *RCL*, 6, 3 (1978), p. 204.

⁴³⁹R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 336.

⁴⁴⁰See R. Tobias, *Communist - Christian Encounter*, p. 336.

⁴⁴¹Among others the Romanian Orthodox Church participated at the following peace conferences and meetings: Warsaw (1950), Helsinki (1955), Stockholm (1958), Moscow (1962), Helsinki (1965), Moscow (1969), Kyoto-Japan (1970), Warsaw (1977), Moscow (1977) and Prague (1961, 1964, 1967, 1971, 1979). See M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane*, Vol. 3, p. 510; V. Coman, *Scrieri de Teologie*, pp. 419-433.

its repressive apparatus are entitled to ensure unity and consensus.⁴⁴² Since besides the Communist Party the Church was the only other institution upholding a different ideology which was allowed, to a certain degree, to exist, it was the particular task of the State to align the Church with the Party train. Accordingly, although theoretically there were two ideologies, in practice there had to be but one will and one voice. To this end the Communist State, in addition to legislation and repressive measures carried on by the *securitate*, paid careful attention to the total institutionalization of religion, and subsequently to controlling it by institutionalized methods. One particular method was the appointment of religious leaders who would obey the Party to the extent of being willing to introduce State-imposed restrictions into the constitution and practice of their own churches.⁴⁴³ These Church leaders became instruments in the hands of the State authorities to excommunicate any dissenters.⁴⁴⁴ Since in Romania freedom of religion refers exclusively to legally approved and institutionalized churches, once a person has been excommunicated by his own church, he or she has no other legal ground for practising his or her religion.

At the moment in Romania a new tactic is being employed: certain 'dissidents' are being excluded from the denomination so that later the authorities can intervene at will. Thus there are no grounds for speaking of religious persecutions but simply of the arrest (under any pretext) of some private citizen who has had a disagreement with the law.⁴⁴⁵

This policy was clearly outlined by Ceaușescu in September 1979 when he addressed the issue of immigration and of human rights in Romania:

Religious freedom is for those cults recognized by the law, but the cults have to respect the law of the country and help build the socialist State. Romanians

⁴⁴²See P. Moyzes, *Church and State*, p. 15. The claim of the Romanian Communist Party to be the sole leader, consciousness and voice of the nation was subsequently substantiated by the results of the elections. Thus at the election in 1948 the Communists won 92%; the following years produced these results: (1957) 99.15%, (1961) 99.78%, (1965) 99.96%, (1969) 99.97%, (1975) 99.96% and (1980) 99.99%. See V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 237.

⁴⁴³One of the most important and most effective methods of the Communists in Romania has been and still is that of attempting to corrupt or win over the leaders of the Christian denominations. The very thing which the authorities failed to do with the apostolic Church, and which the authorities in Poland today are failing to achieve with their own Catholic Church leaders, our own atheist communists have easily succeeded in doing in Romania. Through some reactionary, fearful, profiteering and vain men (many of them without much education) the atheist authorities have managed to introduce into our churches restrictions and regulations which have particularly affected religious movement. Who can directly accuse the authorities for these denials of rights when they stem from the actions of our own organizations or Unions?' ('Christmas Letter', in *RCL*, 5, 2 (1977), p. 99).

⁴⁴⁴See 'Christmas Letter', *RCL*, 5, 2 (1977), p. 100.

⁴⁴⁵'Christmas Letter', in *RCL*, 5, 2 (1977), p. 100.

cannot close their eyes to any infringement of the law under the pretext of Christianity.⁴⁴⁶

Thus, under Ceaușescu's rule, one was either part of a 'regimentation' type of Christianity, or a criminal.

However, Georgescu points out that well-articulated dissidence did not appear in Romania until the early '70s.⁴⁴⁷ This phenomenon can be explained by: (a) the rapid transition from Stalinism to neo-Stalinism, thus depriving Romanian society of that space necessary for the emergence of a civil society;⁴⁴⁸ (b) the predominance of the Byzantine model of 'symphony',⁴⁴⁹ and (c) the Romanian ethos, enshrined in an old proverb which says that 'the bent head escapes the sword'. Romanians learned to bend where necessary in order to survive.⁴⁵⁰ However, if one cannot speak about an organized dissidence during the first three decades of the Communist regime, the records available, although limited and in some cases lacking academic precision, are without doubt enough to prove that throughout the Communist era there were individuals and groups who remained true to their belief that the Church is at the same time both human and divine.⁴⁵¹ Their views came to the surface and to a large degree were fostered during the time of relative détente, when Western ideas of human rights and religious freedom penetrated Romania through diverse channels such as international contacts, visits abroad, Western journalists working in Romania, media programmes (especially Radio Free Europe and the BBC-World Service), books and the Helsinki Accord (1975).⁴⁵²

Historically speaking, the first steps toward an organized opposition came from the Baptists, and then spread rapidly among Brethren, Pentecostal, Orthodox Christians and finally among the Hungarian Reformed. In 1973, whilst speaking about the Communist imposed restriction upon the Church,⁴⁵³ Țon argued:

⁴⁴⁶'Romanian Press Articles', in *RCL*, 8, 1 (1980), p. 67; *Romania Liberă*, 10 September 1979, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁴⁷V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 263.

⁴⁴⁸V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 203.

⁴⁴⁹'Romania's national religious heritage was Eastern (Greek) Orthodox from Byzantium, with its tradition of state control over Church. Romania did not have the more Western, Catholic or Protestant traditions and influences, which influenced Poland and Hungary. Having thus been more isolated...from the main currents of Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment, Romania's religious and, to some extent, political inheritance resembled that of Western Europe perhaps less than Hungary and Poland did' (D. Funderburk, *Pinstripes*, p. 65).

⁴⁵⁰The Romanian ethos was influenced to a large degree by the tragic fate of the people who have been under foreign oppression for centuries and, have had to learn to survive against all odds. (D. Funderburk, *Pinstripes*, p. 65).

⁴⁵¹'In part because of their unique circumstances in Romania, politically and religiously the opposition to the imposition of an alien 'new socialist man' has been more individual than organized' (D. Funderberk, *Pinstripes*, p. 67).

⁴⁵²V. Georgescu, *The Romanians*, p. 263.

⁴⁵³I. Țon, 'The Present Day Situation of the Baptist Church of Romania', in *RCL*, Supplementary Paper No. 1, (1973), p. 15.

'It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us' (Acts 15:28) is the New Testament formula for a decision taken by the church, and this must always be our practice. When we no longer act under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as perceived by the assembled church, whom are we obeying? When the churches allow people from outside to resolve their problems they lose the Lordship of Christ over His Church.⁴⁵⁴

Although at that point Țon believed that Christianity and Communism could be reconciled,⁴⁵⁵ nevertheless he drew a line of separation between them.

The Bible teaches us to love our country in which we live, to respect its authorities, and to give them all that is due to them. However, the Bible further teaches us that our Supreme Master is God. His authority demands from us an unconditional and absolute commitment. When this is affected, we prefer to renounce this life on earth, because we believe in eternal life with God our Creator and with Christ our Saviour.⁴⁵⁶

Țon's view/ on Church-State relations, although not clearly worked out theologically, have been instrumental in bringing together many other church leaders who have been influenced by the 'eschatological' preaching of the Baptist pastor, Liviu Olah,⁴⁵⁷ who proclaimed God's judgment on every form of sin and injustice, including the compromise of the Church. Consequently, fifty Baptist pastors sent a *memorandum* to the Council of Ministers asking the government to let the Church be a Biblical Church.⁴⁵⁸ Taken by surprise, the government attempted to force the signatories to silence, but when the news reached the West, the Communist regime gave permission to the leaders of the Baptist Union to introduce some more 'diverse' religious programmes into their churches.⁴⁵⁹ This movement of 'religious freedom' expanded rapidly to other groups, who in turn became campaigners for freedom within their own churches, the most important of them being: 'The Christian Committee for the Defence of Religious Freedom and Freedom of Conscience' (called ALRC, after its Romanian initials), founded in 1978,⁴⁶⁰ and 'The Committee for the Salvation of Father Gheorghe Calciu', founded also in 1978.⁴⁶¹ As ALRC membership grew rapidly and also attracted some Orthodox believers, their reports about the unheard psychiatric abuse and atrocities committed by the Communist regime in their attempt to silence religious dissidents aroused both the

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454I. Țon, 'Baptists in Romania', in *RCL*, 1, 6 (1973), p. 20.

455For his views on Christianity and Communist cooperation, see I. Țon, *Marxism: The Faded Dream*, Marshalls, Basingstoke, 1976 (Reprinted 1985). See also I. Țon, 'Baptists in Romania', in *RCL*, 1, 6 (1973), p. 22.

456I. Țon, 'Baptists in Romania', in *RCL*, 1, 6 (1973), p. 22.

457For a presentation of Olah's preaching, see John A. Moore, European Baptist Press Service, 24 December, 1974; W.A. Detzler, *The Changing*, p. 150.

458A. Scarfe, 'Romanian Baptists and the State', in *RCL*, 4, 2 (1976), pp. 14-19.

459See A. Scarfe, 'Romanian Baptists and the State', 14-19.

460Initially the Committee had only nine members, all Baptists.

461See A. Scarfe, 'Dismantling a Human Rights Movement: a Romanian Solution', in *RCL*, 7, 3 (1979), pp. 166-169; see also 'ALRC's Programme of Demands', pp. 170-173.

interest of the West and the anger of the regime.⁴⁶² Subsequently, all the members of the Committee were excommunicated by their denominations and arrested, but eventually their documents and example encouraged others to continue the struggle for freedom.

The Romanian government is responsible before the people, before the whole world, before history and before God for the lack of respect for the fundamental rights of man; for the trampling underfoot of religious freedom of conscience; for the flouting of human rights and for the oppression of their own people. We however, find courage in the words of Jesus: 'do not fear those who will kill the body; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.' (Matthew 10,28).⁴⁶³

Whilst taking a firm stand against the attempt of the Communist authorities to interfere with his church, the Orthodox priest Ștefan Gavrilă revealed the psychiatric methods used to break down Orthodox priest Ioan Boboc imprisoned first in 1952 and then again in 1970. Fr. Ștefan Gavrilă was defrocked (in February, 1974)⁴⁶⁴ on the grounds that he interpreted the Scriptures in a sectarian manner. In reality, however, he was defrocked because he refused: (a) to pray during the liturgy for the Communist state, (b) to attend orientation courses which were laid down as obligatory by his own church superiors, and (c) to suspend Sunday liturgies and let believers participate in voluntary work set up by local Communist leaders in order to interrupt the church's programme.⁴⁶⁵ Scarfe gives evidence about other Orthodox believers, such as Fr. Samiznicu and sisters Lidia Abebe and Zimnicu Ursu, who were subjected to psychiatric abuse.⁴⁶⁶

The best known opponent of the Communist regime, from among the Orthodox clergy however is Fr. Gheorghe Calciu-Dumitreasa, who spent more than twenty-one years in Communist jails.⁴⁶⁷ Since 1973 Calciu had served as a professor at the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Bucharest where he became a popular preacher and teacher. However, Calciu was one of the few Orthodox priests who publicly protested (in 1977) against the demolition of the churches in Bucharest by Ceaușescu's regime in order to make space for the Dictator's plan of 'systematization'. Further, in a sermon delivered in January 1979 in the Patriarchal Cathedral, Calciu described atheism as a 'philosophy of despair'.⁴⁶⁸ Subsequently, the Director of the school

⁴⁶²See A. Scarfe, 'Dismantling', pp. 166-170.

⁴⁶³ALRC, 'Truth Which Cannot be Hidden', in *RCL*, 10, 2 (1982), p. 218. See the whole document for an account of Romanian persecution during the Communist régime, pp. 218-226.

⁴⁶⁴See 'Unofficial Romanian Religious Documents', in *RCL*, 5, 1 (1977), pp. 59-60.

⁴⁶⁵See 'Unofficial Romanian Religious Documents', in *RCL*, 5, 3 (1977), p. 205.

⁴⁶⁶A. Scarfe, 'Dismantling', in *RCL*, 7, 3 (1979), p. 168.

⁴⁶⁷The first time he was imprisoned was between 1949 and 1963, under the charge of 'terrorist-fascist' activity. See 'Letter from Romanian Orthodox Priests', in *RCL*, 7, 3 (1979), pp. 175-176.

⁴⁶⁸See P. Booth, 'Father Calciu's First Year of 'Freedom'', in *RCL*, 13, 3 (1985), p. 130.

suspended Calciu from his teaching office,⁴⁶⁹ and in 1979 he was sentenced to ten years imprisonment on the charge of 'neo-Fascist activity'.⁴⁷⁰

Far from defending Fr Calciu in his situation the Romanian Orthodox hierarchy supported his imprisonment; indeed, it was from high Orthodox sources that the allegation of 'neo-Fascist activity' came. The church was no more helpful during his last year in the country. Released from his second spell of imprisonment on 20 August 1984, just over half-way through the ten-year sentence, Fr Calciu found himself unfrocked by his ecclesiastical superiors just a few weeks later, on 6 October. Even before this decision could be confirmed by Synod (which strictly speaking would be necessary before the unfrocking could be made effective) local party members were being asked to inform the Securitate (state security police) if they saw him out in the street dressed in his clerical garments. The real initiative for the unfrocking had come, evidently, from the Securitate, and the church had simply carried out its wishes.⁴⁷¹

In addition to the protests organized in the West to defend Calciu, within Romania both Seminary students⁴⁷² and a special committee campaigned on his behalf.⁴⁷³ After three appeals⁴⁷⁴ sent to the Patriarch of Romania on behalf of Calciu, which never received an answer, five Orthodox priests addressed a 'testimony of Faith' to the Patriarch criticizing the 'prostitution of the church' and its sterility, materialism and hypocrisy.⁴⁷⁵ The number and the strength of those who fought to affirm the freedom of the Church from its historical entangle continued to grow during the 1980s, and in spite of increasing persecution they kept the faith of the Church alive. Funderburk, for example, affirms:

Probably the most dedicated and unbending opposition has come from religious dissidents. The Underground Lord's Army - the conscience of the dominant Romanian Orthodox Church whose official leaders were co-opted by the Communist state - has helped keep the traditional faith alive.⁴⁷⁶

In an attempt to explain the position of the 'silent majority', an anonymous Romanian believer sent a letter to Keston College which affirmed that,

⁴⁶⁹The *Romanian Orthodox Church News*, vol. XV, No. 2 (1985), pp. 81-82, in the article 'Domestic Church Life', writes: 'Taking into consideration his disobedience and insubordination to the ecclesiastic authority, and his infringing of the regulations in force in the Orthodox theological schools, he was brought to the Diocesan Consistory of the Archdiocese of Bucharest. The sentence No. 9/1984 of the Consistory was "unfrocking" in accordance with article 4, Paragraph B, Letter "d" in the Consistorial proceeding. Mr [sic] Calciu Dumitreasa Gheorghe appealed to the Court against the sentence, but the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church maintained the sentence of the diocesan Consistory.'

⁴⁷⁰P. Booth, 'Father Calciu', in *RCL*, 13, 3 (1985), p. 330.

⁴⁷¹P. Booth, 'Father Calciu', in *RCL*, 13, 3 (1985), pp. 130-131.

⁴⁷²See 'Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 7, 3 (1979), p. 207.

⁴⁷³See A. Scarfe, 'Dismantling', in *RCL*, 7, 3 (1979), p. 168.

⁴⁷⁴The Committee also appealed for help to President Ceaușescu, to the World Council of Churches, to Pope John Paul, to the governments of America, France and Great Britain, to the Ecumenical Patriarch and to the Archbishop of Canterbury. See 'Fr Calciu Defended', in *RCL*, 7, 3 (1979), p. 177.

⁴⁷⁵See S. Lamont, *Church and State*, pp. 142-143.

⁴⁷⁶D. Funderburk, *Pinstripes*, p. 70.

The majority of the Romanian Orthodox Church suffers in silence at the interference of the State in Church affairs. Certain priests, though, have in recent years voiced their protests at the intrusion of atheism in society and have been treated badly. They are Gheorghe Zamisnicu, Ștefan Gavrilă, Costica Maftăi, Leonid Pop, and Gheorghe Calciu. Alongside these five one should place the hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Christians who belong to the Lord's Army and who have known 39 years of harsh persecution.⁴⁷⁷

In contrast, the official voice of the Church, through the assistant to the Patriarch, Bishop Vasile Țirgovișteanul, affirms:

It was in August 1944 that the most just order, to which all the creative forces found amongst our people contributed, was set up in Romania... After the liberation, particularly during the last 19 years, when the country has been led by President Nicolae Ceaușescu, a brilliant leader of the nation and eminent personality in the world today...Romania has seen grandiose achievements which add brilliancy to the new image of the home land...These achievements have had a beneficial influence upon the clergy and the faithful of the Romanian Orthodox Church, which... today rejoices...in the achievements of the country.⁴⁷⁸

5.3.4 Praising the Dictator. Since 1948 the Communist leaders of Romania and the Orthodox hierarchy have maintained good relations, which came to include official exchanges of messages on various official occasions, such as New Year, anniversaries of the proclamation of the Romanian Republic and birthdays.⁴⁷⁹ Thus, as a sign of the Party's appreciation for the contribution of the Orthodox Church to the building of the new society, on the 25th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic the government presented Jubilee medals to 37 members of the Church, including hierarchs, theological professors and other clergy.⁴⁸⁰ Similarly, on the 30th anniversary of the liberation of Romania, particular Romanian Orthodox hierarchs were honoured.⁴⁸¹ The fact that the government was pleased with this role of the Church is illustrated by, among other things, the message sent by the Council of State of the Socialist Republic of Romania (under Ceaușescu's presidency) to the Holy Synod at the death of Patriarch Justinian. The Council of State called Justinian 'an outstanding servant of the Church, who kept his clergy in step with the construction of the new Romania.'⁴⁸² Further, upon the election of the new Patriarch Justin Moisescu (12 June, 1977), he was formally received by Ceaușescu (18 June, 1977) at the Council of State and declared Patriarch by Presidential decree. In his address Ceaușescu expressed his satisfaction that the rich traditions

⁴⁷⁷See 'Romanian Unofficial Religious Documents', in *RCL*, 7, 1 (1979), p. 64. (See also pp. 62-63)

⁴⁷⁸V. Țirgovișteanul, 'The 40th Anniversary of the Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Revolution of Social and National Liberation: 1944-1984', in *Romanian Orthodox Church News*, vol. XIV, 3 (1984), 3-5.

⁴⁷⁹See *Romanian Orthodox Church*, 1-2 (1973), pp. 5-9. 'Telegram from Nicolae Ceaușescu to Patriarch Justinian on the occasion of the Patriarch's 75th birthday', in *Romanian Orthodox Church*, 1-2 (1976), 26-27.

⁴⁸⁰See *Romanian Orthodox Church*, 1-2 (1973), 52-54.

⁴⁸¹See *Romanian Orthodox Church*, 7-8 (1974), 860-863.

⁴⁸²'Romanian Press Articles', in *RCL*, 5:3 (1977), p. 203.

of the Romanian Orthodox Church had been carried on into the new era of Socialist Romania.⁴⁸³ In its turn the Synod assured the President on the occasion of his 60th birthday (1978) of the support of the Orthodox faithful and hierarchy in the construction of a better society. Further, the Synod expressed its appreciation for the President's respect for the Church's patriotic role, and pointed out that their religious duties included obedience to the State.⁴⁸⁴ However, the full scale of the Orthodox hierarchy's subservience was only revealed during the last years of Ceaușescu, when misery and deprivations of all kinds had a critical level and the numerous protests from within, the mass exodus to other countries and the protests from abroad had tarnished irreversibly the bright image of the *conducător*. The Orthodox Synod wrote:

The members of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church which met on 30 March 1989 to mark the opening of the year's working session, join with the community of priests and believers in complete unity of thought and action to express their special feeling of deep respect and far-reaching esteem for you, deeply respected President Nicolae Ceaușescu, great leader of the nation, creator of modern Romania, and tireless flag bearer of world peace, and of understanding and cooperation between men and peoples. Expressing our appreciation on the 15th anniversary of the day - 28 March 1974 - on which you were chosen at the behest of the whole nation for the highest state office and became Romania's first president, we ask you to accept our warmest and deeply felt thanks for your personal and constant concern for the unending growth of the country's economic strength, the multi-faceted development of the homeland, the conquest of the high peaks of progress and civilisation, the unending rise in the people's material and intellectual living standards, which take concrete form in the increase in salaries and pensions that millions of workers have enjoyed and in the comprehensive construction programmes of housing and socio-cultural establishments which bear eloquent witness to the humanism that characterises contemporary Romania... We also wholly approve of the ardent activity which you, as the greatest and most brilliant hero of peace and tireless fighter for understanding and peaceful collaboration, wage for the victory of mankind's ideals of freedom and progress, and for complete equality in law, respect for national independence and sovereignty, and for the development of the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, i.e. those principles which Romania consistently and determinately applies to its relations with all the states of the world. With profound gratitude for your efforts in the cause of the Romanian people's happiness and of the world peace, with the greatest reverence, we give our warmest thanks for the atmosphere of complete religious freedom which you have ensured for the religious groups of our homeland, and for your far-reaching understanding towards the Orthodox Church and all believers in the practice of religion and culture. We wish to seize this opportunity, deeply respected President Nicolae Ceaușescu, to assure you that inspired by their deep feeling of patriotic pride in the shining future opening before the magnificent achievements of the people and the progress of society, and mobilised by your call and the example of your life and work, the Romanian Orthodox Church will work with the people devotedly and self-sacrificially, to assist the never ending rise and ever

⁴⁸³See 'New Patriarch of Romanian Orthodox Church', in *RCL*, 5, 3 (1977), p. 195; *Scînteia*, 19 June 1977, p. 5; *România Liberă*, 20 June 1977, pp. 1,5.

⁴⁸⁴See 'Romanian Religious Press Articles', in *RCL*, 8, 1 (1980), 68; *BOR*, 1-2 (1978), 13-23.

greater success among all nations of the world of our dear homeland, the Socialist Republic of Romania.⁴⁸⁵

This is a clear illustration of a relation between Church and State based totally upon pragmatic principles. By pursuing historical privileges, to the point of denying its eschatological role, the Church did not find the necessary strength to oppose social evil and promote justice. Consequently, during the Revolution of December 1989, after Ceaușescu had ordered the massacre in Timișoara, 'the Patriarch of the Orthodox Church...congratulated the *Conducător* for dealing with the 'hooligans' in Timișoara.'⁴⁸⁶ However,

As soon as it was safe to do so, the Patriarch, Teoctist, denounced Ceaușescu as a new child-murdering 'Herod.' Popular pressure seemed to succeed in forcing him to abdicate but, by Easter 1990, Teoctist had been restored since none of the next ranking members of the Orthodox hierarchy were any less incriminated. In fact, Teoctist's natural successor, the Metropolitan Antonius of Sibiu, was so discredited by his eulogies of the late ruling pair that he was completely unacceptable as a replacement. At Easter 1990, some of the faithful joked that Teoctist was obviously under the impression that it was Judas rather than Jesus who rose again.⁴⁸⁷

Small wonder, then, that having had such an inextricable institutional and ideological link with the Communist State, the Romanian Orthodox Church did not develop critical theological reflection concerning its relation with the State. In fact, the Romanian model illustrates very well the implication of an almost complete 'historicization' of the Church: from being an *eschatological* community it became a 'civil association' under Communist control. In the absence of the *eschatological* perspective, Păcurariu affirms:

The State highly appreciates the fruitful work of the servants of the Orthodox altars and of the other cults in the service of peace and also in building up the new life in our fatherland. The members of the Holy Synod, some of the vicars, protopopes, councillors, theology professors, and secular priests are awarded with medals and orders of the Socialist Republic of Romania. His Beatitude Patriarch Justinian was elected deputy in the Grand National Assembly at all elections since 1957, and recently was elected also His High Holiness Metropolitan Teoctist of Moldavia and Suceava. Similarly, Fr. Alexandru Ionescu held that office for several legislatures. Some other leaders of cults are also members of the Grand National Assembly. Their speeches in the Parliament, full of patriotic enthusiasm, are living testimonies that the Romanian Orthodox Church as well as the other cults in our fatherland are in total agreement with the measures adopted by the Leadership of our State for the development of a new life at home, as well as with the external policy of our country. Other servants of the Church are members of county, city, or village councils.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁵'A Letter to Ceaușescu', in *RCL*, 17:4 (1989), p. 365.

⁴⁸⁶M. Almond, *The Rise*, p. 249.

⁴⁸⁷M. Almond, *The Rise*, p. 249. In spite of the protest of 140 leading Orthodox intellectuals, of the students and professors of the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Bucharest and of Orthodox priests and believers, the Holy Synod decided to re-instate Teoctist as Patriarch of Romania. See *Romania Liberă*, 8 April, 1990, p. 3.

⁴⁸⁸M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 3, p. 511.

Due to the strange synthesis between the Byzantine and the Soviet model the relation between Church and State in Romania has a somewhat unique aspect in Eastern Europe. On the one hand the Communist State commits itself to eradicating all religions from society because it is the 'opium for the people', and on the other the very same State affirms that 'the Church is an institution of permanent benefit to the life of the nation. She is part of the State and as such seeks to remain in step with the spirit of the times',⁴⁸⁹ and consequently the State has subsidized the Church.

Beeson suggests that the architect of this model of Church-State relations was Petru Groza himself, who had been a lay member of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church from 1919 to 1927 and had remained a devout believer even after he became Prime Minister in 1945 and later President of the Council of State in 1952.⁴⁹⁰ From another perspective, Hutten argues that the architect was Patriarch Justinian, who 'was in agreement with the social aims of the Communist Party and saw to it that all opposition in the church was removed. Priests who objected were imprisoned or taken to remote monasteries.'⁴⁹¹ The truth, however, is that both Groza and Justinian, as well as their successors, have been part of the 'Vyshinsky Plan' which included both the Romanian Communist Party and the Romanian Church.

5.4 Observations

From a historical point of view Ware is correct when he affirms that in 1917, when the Bolsheviks seized power, 'the Church of Russia found itself in a position for which there was no exact precedent in Orthodox history.'⁴⁹² However, the Romanian Orthodox Church, as well as the other Orthodox churches in Communist countries, do not have the same extenuating circumstances as the Russian Church, because by 1944 the world at large knew what were the main features of a Communist state. Generally speaking, the relation between the Church and the Communist state is not determined primarily by its historical novelty, but by the theological construct of the Church-State relation that one particular church upholds. This presupposition is supported by the historical fact that whilst the Communist states of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have had more or less the same approach towards religion, churches from different traditions (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant) have responded differently. Furthermore, the fact that Orthodox churches from all Communist countries⁴⁹³ adopted a similar attitude toward the respective Communist

⁴⁸⁹These are the words of the first Communist Prime Minister of Romania. See T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 308.

⁴⁹⁰See T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 308.

⁴⁹¹K. Hutten, *Iron*, p. 388.

⁴⁹²T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 152.

⁴⁹³The relation between Church and State in Serbia merits a special analysis due to the fact that the Serbian hierarchy had been for some time outspokenly anti-Communists. However, in the last few decades the Church and the State have reached a more conciliatory *modus vivendi*. See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 162-164.

State, suggests that the Orthodox model of Church-State relation does not provide the necessary space for critical reflection.

Commenting on the appointment of the Church leaders by the government as one of the many methods used by the Communist states in their attempt to control and eventually eradicate religion, Chadwick argues that whilst both Protestant⁴⁹⁴ and Catholic⁴⁹⁵ churches found ways to resist the Communists,

The choosing of bishops worked easily in the Orthodox states (Romania, Bulgaria, Russia, Serbia) where the Churches were accustomed to a measure of State approval. In Serbia (after the early Stalinist years) it worked happily enough: a synod electing bishops in quiet negotiation with a representative of the government but the layman could not simply tell them whom they must elect. The Romanian dictator invented a unique system for electing bishops, in which the Communist MPs and Party officials of the diocese were on the board of electors with the Church representatives...The Orthodox found it easier because their history consisted in managing under hostile or unpredictable States, such as the Ottoman Empire or the tsarist Russian Empire. For centuries they were familiar with the need to bow before an unpleasant government. They found the situation almost normal.⁴⁹⁶

The answer to the problem, however, is not simply historical or sociological, as Chadwick suggests. It is, rather, a theological difference which has practical implications, the explanation for the theological differences having to be thought through in the area of methodology.

5.4.1 Methodological: The basic distinction between the Western and the Eastern traditions concerning the relation between Church and State lies in the theory of 'two kingdoms' or 'one kingdom'. When the Eastern Church adopted the theory of 'one kingdom', it made a significant attempt to address the problem of dualism 'between the spiritual and the material, the sacred and the secular.'⁴⁹⁷ However, it failed to address critically the ontological aspect. In the 'one kingdom' approach there are no grounds for separate ontologies for the Church and the Empire (State). Consequently, if ontologically the Church and the Empire are *one being*, in practical terms, as Schmemmann points out, the Church ceases to be an alternative community and becomes co-extensive with the Empire.⁴⁹⁸ As we noted, the merging of Church with Empire was not only a simple alliance between Roman and Christian universalism, but *a de facto* identification of the Kingdom of God with the Christian Empire: Byzantium was an icon of the heavenly Jerusalem and the Emperor was the icon of God. As Meyendorff points out:

Byzantine theocratic thought was, in fact, based upon a form of 'realised eschatology', as if already the Kingdom of God had already appeared 'in

⁴⁹⁴O. Chadwick, *The Christian Church in the Cold War*, Penguin Books, London, 1992, p. 33.

⁴⁹⁵O. Chadwick, *The Christian Church*, p. 34.

⁴⁹⁶O. Chadwick, *The Christian Church*, pp. 32-33, 36.

⁴⁹⁷J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 215.

⁴⁹⁸See A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, pp. 66-110.

power' and as if the Empire was the manifestation of this power in the world and in history.⁴⁹⁹

Further, Meyendorff argues that 'the fundamental mistake of this approach was to assume that the ideal humanity which was manifested, through the Incarnation, in the person of Jesus Christ could also find an adequate manifestation in the Roman Empire.'⁵⁰⁰ However, once Byzantine thought transferred the Chalcedonian dogma of christology to political theology, the State became a *pneumatologically* realized institution, and consequently, the space between history and *eschata* ceased to exist. The 'not yet' became the 'already'. Consequently, the Romanian Orthodox predicated the Messianic Kingdom of the Communist 'kingdom'.

However, Orthodox theologians are increasingly aware that the Byzantine model of 'symphony' between Church and State is 'misleading...because it was based in part on the medieval Christian state.'⁵⁰¹ Yet, whilst all Orthodox advocate a Chalcedonian approach, they disagree concerning the reality into which the Orthodox Church should incarnate itself. Thus, one group advocates the re-establishment of the Church-State 'symphony',⁵⁰² another group argues that the Church should incarnate into the nation,⁵⁰³ whilst a third group affirms that it should be into the local culture.⁵⁰⁴

5.4.2 Theological: Since the Empire (state) was understood in pneumatological and eschatological terms, there was no difficulty for the Church in placing itself under political power. As a result of this shift in ecclesiology from an alternative, eschatological community to an 'institution' in charge of administering 'mysteries', the Church began to ignore its historical responsibility.⁵⁰⁵ Moreover, the work of the Spirit in constituting the Church as an eschatological community, thus constantly challenging the 'historical' side of the Church, was replaced by what Zizioulas describes as a tendency to 'enslave the Spirit' within the structures of the institutions.⁵⁰⁶ Therefore, as long as one was part of the 'Institution', one was safe irrespective of the methods of getting there. Moreover, the hierarchy were

⁴⁹⁹J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 214.

⁵⁰⁰J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 214.

⁵⁰¹See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, p. 14.

⁵⁰²See N. Gvosdev, 'Rendering', p. 87.

⁵⁰³See I. Ivan, 'Etnosul-neamul - temei divin și principiu fundamental canonic al autocefaliei biericești', in *Centenarul*, pp. 186-201; C. Galeriu, 'Autocefalie și Ortodoxie. Aspecte eclesiologice', in *Centenarul*, pp. 202-233; I. Moldovan, 'Autocefalia Bisericească: unitate de credință și libertate religioasă', in *Centenarul*, pp. 234-267.

⁵⁰⁴This is basically the approach of Orthodox missiologists to the relation between Church and society in the non-Orthodox countries. See I.P. Bratsiotis, 'The Evangelistic Work of the Contemporary Greek Orthodox Church', in *The Christian East*, 1 (1950), pp. 21-32, 38-41; I. Bria, 'The Church's Role in Evangelism', in *International Review of Mission*, 64 (1975), pp. 243-250; N.A. Nissiotis, 'An Orthodox View of Modern Trends in Evangelism', in A. Blane, ed., *The Ecumenical World of Orthodox Civilization, Russia and Orthodoxy*, Vol. 3 of *Essays in honour of Georges Florovsky*, Mouton & Co., Hague, 1974, pp. 181-192; J. Stamoolis, *Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today*, pp. 61-73.

⁵⁰⁵See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 219.

⁵⁰⁶J. Zizioulas, 'First Comment', in *Procès-Verbaux*, p. 144.

regarded as apostolic successors, although they consented either tacitly or openly to the deposition or even to the murder of their predecessors. Similarly, the sacraments administered by the institution were means of grace although the hands who administered the sacraments were stained.

However, the challenge to re-think the relation between both the Spirit and the institution, between the Church and the State, has been constantly brought to the Church either by monastic movements, lay believers or priests. Particularly relevant are the letters of two Russian lay believers addressed to the Russian Patriarch. Anatoly Levin wrote:

The Holy Spirit is not the Patriarch's servant-he is the servant of the Holy Spirit. And if he as Patriarch, is a bad and unworthy servant, the Holy Spirit will possess more worthy servants as bishops, for the world is too vast to be confined to Chisty Pereulok (the location of the Patriarchate).⁵⁰⁷

Similarly, Solzhenitsyn argued:

The Church is ruled dictatorially by atheists - a sight never before seen in two millennia!...By what reasoning is it possible to convince oneself that the planned *destruction* of the spirit and the body of the Church under the guidance of atheists is the best way of *preserving* it? Preserving it for whom? Certainly not for Christ. Preserving it by what means? *By falsehood*. But after falsehood by whose hands are the holy mysteries to be celebrated?⁵⁰⁸

These letters illustrate the quest of Orthodox believers for an authentic eschatological community which preserves the space between history and *eschata*. Although for almost two millennia the Orthodox Church did not develop a critical reflection of its relation with the State, it appears that in recent years some Orthodox scholars in the Diaspora are willing to look not only to the historical 'fate' of the Church, but also to a better reflection of Chalcedonian dogma in the relation between the Church and the world, between the created and uncreated spheres.⁵⁰⁹ Thus, Lossky argues that:

Fidelity to this Chalcedonian dogma of the Church carries with it an obligation simultaneously to confess the historical, concrete character of the Church and also her uniqueness in regard to the world, her freedom from the world and the laws of its life; for she is not of this world.⁵¹⁰

Whilst acknowledging that the Church runs the risk of being 'historicized', Lossky constantly affirms the need for a pneumatological space which provides freedom from historical determinism.

Each one of us is of the earth, belongs to a particular political structure, a particular social class, each is in part the product and at the same time the creator of contemporary culture. But each of us, belonging as we do to the unity of the Church, can and must rise above his personal political interests, above his class, above his culture, since the Church grants us the possibility of being free of our limited nature. Inevitably, there will be a variety of political,

⁵⁰⁷Cf. T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 72.

⁵⁰⁸Cf. T. Beeson, *Discretion*, p. 73.

⁵⁰⁹T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 248.

⁵¹⁰V. Lossky, 'Ecclesiology: some dangers and temptations', in *Sobornost*, 4, 1 (1982), p. 23.

national, social and cultural interests and trends in any Christian milieu. To oppose them would be to oppose life itself, in all its richness and variety. The Church does not prescribe any political views, social teachings or cultural peculiarities for anyone. At the same time she cannot allow the interests or arrangements of particular individuals or groups to be promoted as the Church's interests since her primary concern must be for the preservation of unity, outside which there is no catholicity, no certitude, no distinction between Church and world. She cannot allow individual peculiarities or characteristics to take precedence over her unity, in the absence of which her sovereign freedom from the world is lost and displaced by subordination to conflicting elements and interests (patriotism of various kinds, social justice, the defence of 'Christian civilisation'). In this sphere Church schisms are inevitably brought about, and ecclesial awareness is corrupted.⁵¹¹

Moreover, Gvosdev looks into the history of the Orthodox Church, particularly to those teachings and events which represent the victory of *eschata* over history, or of the Spirit over the institution, and argues that there are resources for renewal from within the Orthodox Church. Of particular interest are his remarks concerning the fact that,

Traditionally, Orthodoxy has always maintained that the Kingdom of Heaven 'is not of this world' and that the body of Christian believers, while present in the world, was not of the world. The state was to be supported, not because of any moral worth, but because it provided the conditions of order and civic peace necessary for the Christian believer to practice the faith.⁵¹²

Further, Gvosdev argues that this view does not borrow from the Western tradition of 'two kingdoms', but reflects a traditional Orthodox teaching.

Orthodox practice clearly distinguishes between secular and religious affairs. The 83rd Canon of the Apostolic Canons forbids any Church official from holding secular office; in the commentary on that regulation, civil and sacerdotal authority is said to be 'contrary and conflict[ing] with the other.'⁵¹³

Additionally,

The Seventh Ecumenical Council (Nicaea, 787) expressly forbids the appointment of bishops by the secular authority and proclaims the Church as the supreme authority in religious matters. The Council reiterated the regulation that if 'any bishop comes into possession of a church by employing secular ruling, let him be deposed from office, and let him be excommunicated.' Moreover, if the secular ruler attempted to interfere with the operation of the church by preventing the annual Synods, he was to be excommunicated.⁵¹⁴

Thus, despite of the fact that for most of its history the Orthodox Church succumbed to the pressure of political powers, the re-discovery of its canonical tradition concerning the space between Church and State represents an important step towards critical theological reflection. However, this critical approach must be also extended to the relation between Church, nationhood and culture.

⁵¹¹V. Lossky, 'Ecclesiology', p. 24.

⁵¹²N.K. Gvosdev, 'Rendering', p. 84.

⁵¹³N.K. Gvosdev, 'Rendering', p. 85.

⁵¹⁴N.K. Gvosdev, 'Rendering', p. 85.

5.4.3 Sociological: The relation between Church and State in the Orthodox tradition, whilst very complex, can be summed up nevertheless in the words of Schmemmann: 'the Church had not been free, in the modern sense of the term, since the time of Constantine the Great.'⁵¹⁵ Historically speaking, in Orthodox countries the institution of the State has been, for most of the time, more powerful than the institution of the Church. Consequently, the State developed methods and means of bringing the Church under its control. Whilst it is true that there are significant sociological differences between the Church under the Byzantine autocrats and the Church under the Communist dictators, in both cases, however similarities, remain: the Church failed to maintain the space between itself and the State. Thus its status as an alternative community was significantly diminished. From the 'first class' religion in Byzantium, to the 'second class' religion under Islam, through being a 'department of state' under Peter the Great and Prince Cuza, until finally it becoming the 'opium of the people' which must be eradicated, the Church has travelled a long historical road. Almost at every new stage it appears that the Church lost some more space. It is true, however, that governments came and went but the Church remained, and, moreover, in Eastern Europe there are signs of a 'renaissance'.⁵¹⁶

However, the Eastern Church must learn from history; not only from its own but also from that of other traditions. As Meyendorff puts it:

This charismatic understanding of the state obviously lacked political realism and efficiency. 'Providential usurpations' were quite frequent, and political stability an exception. In political terms, the Byzantine imperial system was indeed an utopia... By contrast, Western Christendom has traditionally understood the present state of humanity in both a more realistic and a more pessimistic way; though redeemed and 'justified' in the eyes of God by the sacrifice of the cross, man remains a sinner. The primary function of the Church, therefore, is to provide him with criteria of thought and a discipline of behaviour, which would allow him to overcome his sinful condition and direct him toward good works.⁵¹⁷

It appears that the Romanian Orthodox Church has made some significant steps in this direction since 1989. Thus, after the fall of the Communist regime (December 1989), the Church leadership confessed, in the 'gospel spirit of repentance', their weakness in collaborating with the dictatorial regime and announced that all sanctions levied against the priests for political reasons would be lifted.⁵¹⁸ Moreover, on September 28, 1990, for the first time in the history of Romanian Orthodoxy, the Church declared its complete autonomy from State, denying thus the right of the latter to interfere with episcopal elections or the day-to-day administration of the

⁵¹⁵A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, p. 332.

⁵¹⁶See P. Walters, 'Christians in Eastern Europe', pp. 14-16.

⁵¹⁷J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, pp. 215-216.

⁵¹⁸See 'World Council; Orthodox Church Admits Mistakes in Romania', in *The Word*, April 1990, pp. 29-30.

Church.⁵¹⁹ Additionally, on January 9, 1990 the 'Reflection Group for Church Renewal' was founded under the leadership of Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and D. Staniloae, with the specific purpose of renewing the life of the Orthodox Church at all levels: in hierarchy, teaching, administration and its role within Romanian society.⁵²⁰

However, despite such significant steps towards a clearer distance between Church and State, they are primarily grounded in nationalistic pragmatism and not in critical theological reflection. Thus, whilst affirming its autonomy from the State, the Orthodox Church advocates integral State subsidies for all Orthodox clergy.⁵²¹ Moreover, in February 1994 the National Church Congress amended Art. 2 from the Orthodox Constitution, which now stipulates: 'The Romanian Orthodox Church is *national*, autocephalous and unitary in its organization.' Consequently, the official title of the Church is: 'The Romanian Orthodox Church-National Church.'⁵²² Such an approach, in addition to religious intolerance, runs the risk of inter-Orthodox divisions similar to those of the Diaspora, where instead of 'one bishop in one city' there are as many bishops in one city as ethnic Orthodox churches.

⁵¹⁹See A. Webster, 'Romanian Church Seeks to Cleanse Itself', in *Christian Century*, 3 April, 1991, pp. 357-358.

⁵²⁰See 'Înnoiri în Biserica Ortodoxă', in *Romania Liberă*, January 14, 1990, p. 2.

⁵²¹'Dispute Aprinse Privind Proiectul Legii Cultelor', in *Creștinul Azi*, II, 2 (November 24, 1993), p. 10.

⁵²²See 'National Church', in *Creștinul Azi*, III, 27 (1994), p. 19.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

Since religious authority, as every other kind of authority, is a relational category, I have explored both its nature and form(s) of expression within the context of the specific goal of the ecclesial community as defined by the Orthodox paradigm of revelation-communion-deification. Accordingly, the authority of Scripture, Tradition, Church and State find their *raison d'être* in enabling the people of God (and the entire creation) to attain to *theosis*. Practically speaking, the authority of Scripture, Tradition, Church and State manifests itself in and through the relation of specific elements which give content to the respective authority within the ecclesial community. The key to understanding authority from this perspective is the concept of space, which provides for both relatedness and freedom among the elements involved.

Within such a frame of thought I have explored the Orthodox approach to the question of the authority of: (a) Scripture, from the perspective of the space that exists between *episteme* and *praxis*; (b) Tradition, from the perspective of space between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions; (c) Church, from the perspective of the relation between both the 'Head' and the 'Body', and the Spirit and the Institution; and finally, (d) Church and State, from the perspective of the relation between history and *eschata*. In each set of relations the mode in which the space is conceived influences the development of either *specific* or *general* authority, that is, either oppressive or enabling authority.

If, historically speaking, during previous centuries the concept of authority has developed within the Orthodox Church within the context of an ever-diminishing space between the above-mentioned elements until eventually authority acquired an oppressive expression, the twentieth century can be described as the century of struggle for space in order to transform oppressive authority into a liberating authority. Whilst the factors which stimulated such a struggle could be generally described as modernism, ecumenism and internal dynamics, it has to be pointed out that they operate in different forms and degrees in different historical circumstances. Thus, whilst in the Diaspora the key players have been modernism and ecumenism, within Romanian Orthodoxy the development of the concept of authority has been shaped primarily by, on the one hand, the internal dynamics created by the movements which originated from the work of Cornilescu, Popescu and Trifa, and on the other, by the encounter between the Church and the dictatorial Nazi and Communist regimes. Due to this fact, the approach of the Romanian Orthodox Church to the question of authority, while remaining within general Orthodox boundaries, has also certain specific features.

Firstly, whilst the Orthodox in the Diaspora have dealt with the question of biblical authority within the context of biblical criticism, epistemological concerns regarding God's knowability and/or unknowability and the meaning of theological discourse about God, Romanian Orthodoxy has been challenged by the emergence within the Church of a widespread belief in the authority of Scripture following the translation of the Bible into modern Romanian by Cornilescu. Consequently, whilst in the Diaspora both apophatic and eucharistic approaches concerning the relation between *episteme* and *praxis* ascribe a secondary role to Scripture, that is, after either mystical union with God or the eschatological encounter with Christ in the Eucharist, in Romania the apophatic-cataphatic synthesis provides a prominent role for Scripture in both theological epistemology and ecclesial practice. Therefore, whilst the debates concerning biblical authority in the Diaspora reflect the concerns of academic theology, in Romania such debates reflect primarily the pastoral needs at the parish level. Moreover, from the interplay between the Orthodox paradigm of revelation-communion-deification and the Protestant paradigm of revelation-justification-sanctification adopted by Cornilescu's movement there emerged within Romanian Orthodoxy new hermeneutical communities which emphasize both the mystical and the ethical dimensions of biblical Christianity. Consequently, since Scripture is perceived as the 'Book of the community', both laity and hierarchy participate in *episteme* and *praxis*. However, due to the fact that the magisterial approach concerning the relation between theological epistemology and ecclesial practice is still dominant within Romanian Orthodoxy, the space for lay participation is significantly limited. Yet, despite the Church's attempt to maintain an institutionalized hermeneutic, the access of the laity to Scripture has raised awareness concerning the tension between *episteme* and *praxis*. Such an awareness is essential for a critical reflection concerning the authority of Scripture and Tradition from the perspective of space between *episteme* and *praxis*.

Secondly, the Orthodox belief that the purpose of revelation is deification highlights the normative character of the Apostolic Tradition as representing the only authoritative source for faith and practice. Hence loyalty to the Apostolic Tradition is essential to the Orthodox approach to *theosis*. However, the view that there is significant disagreement between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions represented a major challenge for Orthodoxy during the twentieth century. Thus it has been argued that the ecclesiastical tradition contains elements of purely human origin which are harmful to the mission of the Church. Consequently the Orthodox Church has been challenged to distinguish between the Apostolic Tradition, which is essential to deification, and the ecclesiastical tradition(s) which, having a purely human origin, might not be necessarily true. However, since these traditions are intertwined and received from the past as the tradition of the Church, the authority of Tradition has to be understood from the perspective of space between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions.

Responding to the challenge posed by modern scholarship and ecumenism, Orthodox scholars in the Diaspora acknowledge that their tradition contains some foreign elements, primarily of Catholic or Protestant origin, but argue

that such elements have not distorted the essence of the Apostolic Tradition guarded by the Orthodox Church. However, addressing the same issue within the context of the crisis generated by Popescu's belief that the ecclesiastical tradition is in striking contradiction to the Apostolic Tradition contained in Scripture, Romanian theologians argue that the tradition of their Church is entirely of Apostolic origin and in complete harmony with Scripture: namely, that the Apostolic Tradition is identical to the ecclesiastical tradition. Such an approach led not only to a theology of repetition but also to the estrangement of a significant number of Orthodox believers from the tradition of their Church. Conversely, the fact that the Orthodox Church in the Diaspora provided space, albeit a small one, between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, led both to the replacement of oppressive authority with the liberating authority of tradition, and to the emergence of flourishing schools of theology. It is true, however, that in more recent times some Romanian theologians have attempted to provide space for more critical reflection concerning the relation between the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions. However, since such space requires clear a distinction between them, the Orthodox Church is confronted by the fact that thus far it has no clear criteria for distinguishing among different ecclesiastical traditions and the Apostolic Tradition. Attempting to respond to this problem, Orthodox theologians in the Diaspora advocate a return to the patristic source, whilst Romanian Orthodoxy taking into account the pastoral reality of the existing hermeneutical communities which believe in the authority of Scripture, proposes a return to the initial Apostolic Tradition.

Thirdly, whilst the Orthodox paradigm of revelation-communion-deification underlines the importance of God's self-revelation for deification, it ascribes a preeminent role to the Church in both receiving the divine revelation and handing it on to coming generations. Within such a context the Orthodox believe that *extra ecclesia nulla salus*, that is, deification can be attained only in and through the Church. Such a maximalist view of the Church is grounded in the Orthodox belief that the Church is both the 'Body of Christ' and the 'Temple of the Spirit'. However, if during previous centuries it has been affirmed that the 'Body' shares the same authority with the 'Head' and the 'Temple' with the 'Spirit', during the twentieth century such a belief has been significantly challenged, particularly from the perspective of the space that exists between the divine and human spheres of the Church.

The attempts to develop ecclesiologies rooted either in the 'double economies' or the 'simultaneous economy' of the Son and the Spirit without maintaining the space between the divine and human elements, led to a magisterial way of presenting the Church as a symbolic, mystical reality, whilst ignoring the life of the concrete communities that form the visible Church. Despite the fact that the attempt of Orthodox theologians to defend such an approach to ecclesiology produced a significant number of scholarly theological publications, in reality, however, it failed to develop concrete communities which reflected historically the belief in *communicatio idiomatum*, that is, that whatever is true of the divine can be also predicated of the human side.

From a trinitarian perspective, the belief that the Church is an *eikon* of the Trinity, that is, a hierarchical community, faces the challenge of maintaining the balance between the *monarchical* and *perichoretic* approaches to the doctrine of the Trinity. A strong emphasis on a sacramental-hierarchic ecclesiology derived from a misunderstanding of the divine *monarchy* leads to *specific authority*. Consequently, all decisions concerning the relation between *episteme* and *praxis* become the exclusive prerogative of the 'office'.

Such an approach, however, must be corrected by a *perichoretic* understanding of the Trinity. In other words, the 'one' and the 'many' are not only constitutive of the ecclesial being, but according to *perichoretic* ecclesiology participate in all aspects of the Church's life. An ecclesiology which does not maintain the balance between the 'one' and the 'many' runs the risk of ending up in either 'hierarchology' or individualism. This latter aspect is particularly relevant for the movements which originated from the work of the Romanian Orthodox priests Cornilescu, Popescu and Trifa. Thus, paradoxically, whilst rejecting the ecclesiology of the 'one' (office) as being dead institutionalism, Cornilescu and Popescu ended up in a traditionalist 'presbyterianism'. On the other hand, the emergence of the 'Lord's Army' within the Romanian Orthodox Church challenged the magisterial view of the Church as institution by developing *charismatic* ecclesial communities. Accordingly, the 'Lord's Army' attempts to live the truth as an event of *communion* in which Christ, the Spirit, Scripture and the believing community are in a dynamic and consistent dialogue. Within such communities all members are entitled to participate in the dialogue between *episteme* and *praxis* according to their gifts, that is, authority is dispersed amongst the members of the community. Additionally, since the 'Lord's Army' perceives the space between the human and divine elements as a continuous challenge to grow, its members believe that their corporate movement towards deification includes both *episteme* and *praxis*, faith and conduct. However, it has to be pointed out that thus far the 'Lord's Army' has failed to develop a coherent theological system which would provide both critical reflection on general Orthodox theology and an alternative ecclesiology which would do justice to both the 'one' and the 'many'. Thus far the pneumatological over-emphasis on the 'many' runs the risk of division between different conflicting trends. Consequently, Romanian Orthodoxy has to realize a synthesis between the magisterial ecclesiology of the 'one' and the *charismatic* ecclesiology of the 'many' in order to do justice to both the Spirit and the institution. However, the awareness that the authority of the Church is at the same time divine and human represents beyond any doubt an important step towards such an ecclesiology which would create space for both the divine and human spheres and so provide relatedness, freedom and growth.

Fourthly, since it belongs to both the created and uncreated spheres, the being of the Church is not self-contained but instead is open both to God and its environment: the Church is at one and the same time a historico-eschatological community. Hence the challenge to any ecclesiological construct to maintain a dynamic balance between history and *eschata*.

Within Orthodoxy this tension is best illustrated by the relation between Church and State as illustrated by the Byzantine paradigm of 'symphony'. Whilst this model was intended to maintain the harmony between Church and State within the Christian Empire, in reality the tension continued due to the fact that, on the one hand, the State attempted to 'historicize' the Church in order to use it for the well-being of the Empire, and on the other, the Church attempted to 'eschatologize' the State in order to bring about the deification of the entire created order.

The main weakness of this construct consists in the fact that from an ontological perspective the space between Church and State was eliminated in favour of a new historical-eschatological entity called the Christian Empire, and from an economic perspective the Church 'eschatologized' a largely pagan State. However, once the Church lost its ontological space, historically it collapsed under the authority of the State. Thus, despite the Orthodox belief that the Church is an eschatological community, in reality the Church has been 'historicized' by the Byzantine State, the Muslim State, the secular absolutist State and the dictatorial Nazi and Communist régimes to the extent of being considered either a department of State or an anachronistic historical product of the unjust class system which must be eradicated by the proletarian State. Yet, besides periodic protests by some Church leaders, magisterial Orthodoxy failed to develop a theological model which would create enough space between Church and State in order to provide for both relatedness and freedom. However, there have been communities and movements within Orthodoxy which affirmed that, since ontologically the Church is distinct from the State, historically it has to resist any attempts of the latter to control it. Whilst such movements have so far failed to develop a coherent theological construct concerning the relation between history and *eschata*, it has to be pointed out that their awareness concerning the need for space between Church and State constitutes an important source for further theological reflection. Precisely because the Orthodox Church upheld an incarnational approach to the relation between history and *eschata*, the concept of space has to be taken into account by all three major contemporary trends within Orthodoxy which attempt to develop a new 'symphony' between either the Church and the State, the Church and nationhood, or the Church and culture.

In conclusion, it can be affirmed that the understanding of authority as a relational category during the twentieth century has led to significant progress in both identifying the related elements and developing a critical reflection of the models which have been received from the past. Whilst the problems of the past have not yet been overcome, it can be argued that the concept of space offers the possibility both to deconstruct the model(s) of oppressive authority and to construct new models of liberating authority which facilitate growth. Accordingly, *general authority* does not mean the absence of any form of institution. Rather it emphasizes that institution exists in the service of the community in order to promote unity, coherence, identity and growth. Within such a context each member is entitled to participate according to his/her gifts in the community's *episteme-praxis*. Such a community, then, reflects a synthesis between *monarchic* and

perichoretic Trinity and between christology and pneumatology. In other words, the Church reflects its eschatological dimension whilst living in concrete historical circumstances.

The shift from an oppressive to an enabling concept of authority within the Romanian Orthodox Church proves not only the fact that there are resources within the Orthodox tradition for renewal and growth, but also that such a change is fully justified both academically and pastorally.

Appendix I

General Regime of Religion

Monitorul Oficial No. 178, 4th August, 1948

The Presidium of the Grand National Assembly of the Romanian People's Republic by virtue of Article 44, Para. 2 and of Article 45 of the Constitution of the Romanian People's Republic, in view of the decision of the Council of Ministers No. 1, 180 of 1948, issue the following Decree No. 177, establishing the General Regime of Religion.

Chapter I

General Provisions

Section I

Religious Freedom

Art. 1.-The State guarantees freedom of conscience and of religion throughout the territory of the Romanian People's Republic.

Anyone may belong to any religion or embrace any faith, if its exercise is not contrary to the Constitution, to security and public order, or to morality.

Art. 2.-Religious hatred manifested by acts which hinder the free exercise of recognized religions are offenses and shall be punished by law.

Art. 3.-No one may be prosecuted for his religious faith or for lack of it.

Religious faith does not prevent anyone from acquiring and exercising political and civil rights and exempts no one from obligations imposed by law.

Art. 4.-No one may be compelled to attend any kind of religious service.

Art. 5.-No one may be compelled by State administrative measures to contribute to the upkeep of any religion or to submit to the decisions of any ecclesiastical court.

Section II

Freedom to Organize Religious Worship

Art. 6.-Religious bodies are free to organize and may function freely if their practice and rites are not contrary to the Constitution, security, public order or morality.

Art. 7.-Religious bodies shall be organized according to their own rulings, teachings, canons and traditions, being also allowed to set up institutions, associations, orders and congregations of their own.

Art. 8.-Recognized religions may have ecclesiastical courts of their own for maintaining discipline among their staff.

Disciplinary courts shall be organized by special regulations, in accordance with the canons and statutes of the respective religions. The regulations shall be drawn up by the courts of the respective religion and approved by decrees of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, at the proposal of the Ministry of Religion.

Art. 9.-The local component parts of recognized religions may have and maintain, alone or in associations with others, cemeteries for their congregations.

Communes are obliged to set up common cemeteries, or to reserve sections in the grounds of the existing ones, for the burial of those who do not belong to religions having cemeteries.

Chapter II

Relations between the State and Religious Bodies

Art. 10.-The faithful of all religions are obliged to obey the laws of the country, to take an oath when and how required and to register births, deaths, marriages, etc., within the period stipulated by law.

Art. 11.-Offenses against common law and crimes committed by the heads of religions shall be heard by the law courts with right of appeal to the Supreme Court.

Art. 12.-Recognized religions shall have a central organization to represent them irrespective of the number of the faithful.

Art. 13.-In order to be able to organize and to function, religions must be recognized by decrees of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, issued on the proposal of the Government, following the recommendation of the Minister of Religion.

Recognition may be withdrawn in the same way for good and sufficient reasons.

Art. 14.-In order to obtain recognition, each religion shall forward, through the Ministry of Religion, for examination and approval, its statute, including the system of organization, management and administration used together with the articles of faith of the respective religion.

Art. 15.-The Rumanian Orthodox Church is independent and unitary in its organization.

Art. 16.-The organization of political parties on a religious basis is banned.

Art. 17.-Local component bodies of recognized religions such as communities, parishes, units, groups, shall be entered in a special register at the respective mayoralty giving names of the leading and controlling officials and the size of the membership.

Art. 18.-Civilian foundations and associations whose aims and purposes are religious, totally or in part, must in order to be recognized as legal entities have the approval of the Government, through the Ministry of Religion, being subject to all obligations issuing from laws concerning their religious character.

Art. 19.-Inscriptions and symbolic signs, as well as the seals and stamps showing the denomination of the religion, must be approved by the Ministry of Religion before they are used.

Art. 20.-The heads of religions, hierarchy, and in general the entire personnel in the service of religion must be of Rumanian citizenship enjoying the full exercise of civic and political rights.

Art. 21.-The heads of religions and all metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, superintendents, apostolic administrators, administrative vicars, and others with like functions, elected or appointed in accordance with the charters of the respective religion, shall be able to function only after approval of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, given by decree, at the proposal of the Government, following the recommendation of the Minister of Religion.

Before taking up duties, they shall be sworn in by the Minister of Religion.

The wording of the oath is as follows:

'As a servant of God, as a man and a citizen, I swear to be true to the People and to defend the Rumanian People's Republic against its enemies abroad and at home. I swear to respect that I shall not allow my subordinates to undertake or to take part, and that I myself shall not undertake or take part in any action likely to affect public order and the integrity of the Rumanian People's Republic. So help me God.'

This form of oath is compulsory also for the leaders of civilian associations of a religious character coming under Art. 18.

The other members of the clergy belonging to the various religions, as well as the presidents or leaders of local communities shall, before taking up their duties, be sworn in by their hierarchic chiefs with the following oath:

'As a servant of God, as a man and a citizen, I swear to be true to the people and to defend the Rumanian People's Republic against its enemies abroad and at home; I swear to respect the laws of the Rumanian People's Republic, and I pledge myself to secrecy with regards to all matters connected with the service of the State. So help me God.'

All other employee of religious bodies shall be sworn in by the State authorities responsible, with the oath of allegiance provided by Art. 8 of Law No. 363 of 30th December, 1947, by which the Rumanian State became the Rumanian People's Republic.

Art. 22-Religions with eparchial organizations may have a number of eparchs in proportions to the total number of the faithful.

For the establishment and functioning of an eparch (diocese, superintendencies) an average of 750,000 faithful shall be reckoned for each eparchy. The areas of exarchies shall be established and the distribution of the faithful by exarchies shall be carried out by the statutory bodies of the respective religion, and shall be confirmed by a decree of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly, on the proposal of the Minister of Religion.

Chapter III

Activity of Religious Bodies

Art. 23.-The activity of recognized religions shall be developed in accordance with their religious doctrines, and their approved charter and in accordance with the laws of the country and morality.

Art. 24.-Religious bodies may hold congresses or general assemblies with the approval of the Minister of Religion, and give lectures and hold local meetings (eparchial, diocesan) with the approval of the respective local authorities.

Art. 25.-The Ministry of Religion may suspend any decisions, instructions, or orders, as well as any orders of an ecclesiastical-administrative, educational, philanthropical or statutory nature, infringing in any way the charter of the respective religion, the provisions of the foundation deeds, or the deeds of associations, or affecting in any way the security, public order or morality of the country.

Pastoral letters and circulars of general interest shall be brought in due time to the notice of the Minister of Religion.

Art. 26.-In their activity religions may use the mother language of the faithful. Correspondence with the Ministry of Religion shall be carried on in the Rumanian language.

Art. 27.-When, as is customary, the supreme authority in the State is mentioned at various religious services and in official celebrations, provided by laws and decisions, only formulas previously approved by the Ministry of Religion shall be used. Religions must also avoid in the prayer books the use of expressions, or formulas contrary to the law or to morality.

Chapter IV

Properities of Religious Bodies

Art. 28.-Recognized religious bodies are bodies corporate. Their local organizations, if they have the membership provided by the body corporate law, are also bodies corporate; so are the institutions, associations, orders, and congregations provided by their charters, if the latter have been drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the body corporate law.

Art. 29.-The real and personal property of religious bodies, of their various organizations, institutions, associations, order and congregations, shall be inventoried by statutory agencies.

The central authorities of religious bodies shall forward all the data concerning these inventories to the Ministry of Religion, to enable it to exercise its right to verify and control.

Art. 30.-Religious bodies, their various organizations, institutions, associations, orders and congregations shall have their own budget, showing income and expenditure.

These budgets are subject to control by the Ministry of Religion.

The budget and financial management of the central agencies and institutions, of eparchial centres and their institutions shall be verified and approved by the Ministry of Religion.

Art. 31.-Expenditure for maintenance of religious bodies may also be covered by subscriptions from the faithful.

Art. 32.-Subsidies granted by the State shall be accounted for and controlled in accordance with the Public Accountancy Law.

Art. 33.-Infringement of the laws concerning the democratic order in the Rumanian People's Republic may entail the withdrawal of State

subsidies. Clerics with anti-democratic attitudes may be struck off State pay-rolls, temporarily or for good.

Art. 34.-The salaries of the personnel of religious bodies shall be established in accordance with the laws in force.

Art. 35.-The institution of patronage, concerning property coming from private persons or institutions of any category, remains abolished.

Art. 36.-The property of religious bodies which no longer exist or from whom recognition has been withdrawn shall belong by right to the State.

Art. 37.-In the event of at least 10% of the number of the faithful of the local community of a religion passing over to another religion, the local religious community of religion given up shall lose by right a part of its property proportional to the number of those who have left, and that proportionate share shall be transferred, also by right, to the assets of the local community of the new religion embraced.

Should those passing over from one religion to another form a majority, the church (place of prayer, house of prayer) as well as the attached buildings, shall belong by right to the local community of the newly adopted religion, the balance of the property being divided between the two local communities, in the ratio specified in the above paragraph.

Should those passing from one religion to another represent at least 75% of the number of the faithful in the local community of the religion given up, all the property shall be transferred by right to the assets of the local community of the religion embraced; the community given up shall have a right to compensation proportional to the number of remaining faithful, without taking into account the church (place of prayer, house of prayer) and the attached buildings. This compensation is payable within three years from its establishment.

Cases provided in this article shall be tried and solved by the people's court of the locality.

Chapter V

Relations between Religions

Art. 38.-Anyone is free to pass to another or to give up a religion. The declaration of intention to give up a religion shall be forwarded to the local body of the religion given up, through the local communal authority. The respective communal authority is obliged to issue proof of that application upon application for same.

Art. 39.-No religion may register new adherents if those applying for registration fail to prove that they have notified their former religious sect of the change.

Art. 40.-Relations of the religious bodies with foreign countries shall be only of a religious nature.

Religious bodies and representatives of any religion shall maintain contact with religious bodies, institutions or official persons abroad only with the approval of the Ministry of Religion, and through the inter-medium of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Art. 41.-The jurisdiction of religious bodies in Rumania cannot be extended outside the territory of the Rumanian People's Republic, nor may

any religious body abroad exercise its jurisdiction over the faithful within the Rumanian State.

Art. 42.-Assistance and offerings received from foreign countries by religious bodies of this country, or sent to foreign countries by the latter, shall be under the control of the State.

Art. 43.-Ecclesiastical property abroad and religious interests of Rumanian citizens abroad, may form the object of international agreements on a reciprocal basis.

Chapter VI

Religious Instruction

Art. 44.-Religious bodies are free to organize schools for the training of clerical staff under State control.

The setting up of schools and drawing up of curricula shall be effected by the competent agencies of the respective religious bodies, and shall be submitted for approval to the Ministry of Religion.

Art. 45.-Teachers shall be appointed by the statutory bodies of the respective religions, in accordance with the statute and rules approved by the Ministry, with prior approval by the Ministry for those paid by the State, and with confirmation within 15 days from the date of the appointment for those paid by the religious bodies.

The Ministry of Religion may cancel appointments made, should this be required for reasons of public order or State security.

Art. 46.-Diplomas and certificates issued by schools for training ecclesiastical personnel are valid only within the respective religion.

The validation of foreign diplomas and certificates for religious training shall be made by special commissions recognized by the Ministry of Religion.

Art. 47.-Religious bodies are obliged to communicate to the Ministry of Religion all their data concerning the organization and functioning of the schools for training ecclesiastical personnel.

Art. 48.-Religious bodies may organize, with the approval of the Ministry, schools for church singers, and schools for training the clergy.

Schools for church singers shall admit only applicants who have attended unified medium schools or else seven elementary classes.

Schools for training secular clergy or monks may be theological colleges whose students must have attended unified medium schools or seven elementary classes; theological institutes attended by secondary or pedagogic school graduates; or theological institutes with university standing whose students must have matriculated or graduated from pedagogic schools.

Each religious body shall select for the training of its clergy the kind of institution it prefers.

Special colleges for training monks may be set up by religious bodies with the approval of the Ministry. Students attending such colleges must have attended unified medium schools or seven elementary classes.

Art. 49.-For the training of its clergy, the Orthodox Church may have two theological institutes with university standing.

The Roman Catholic Church may have one theological institute of university standing with the necessary special sections.

The Protestant Churches may have one theological institute of university standing with the necessary special sections.

Art. 50.-Religious bodies may give board and lodging to the pupils or students attending the schools or institutes for the training of their clergy, but only to their own pupils or students, and only at the respective school or institute.

Art. 51.-Canonical jurisdiction and dogmatic teaching at schools for church singers, colleges and institutes shall be carried out by the respective religious bodies. Didactic and administrative control shall be carried out by the Ministry of Religion, irrespective of the kind and grade of the school or institute.

Art. 52.-The re-appointment of existing teachers shall be made by decree, at the proposal of the Ministry of Religion.

Chapter VII

Final and Transitory Provisions

Art. 53.-Existing theological colleges, in which general subjects are also taught, are abolished. Teachers of lay subjects at such colleges, and the amount allotted for their pay, shall pass from the Ministry of Religion to the Ministry of Public Education. Teachers belonging to these categories shall be re-appointed in accordance with possibilities, to teach the same subject or similar ones.

Graduates of theological colleges who took their degrees before the publication of this law shall have the right to attend higher theological institutes, in the same way as students who have matriculated or graduated from pedagogical schools.

Art. 54.-The Bucharest Faculty of Theology shall become a Theological Institute with university standing. Its teachers and administrative staff, and the amounts allotted for their pay, shall pass from the Ministry of Public Education to the Ministry of Religion.

Art. 55.-All matters pertaining to the distribution of property among various local communities still pending shall be solved in accordance with the provision set forth in Art. 37 of this law.

Art. 56.-All religious bodies are obliged to forward their charters, drawn up in accordance with this law, within three months from its publication, to the Ministry of Religion for approval.

Approval of charters shall be given by decrees of the Presidium, of the Grand National Assembly, at the proposal of the Government, through the Ministry of Religion.

Art. 57.-Subsequent amendments in the charters of religious bodies shall be made in the same way.

Art. 58.-The provisions of Law No. 68 of 19th March, 1937, for the organization of the army clergy, are repealed.

The clergy of all religions are obliged to grant religious assistance to, and to officiate for service men whenever required. Refusal to fulfil this obligation is an infringement, subject to disciplinary penalties.

Art. 59.-Army churches and chapels, with their entire property, shall be included in the assets of the parishes of the same religion, in whose area they are situated.

The Alba-Julia Army Cathedral and its assets become the property of the Rumanian Orthodox Bishopric of Cluj, Vad and Feleac.

Art. 60.-Army clergymen who, on publication of this law, have served the State for at least 20 years, may apply for pensioning off, by derogation to the provisions of the General Pension Law. A surplus of five years' pension shall be added to the time actually served.

Military clergymen not in a position to benefit from the provision of the preceding paragraph shall be allotted posts as priests, on individual application, in the exarchies where they have worked or in other exarchies where there are vacancies.

The Bishop of Armed Forces shall keep his present personal title and rights. He shall remain at the disposal of the Holy Synod, which shall allot him duties corresponding to his rank.

Art. 61.-The salaries of clerical staff taken over by the Ministry of Religion shall be paid out of an extraordinary budgetary credit, to be opened by the Ministry of Finance on behalf of the Ministry of Religion, and to be covered by striking off an equal amount from the budget of the Ministry of National Defence.

Art. 62.-Law No. 54 of 7th April 1928, for the general regime of religions, as well as other provisions contrary to this law, are repealed.
Bucharest, 3rd August 1948

Minister of Religion
Stanciu Stoian
Minister of Education
G. Vasilichi

C.I. Parhon
Popa Emil
Minister of National Defence
E. Bodnăraş

Minister of Justice
A. Bunaciu

Abbreviations

- AC 'Andrei Şaguna', Asociaţia Clerului Andrei Şaguna
ALRC, Comitetul pentru Apărarea Libertăţilor Religioase şi de Conştiinţă
ANCL, *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*
BOR, *Biserica Ortodoxă Romană*
CCSL, *Corpus christianorum. Series latina*
COD, *Calendarul Oastei Domnului, 1992*
CSCO, *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium*
CSEL, *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*
DCC, Bettenson, H., ed., *Documents of the Christian Church*
ECR, *Eastern Church Review*
ECQ, *Eastern Church Quarterly*
EPS, *Ecumenical Press Service (ICPIS prior to 1947)*
GB, *Glasul Bisericii*
GCS, *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*
ICPIS, *International Christian Press and Information Service (prior to 1947)*
JEH, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JRS, *Journal of Religious Studies*
LS, *Lumina Satelor*
MA, *Mitropolia Ardealului*
MB, *Mitropolia Banatului*
MMS, *Mitropolia Moldovei şi Sucevei*
NPNF, *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*
OD, *Oastea Domnului*
PG, Migne, *Patrologia graecae*
PL, Migne, *Patrologia latinae*
RCL, *Religion in Communist Lands*
RT, *Revista Teologică*
SJT, *Scottish Journal of Theology*
ST, *Studii Teologice*

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