

Iuliu-Marius Morariu

**ECUMENISM, PRIMACY,
AUTHORITY
and LOVE**

Faces of a Complex Theological Reality



Presa Universitară Clujeană

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IULIU-MARIUS MORARIU (protosyncell Maxim) (b. 1991, Salva) is a PhD in theology from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of Babeş-Bolyai University (UBB) in Cluj-Napoca (Summa cum laude) and a PhD in social sciences from the Pontifical University Angelicum of Rome (Summa cum laude). He graduated Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Cluj-Napoca (as a valedictorian), a master's degree in „Pastoral Counseling and Psychosocial Assistance”, within the aforementioned faculty, the Faculty of History and Philosophy, BA (2014), and a master's degree in „History of South-Eastern Europe” (2016), the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey (University of Geneva, 2018), and a MA in social sciences at the above-mentioned Pontifical University (2020), a MA in „Saint Ignatius College” in Stockholm (Ecumenism and International Relations) and studied at the Universities of Kosice, Graz and Belgrade. As of 2022, he is the ecclesiarch of the „Saint George the Great Martyr” Cathedral in Saint-Hubert (Quebec) of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada. He was exarch of the monasteries in the Diocese of Canada in the period 2022-2024, and from July 2024 he is diocesan inspector. He published, edited, coordinated or translated no less than 50 volumes and over 300 studies and specialized articles in the country and abroad. He is an editorial member of 8 specialist journals (3 indexed in Web of Science), scientific secretary of the „Vasile Moga” Division of ASTRA Sebeş and of the „Ioan Lupas” Study Center within the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Cluj-Napoca, member of the Center for Ecumenical Studies (Cluj-Napoca), of the Academy of Models, Elites and Values (Cluj-Napoca) and associate researcher of the University of Pretoria (South Africa) and a member of the Academy of Romanian Scientists (New York branch). As a radio personality, he produces shows and columns for Radio Renaştearea (Cluj-Napoca), Radio Trinitas (Bucharest) and Radio Someş (Bistrita). In 2020 and 2021 he was placed according to the top made by Stanford University among the first 2% of the World researchers in their field, according to the number of the quotation of their work. He received in 2021 and 2022 the Excellency Prize from the rector of „Babeş-Bolyai” University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. He cooperates with Orthodox portals like Radio Renaşterea (Cluj-Napoca), doxologia.ro, or „Calea spre Mântuire”.

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2024

Referenți științifici:

Prof. univ. dr. Lino Bianco

Pontifical Gregorian University, Roma, Italia

Lecturer PhD. Flavius-Cristian Mărcău

„Constantin Brâncuși” University, Târgu Jiu, Romania

ISBN 978-606-37-2442-8

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**Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai
Presa Universitară Clujeană**

Director: Codruța Săcelean
Str. B.P. Hasdeu nr. 51
400371 Cluj-Napoca, România
Tel.: (+40)-744-687.884
E-mail: editura@ubbcluj.ro
<http://www.editura.ubbcluj.ro>
<https://biblioteca.ubbcluj.ro/>

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In the Name of Humanity

Introduction

Historical and social realities have impacted upon the ecumenical councils and their subsequent directions. Ecumenical councils are needed to strengthen communion in the church. In the course of two millennia, the Catholic Church has recognised twenty-one ecumenical councils;¹ the Eastern Orthodox Church recognises the first seven as legitimate, namely, Nicaea I, Constantinople I, Ephesus, Chalcedon, Constantinople II, Constantinople III, and Nicaea II. The councils relevant to the discussion in this article are Vatican Council I and

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1. The twenty-one ecumenical councils recognised by the Roman Catholic Church are: (i) Nicaea I (325), (ii) Constantinople I (381), (iii) Ephesus (431), (iv) Chalcedon (451), (v) Constantinople II (553), (vi) Constantinople III (680), (vii) Nicaea II (787), (viii) Constantinople IV (869), (ix) Lateran I (1123), (x) Lateran II (1139), (xi) Lateran III (1179), (xii) Lateran IV (1215), (xiii) Lyon I (1245), (xiv) Lyon II (1274), (xv) Vienne (1311), (xvi) Constance (1414), (xvii) Florence (1438-1443), (xviii) Lateran V (1512-1517), (xix) Trent (1545-1549, 1551-1552, 1562-1563), (xx) Vatican I (1869-1870), and (xxi) Vatican II (1962-65) (Karl Keating, "The 21 Ecumenical Councils", *Catholic Answers: Magazine*, 6/1/1993, <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-21-ecumenical-councils>, accessed 11.09.2024).

Vatican Council II, hereafter referred to as Vatican I and Vatican II, respectively.

Vatican I was a unique council for several reasons, including the fact that it focused on doctrine rather than a specific heresy and that it was the first to have representation of bishops from various parts of the world.² It ended abruptly due to the Franco-Prussian war, with only two of the six proposed decrees being addressed, namely, (i) faith and revelation, and (ii) the primacy and infallibility of the Pope stated by the dogmatic constitution of the Church of Christ, *Pastor Aeternus*.³ Although the latter was

Archbishop Job (Getcha) of Telmessos notes that, particularly from the fourth century onwards, whilst the primacy of the See of Rome in the West was traced back to St Peter's role among the Apostles, this notion was not accepted in the East (Archbishop Job (Getcha) of Telmessos, "The Perspectives and Challenges of Primacy and Synodality in the Orthodox Church Today", *The Ecumenical Review* 72(3) (2020): 356–369: 360, <https://doi.org/10.1111/erev.12521>).

2. The objective of this council was to confront modern ideology that considered faith to be part of the evolution of history. The context was the unfolding political realities – the aftermath of the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars and Gallicanism – including the 'Risorgimento', which was a direct threat to the Papal States.
3. Vatican I, "*Pastor Aeternus*, 18 luglio 1870, Costituzione dogmatica", in: Ugo Bellocchi, (ed.), *Tutte le encicliche e i principali documenti pontifici emanati dal 1740*, vol. IV: Pio IX (1846-1878), (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), 334-340.

Vatican I was interrupted owing to the intention that it would continue at the end of the conflict. But then Garibaldi reached Rome and occupied it; thus, until February 1929 the Pope was considered 'imprisoned' in the Vatican. The matter was officially and formally declared 'closed' in 1960 by Pope John XXIII during the official opening of the Vatican II.

only invoked once since 1870 – the proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption by Pope Pius XII in 1950 – it had repercussions as to the role of the Pope from a legal perspective, which led to an overhaul of the Church in terms of governance and structure. Vatican I opened the doors of the Papacy for dialogue with the contemporary world. It is still considered a framework for today’s Church, notably with respect to the Petrine ministry: “Vatican I was in itself also a kind of ultramontanist ‘modernization’ of the Roman Catholic Church, which paved the way for the *aggiornamento* of Vatican II and still shapes the post-Vatican II church especially for what concerns the Petrine ministry”.⁴

Primacy and Synodality: A Canonical Tradition

In his address at the annual working session of the Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working

4. Massimo Faggioli, “Modernization of the Papacy and Catholicism in the Postmodern: Legacy and Challenges to Vatican I”, in *Horizons*, 47, no. 1 (2020):115-119: 115, <https://doi.org/10.1017/hor.2020.44>

Contemporary scholars regard Vatican I as the culmination of the ultramontanist movement rather than modernisation of the Church. This movement took shape in France, particularly at the end of the eighteenth century, as a reaction to the revolutionary uprisings.

Group – a team of thirteen Eastern Orthodox and Catholic theologians from different countries invited on the basis of their theological expertise – held at the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of the Angelicum, Rome, Pope Francis stated that:

“Through the constructive patience of dialogue, especially with the Orthodox Churches, we have come to understand more fully that in the Church primacy and synodality are not two competing principles to be kept in balance, but two realities that establish and sustain one another in the service of communion. Just as the primacy presupposes the exercise of synodality, so synodality entails the exercise of primacy.”⁵

In the opening chapter of *Ecumenism, primacy, authority and love – faces of a complex theological reality*, Iuliu-Marius Morariu refers to the work of this non-official ecumenical working group, which has met annually since 2004. Morariu’s work is a short anthology of thought-provoking, ecumenical-related themes. He cites the work undertaken by the working group with respect to primacy and synodality in the doctrines of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches which promotes

5. Pope Francis, *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working Group*, (Vatican City: Clementine Hall, 7 October 2021), <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2021/october/documents/20211007-gruppo-ortodossocattolico-santireneo.html>, accessed 11.09.2024.

unity between the two Christian traditions. It may be read as a preamble to a few other themes discussed in the anthology ranging from the relation between secularism and political theology to the manner in which ecumenism was understood by the Romanian communist regime.

The permanent representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the World Council of Churches, Archbishop Job (Getcha) of Telmessos, hereafter referred to as Archbishop Job, notes that “the bilateral dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church has focused since 2006 on the issue of conciliarity and the issue of primacy and synodality. It is therefore in the context of synodality that the thorny question of the Roman primacy has since then been addressed.”⁶ His Eminence notes the work undertaken by the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. The *Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church: Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority*, hereafter referred to as the Ravenna document, defines three levels of ecclesial communion – local,

6. Archbishop Job, “The Perspectives and Challenges of Primacy and Synodality in the Orthodox Church Today”.

regional and universal.⁷ These levels were endorsed in the document *Synodality and Primacy during the First Millennium: Towards a Common Understanding in Service to the Unity of the Church*, hereafter referred to as the Chieti document, which studies primacy and synodality in the first millennium.⁸ During this period both churches were still in full communion: “the history of the Church in the first millennium is decisive. In spite of certain temporary disruptions, East and West Christians lived in communion during this period and, in this context, the essential structures of the Church were instituted”.⁹

7. Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, *Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church: Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority*, (Ravenna, 13 October 2007), <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-orientale/chiese-ortodosse-di-tradizione-bizantina/commissione-mista-internazionale-per-il-dialogo-teologico-tra-la/documenti-di-dialogo.html>, accessed 11.09.2024.

8. Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, *Synodality and Primacy during the First Millennium: Towards a Common Understanding in Service to the Unity of the Church*, (Chieti, 21 September 2016), <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-orientale/chiese-ortodosse-di-tradizione-bizantina/commissione-mista-internazionale-per-il-dialogo-teologico-tra-la/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-in-inglese1.pdf>, accessed 11.09.2024.

9. *Ibid.* Officially there was ‘communion’ during the first five centuries, and its guarantor was the Emperor. From the beginning there were shifts between local churches based upon theological/pastoral approach. For example, the Council of Jerusalem in the Acts of the Apostles, and later – in the sec-

Three months prior to the publication of the Chieti document, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew stated, in his opening address at the inaugural session of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church:¹⁰

“... the synodal institution that we are today called to serve in its supreme form derives its origin from the depths of the mystery of the Church. It is not merely a matter of canonical tradition, which we have received and preserve, but of fundamental theological and doctrinal truth, without which there is no salvation. In confessing our faith in the holy Creed in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, at the same time we proclaim her synodality which incarnates in history all those characteristics of the mystery of the Church, that is to say, her unity, holiness, universality and apostolicity. Without synodality, the unity of the Church is severed, the sanctity of its members is reduced to mere individual morality and articulation about virtue, catholicity is sacrificed in favour of particular individual, collective, national and other secular interests or

ond-to-third century – two different theological approaches emerged: the theological school of Alexandria and that of Antioch. Also, it is imperative to note that none of the first ecumenical councils could start without the presence of the papal legates.

10. “Opening Address by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at the Inaugural Session of the Holy and Great Council,” 20 June 2016, <https://www.holycouncil.org/-/opening-ecumenical-patriarch>, accessed 11.09.2024.

intentions, and the apostolic message falls prey to various heresies and ruses of human reason”.

This quotation was used by Archbishop Job in his seminal publication on the perspectives and challenges of primacy and synodality in the Orthodox Church today.¹¹ He noted that “the Orthodox tradition has always emphasized the importance of conciliarity or synodality, which it identifies as being ontologically linked to the very nature of the church”.¹² He also cited the address of Pope Francis at the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops: it is “precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium”¹³. The Pope called for greater synodality to establish ways of communion, participation, and mission at every level of the church.

11. Archbishop Job, “The Perspectives and Challenges of Primacy and Synodality in the Orthodox Church Today”.

12. *Ibid*, 356.

13. “Ceremony Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops: Address of His Holiness Pope Francis,” 17 October 2015. http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/october/documents/papa-francesco_20151017_50-anniversario-sinodo.html, accessed 11.09.2024. In the opinion of Archbishop Job, Pope Francis “suggested that the Catholic Church has to learn from the Orthodox Church on this point” (Archbishop Job, “The Perspectives and Challenges of Primacy and Synodality in the Orthodox Church Today”, 357).

Primacy and Synodality: The Way Forward According to the Catholic and Orthodox Churches

In 2019, the Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working Group published a comprehensive document to complement the official international dialogue between the two churches, entitled *Serving Communion: Re-thinking the Relationship between Primacy and Synodality*.¹⁴ This extensive, well-structured and focused working paper has three dimensions on which it grounds its theological analysis: (i) hermeneutics in the ecumenical dialogue present in specific historical and cultural contexts, (ii) the history of the church, notably during the medieval period, and (iii) systematic theology, notably with respect to the role of church authority and the interpretations of primacy and synodality. This document “brings as an element of novelty in the documents of the ecumenical dialogue the section dedicated to hermeneutics as a theoretical foundation for the theological and historical analysis of the elements that create dissension. ... [It is] a paradigmatic model for tackling church-divisive

14. Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working Group, *Serving Communion: Re-thinking the Relationship between Primacy and Synodality*, (Los Angeles: Marymount Institute Press, 2019). The preface of this study was authored by the two co-chairmen: the German Roman Catholic Bishop Gerhard Feige – a member of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity and chairperson of the Ecumenical Commission of the German Bishops’ Conference – and the Romanian Metropolitan Serafim Joantă of Germany and Central Europe.

issues.”¹⁵ In the words of Paul McPartlan – Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology and Ecumenism at The Catholic University of America and member of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church since 2005¹⁶ – this publication is a “balanced and charitable study of the issue of primacy and synodality, happily free from polemic and ideology, and is greatly to be welcomed. It resonates in many ways with the principles of Catholic teaching and theology today, and also with the work of the official international dialogue”.¹⁷

The Bishop of Rome: Primacy and synodality in the ecumenical dialogues and in the responses to the encyclical Ut unum sint is a study published earlier this year by the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity within the Holy See.¹⁸ Further to addressing primacy and syn-

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15. Mihail Comănoiu, “Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox–Catholic Working Group. *Serving Communion: Re-thinking the Relationship between Primacy and Synodality*. Los Angeles: Marymount Institute Press, 2019.” in *The Ecumenical Review*, 73, no. 2 (2021): 322-325, <https://doi.org/10.1111/erev.12596>
 16. The Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church is instrumental in the dialogue between the two Christian churches.
 17. Paul McPartlan, “Serving Communion: Re-Thinking the Relationship between Primacy and Synodality,” in *Ecclesiology*, 16, no. 1 (2020): 3-11, <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455316-01601002>
 18. Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, *The Bishop of Rome: Primacy and synodality in the ecumenical dialogues and in the responses to the encyclical Ut unum sint*, (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2024), <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/news/2024/2024-06-13-il-vescovo-di-roma-nuovo-documento-dpuc.html>, accessed 11.09.2024.

odality not as opposing ecclesial dimensions but as mutually interdependent – in the words of the Prefect of the Dicastery Cardinal Kurt Koch, “primacy must be exercised in a synodal way, and synodality requires primacy”¹⁹ – this publication recommends building bridges between dialogues so that they enrich one another: local and international, official and unofficial, bilateral and multilateral, Eastern and Western.²⁰ A commentary on this study was published by Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm – the moderator of the central committee of the World Council of Churches – in *The Ecumenical Review*.²¹ In his commentary, Bishop Bedford-Strohm noted that “the fact that it is simply

This study – published with the approval of Pope Francis and presented at a press conference at the Holy See Press Office on 13 June 2024 (<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2024/06/13/240613f.html>, accessed 11.09.2024) – discusses primacy and synodality in the ecumenical discourses and includes a synopsis of the reactions at the time to the encyclical *Ut unum sint* (John Paul II, *Ut unum sint: On Commitment to Ecumenism* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 25 May 1995, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_t-unum-sint.html, accessed 11.09.2024).

19. Andrea Tornielli, “Koch: Papal primacy is service, exercised in a synodal manner,” in *Vatican News*, 13 June 2024 (<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2024-06/koch-papal-primacy-is-service-exercised-in-a-synodal-manner.html>, accessed 11.09.2024).
20. This document concludes with a proposal from the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity to identify “the most significant suggestions for a renewed exercise of the ministry of unity of the Bishop of Rome, ‘recognized by one and all’” (“The Bishop of Rome: Primacy and Synodality in the Ecumenical Dialogues and in the Responses to the Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*,” in *The Ecumenical Review*, 76, no. 3 (2024): 273-281: 273, <https://doi.org/10.1111/erev.12863>
21. *Ibid.*, 276-281.

entitled 'The Bishop of Rome', and not 'The Vicar of Christ' or 'The Primacy of the Pope', is itself an expression of a serious attempt ... to respond in a spirit of love to the various testimonies of ecumenical dialogues".²²

The dogmatic definitions included in Vatican I represent a significant hurdle in the synodal path.²³ Besides clarifying the Catholic doctrine with respect to the philosophical tendencies of the time, they addressed the doctrine of the primacy (supremacy) and infallibility of the Pope.²⁴ Massimo Faggioli argued that *Pastor Aeternus* "is not about papal infallibility, but about papal primacy. ... It is the papal primacy of jurisdiction that has acquired a greater scope than it actually had in 1870".²⁵ Kristin Colberg noted that

22. Ibid, 273.

23. Some dialogues appreciate the unique historical context surrounding Vatican I. It was convoked under the rising threat of the Kingdom of Italy encroaching on the Papal States and was adjourned after Italian soldiers marched on Rome.

24. The council called for the consolidation of papal authority, a position widely supported by all forces within the church: "In each step, Pius IX found strong backing from ultramontane forces within the church, not just among the bishops, but from clergy, religious (especially the Jesuits!), laity, and the Catholic press, who saw the strong assertion of papal authority as the necessary response to the crisis the church faced" (Jeffrey von Arx, "Vatican I's Teaching on Papal Infallibility: Nineteenth-century historical context and twenty-first century relevance," in *Horizons*, 47, no. 1 (2020): 109-114: 112, <https://doi.org/10.1017/hor.2020.43>)

25. Faggioli, "Modernization of the Papacy and Catholicism in the Postmodern: Legacy and Challenges to Vatican I", 115. With respect to the latter statement, Faggioli refers to Margaret O'Gara ("Three Successive Steps toward Understanding Papal Primacy in Vatican I," in *The Jurist*, 64 (2004): 208-223)

“proponents of synodality often interpret Vatican I’s definition of papal primacy as an obstacle to the synodal path. Recent scholarship, however, suggests ways that Vatican I need not present a stumbling block; rather, when properly contextualized and interpreted, *Pastor Aeternus* has the potential to illumine the inherent dynamism between primacy and synodality”.²⁶

In her study she proposed approaches to Vatican I and synodality which encourage towards “more responsive ecclesial structures in the diverse and changing church of today”.²⁷ The document issued by the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity suggested that redefining, or possibly rewording, the original dogmatic definitions ensured the original meaning was comprehensible and acceptable in the contemporary ecumenical context.²⁸ This suggestion is worth noting, notwithstanding Colberg’s valid argument that rather than reading primacy and synodality as competing concerns, one should re-envision the relation between

who, in turn, followed Klaus Schatz (*Papal Primacy: From Its Origins to the Present*, trans. John A. Otto and Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996)).

26. Kristin Colberg, “Expanding Horizons 150 Years after Vatican I: Toward a Renewed Relationship between Synodality and Primacy”, in *Theological Studies*, 83, no. 1, (2022): 70-83: 70, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00405639221075054>

27. *Ibid.*

28. This point was noted in Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, *The Bishop of Rome: Primacy and synodality in the ecumenical dialogues and in the responses to the encyclical Ut unum sint.*

the two “by broadening three horizons: the meaning of ‘synodality’, the interpretations of Vatican I’s teaching on papal primacy, and the exercise of primacy in a synodal church.”²⁹ Whilst addressing the legacy and challenges of Vatican I, Faggioli noted that

“The role of the papacy as the agent of reconciliation among religions is a post-Vatican II development. ...

Pope Francis’ grand opening ... of the debate on ecclesial synodality in the Catholic Church is an act of reception of Vatican II, but also of Vatican I because it leverages a Petrine ministry”.³⁰

Implementation of Synodality

Archbishop Job maintained that

“The Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church in 2016 should be perceived and received as a genuine manifestation of synodality at the beginning of the 21st century. It has reminded us that it is within the exercise of primacy and synodality at the universal level that the unity and the orthodoxy of

29. Colberg, “Expanding Horizons 150 Years after Vatican I: Toward a Renewed Relationship between Synodality and Primacy”, 71.

30. Faggioli, “Modernization of the Papacy and Catholicism in the Postmodern: Legacy and Challenges to Vatican I”, 118, 119.

the church is guaranteed. Its message referred to the proposal for the Holy and Great Council to become a regular institution to be convened every seven or ten years. By saying this, the Holy and Great Council has perhaps inaugurated a new era of synodality in the Orthodox Church on the universal level. This is perhaps the greatest contribution of the Holy and Great Council in an era of globalization, when the pastoral problems encountered by each local autocephalous church, due to a growing secularization of the world, are very similar and need a common synodal response".³¹

Morariu presented the Romanian Orthodox Diocese in Canada as, de facto, an illustration of secularism and political theology in a society where

"compared to other countries from the European space, for example, the level of secularisation is deeper. Events like the 'revolution tranquille'³² have shifted the approach on religion and there are still debates related to the situation of the indigenous people and how certain Catholic priests abused them."³³

31. Archbishop Job, "The Perspectives and Challenges of Primacy and Synodality in the Orthodox Church Today", 356.

32. For more information about this theme, Morariu refers to Réjean Pelletier, "La Révolution tranquille", in *Le Québec en jeu*, (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1992), <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pum.15288>

33. See Iuliu-Marius Morariu, *Ecumenism, Primacy, Authority and Love: Faces of a complex theological reality* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2024), 71.

Archbishop Job argued that, unlike in the Catholic church, “the implementation of synodality at the local level and universal level remains problematic or challenging in the Orthodox Church today”.³⁴ Although, in theory, most Orthodox theologians welcomed the three levels of synodality outlined in the Ravenna and Chieti documents, synodality is far from being implemented at a local and universal level. This seems not to be the case with the Romanian Orthodox Diocese in Canada, as Morariu outlined in a chapter of his work.³⁵ This diocese is working hard to implement synodality at least at the local level. The initiatives mentioned by Morariu include gracious listening to each individual as a member of the Church and options to take on activities like youth camps that bring together other members of the community. These are pragmatic, achievable ways of putting synodality into practice; they are proposed as a response to the realities of and feedback from the community which compelled the church to take action. Reading the signs of the times and actively engaging with and responding to them is an optimal form of consciously driven synodality at the local level.

34. Archbishop Job, “The Perspectives and Challenges of Primacy and Synodality in the Orthodox Church Today”, 360.

35. See Morariu, *Ecumenism, Primacy, Authority and Love: Faces of a complex theological reality*, 59-72.

The Orthodox Church of Ukraine: A case of Ethnophyletism?

One can trace the present war in Ukraine to the outbreak of civil war in the country in February 2014 which was instigated and supported by foreign powers. The war (to use the language of the West) or special military operation (to use Russia's) which commenced in February 2024 in Ukraine is a continuation of the 2014 events. The genesis of the problem pre-dates the Second War; it can be personified in the antagonism between the Greek Catholic West falling under the jurisdiction of the Holy See versus the Orthodox East falling under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. Besides the Ukrainian Head of State, the other two main heads of states involved are the presidents of the United States and of the Russian Federation, namely the Catholic Joe Biden – who was US Vice President during the outbreak of the 2014 civil war and subsequently³⁶ – and the Orthodox Vladimir Putin, respectively. All are lawyers by education. Due to limitations arising from the current professional

36. Biden was Vice President of the United States for both terms of the Barack Obama presidency; the first ran from 2009 to 2013 and the second from 2013 to 2017.

position held by the author,³⁷ I cannot delve further into this sensitive topic.³⁸

Notwithstanding my professional constraints, there is no harm in putting forward the following, certainly not exhaustive, list of questions related to the subject of this academic writing:

1. Both the Ukrainian government and the newly formed Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) claim to support democratic values and religious freedom, yet they implement restrictive measures against the UOC-Moscow Patriarchate, arguably infringing on minority rights. How does one reconcile these actions with the presumed commitment to democratic principles, especially when they mirror the same criticised oppressive tactics displayed by Russia in its approach to the church?
2. Considering that the establishment of the OCU is mainly a national project backed by the Ukrainian government, do the nationalistic motivations within

37. The author has served in the role of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of his homeland, Malta, to the Balkans since 2014.

38. The civil war in Ukraine between the pro-Russia and pro-West factions was further nourished by the decision of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople to establish the Orthodox Church of Ukraine an autocephal diocese in those territories when he knew that the jurisdiction was not his but that of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

the OCU and the government undermine the Orthodox ideal of ecclesial unity? Could this nationalism not only alienate minority Orthodox communities – such as the one affiliated to Moscow and others (Bulgarian, Romanian, etc.) – but also damage Ukraine’s standing in the global Orthodox world?

3. In recent times, some Orthodox theologians raised concerns regarding ethnophyletism, that is, prioritising national identity within the church. With respect to national Orthodox churches emerging in Ukraine and other regions, how do we perceive the border between healthy national identity and potential ethnophyletism within Orthodoxy? Could national churches inadvertently elevate national interests above ecclesial unity?
4. Given that the calling of the Orthodox Church is to transcend earthly divisions, how should one view, from a theological perspective, the close alignment between certain national Orthodox churches and their respective governments, especially when political tensions drive ecclesial separation? Could this alignment be seen as compromising the Church’s mission, or is it simply a contextual necessity? For example, it is a fact that the Romanian Patriarchate wanted to create a religious non-governmental organisation in Ukraine but approval is still pending.

Fascism, Communism and Ecumenism

Although in the mid-first century Christianity appeared as a religious group within Judaism – one of the earlier monotheistic religions in world history – worshipers of both faiths co-existed. Later, the relationship between them, notably with respect to the Catholic Church, became more complex. Historically it is grounded in Christian theology, which blamed the Jews for killing Jesus. The rulers of Catholic territories practiced antisemitism, which led to persecution, violence and discrimination against the Jews, including their expulsion from Catholic lands.³⁹ With the rise of nationalism and industrialisation in Europe, political antisemitism increased due to economic conflicts between Jews and non-Jews. In the early twentieth century, hatred towards the Jews peaked during the Great Depression and was manifested through the Holocaust – a statement of ultimate human evil – when millions of European Jews were systematically exterminated in occupied Poland by Nazi Germany and its collaborators.⁴⁰ Vatican II improved the rela-

39. The reason was neither theological nor religious but one of financial interests. The Jews had monopoly on the banks, and it was only in the latter part of fifteenth century – on the initiative of some Franciscan friars – that the Catholic Church institutionalised the so-called ‘Monte di Pietà’ in order not to leave hegemony over the finances of Europe in the hands of the Jews.

40. Other groups were also exterminated during this purge based on their ethnicity (notably the Roma and Sinti), political beliefs, disability or sexual orientation.

tionship between the Catholic Church and Judaism. *Nostra aetate*⁴¹ is the first declaration in the history of the Catholic Church focused on the relationship of the Church with the Jews. It repudiated the accusation of Jewish deicide and officially condemned antisemitism. Later, it established the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jewish community to address the harm caused by past persecutions, with the Vatican formally apologising for its lack of action and silence during the Holocaust.⁴²

Whilst Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) personified the radical far right in Germany, Stepan Andriyovych Bandera (1909–1959) and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (1899–1938) represented the far-right in today's Ukraine and Romania, respectively. Bandera, the son of a Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest, was the leader of the militant wing of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists.⁴³ He was a highly controversial figure – some hail him

41. Pope Paul VI, "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions – *Nostra aetate*", 28 October 1965, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat_ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html, accessed 11.09.2024.

42. Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, *We Remember: A reflection on the Shoah*, 16 March 1998, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/commissione-per-i-rapporti-religiosi-con-l-ebraismo/commissione-per-i-rapporti-religiosi-con-l-ebraismo-crre/documenti-della-commissione/en1.html>, accessed 11.09.2024.

43. David R. Marples, "Stepan Bandera: The resurrection of a Ukrainian national hero", in *Europe-Asia Studies*, 58, no. 4 (2006): 555-566, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668130600652118>

as a hero while others denounce him as a fascist and/or Nazi collaborator; his legacy gained traction following Russia's intervention in Ukraine in 2022. During World War II, his followers – the Banderites – exterminated Polish and Jewish civilians.⁴⁴ Codreanu was the leader of the Legion of the Archangel Michael, also known as the Legionary Movement, which he founded in 1927 at a time when Romania was Franco-ophile. The Legion – “arguably the most unusual mass movement of interwar Europe”⁴⁵ – was a Romanian religious, anti-democratic, anti-capitalist, anti-communist, and anti-Semitic, fascist movement “based on the millennialist cult of the Archangel Michael. ... [It is] generally considered an unusual ‘variety of fascism’ mostly because of its mysticism and religious ritualism”.⁴⁶ Unlike other European contemporaries, the Legion “willingly inserted strong elements of Orthodox Christianity into its political ideology to the point of becoming one of the rare modern European

44. Yitzhak Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

45. Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism 1914–1945*, (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 279-280.

46. Constantin Iordachi, “Charisma, Religion, and Ideology: Romania’s Interwar Legion of the Archangel Michael,” In: John R. Lampe, Mark Mazower, (eds), *Ideologies and National Identities*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 19-53: 19. This book chapter was later expanded into the following monograph: Constantin Iordachi, *Charisma, Politics and Violence: The legion of the ‘Archangel Michael’ in inter-war Romania*, Trondheim Studies on East European Cultures and Societies, No. 15, 2004, https://www.ntnu.edu/documents/1295900401/1295966101/Nr%2B15_B5.pdf

political movements with a religious ideological structure.”⁴⁷ Codreanu promoted a xenophobic, exclusive ultra-nationalism. He rejected French ideals in favour of the restoration of authentic Eastern Orthodox values and the glory of Romania’s folk culture, which he celebrated as a statement of “Romanian genius”.⁴⁸ Following the Legion’s support for the ultranationalist and authoritarian vision of Ion Antonescu (1882–1946), Romania was declared a “National Legionary State”, with the Legion as the only legal party in the country. Once in power, the Legion intensified existing anti-Semitic legislation which led to violence against and executions of Jews.

According to Morariu, both the Legionary Movement and the post-World War II communist regime in Romania had their own messianisms. Codreanu and the only two Communist leaders – Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1901–1965) and Nicolae Ceaușescu (1918–1989) – had charisma and enjoyed a cult of personality. Both regimes used religion as a medium, but Ceaușescu used it in an ecumenical context. As Morariu pointed out in his conclusions, the communists understood that religion can be used as a tool to create the appear-

47. Radu Ioanid, “The Sacralised Politics of the Romanian Iron Guard,” in *Totalitarian Movements & Political Religions*, 5, no. 3 (Winter 2004): 419-453: 419, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1469076042000312203>

48. Richard J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 115. Instead of Romanian traditional folk dress, the Romania’s Francophile elite opted for Parisian style of the time.

ance of religious freedom and therefore accepted the Romanian Orthodox Church. He noted that despite political pressures, its involvement “in the Ecumenical Movement bore fruits that are still important today and that contributed to the creation of bridges of dialogue with other Churches”.⁴⁹

Morariu supported his claim by referring to Andrei Scrima (1925–2000), a prominent Romanian Orthodox theologian whom he has been researching in recent years.⁵⁰ Scrima became the personal delegate of the ecumenical patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople to Vatican II after refusing to return to Communist Romania. As an archimandrite of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, he was involved in the meeting between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I in Jerusalem in 1964 which led to the rescinding of the excommunication of 1054 AD, the year of the Great Schism between the churches of the Greek East and the Latin West. The retraction of this excommunication was a major leap in restoring the relations between Rome and Constantinople, along with other Eastern Orthodox patriarchates. As a re-

49. See Morariu, *Ecumenism, Primacy, Authority and Love: Faces of a complex theological reality*, 97.

50. See, Iuliu-Marius Morariu, “Ecumenism and Communism in the Romanian Context: Fr. Andre Scrima in the Archives of the Securitate”, in *Religions*, 12 (2021), 719, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12090719>; Iuliu-Marius Morariu, “Elements of Father Andrei Scrima’s Ecumenical Activity as Reflected in File No. 0005468 from the ‘Securitate’ Archives”, in *Review of Ecumenical Studies*, 12, no. 3 (2020): 497-511, <https://doi.org/10.2478/ress-2020-0035>

sult, the Joint Catholic-Orthodox Declaration was issued and read simultaneously at a public meeting of Vatican II and at a special ceremony in Istanbul (Constantinople).⁵¹ Why was Scrima so relevant to the government of Bucharest at the time? The Romanian authorities were interested not only in his ideas about ecumenism but also in the aspiration “to create a good image using the Ecumenical Movement, the World Council of Churches and the [sic] dialogue with the Catholic Church as tools in the accomplishment of this purpose”.⁵² The government of Bucharest was interested in using ecumenism “in order to create the illusion of democracy and freedom”⁵³ and it attempted “to use the ecumenical dialogue platform to simulate transparency and democracy [of its government]. This is one of the reasons why today, in [Eastern European] countries, there is a certain reticence (especially among the Eastern-Orthodox people, who are in the majority there), towards Ecumenism”.⁵⁴

51. Pope Paul VI, Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I, “Joint Catholic-Orthodox Declaration of his Holiness Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I”, Vatican City, 7 December 1965, https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/speeches/1965/documents/hf_p-vi_spe_19651207_common-declaration.html, accessed 11.09.2024.

52. Morariu, “Elements of Father Andrei Scrima’s Ecumenical Activity as Reflected in File No. 0005468 from the ‘Securitate’ Archives”, 510-511.

53. Morariu, “Ecumenism and Communism in the Romanian Context: Fr. Andre Scrima in the Archives of the Securitate”, 719.

54. Morariu, “Elements of Father Andrei Scrima’s Ecumenical Activity as Reflected in File No. 0005468 from the ‘Securitate’ Archives”, 497.

In the Name of Humanity

Pope Francis' encyclical letter *Fratelli tutti*⁵⁵ called for human fraternity and solidarity – universal fraternity without borders – and appealed for a rejection of war. Although there is no mention of “Islam” or “Muslims”, this topic was tackled in the subsequent *Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*⁵⁶, co-issued by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of al-Azha Sheik Ahmed el-Tayeb. According to the former, this joint statement was “no mere diplomatic gesture, but a reflection born of dialogue and common commitment”.⁵⁷

Noting in *Fratelli tutti* that the “conditions that favour the outbreak of wars are once again increasing”,⁵⁸ His Holiness reiterated his position, which he shared

55. Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti: On fraternity and social friendship*, 3 October 2020, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, accessed 11.09.2024.

56. Pope Francis, Sheik Ahmed el-Tayeb, *Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/travels/2019/outside/documents/papa-francesco_20190204_documento-fratellanza-unana.html, accessed 11.09.2024.

57. Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, para 5. This statement was also highlighted in the *Catholic Herald* (Christopher Altieri, “Pope Francis releases Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti”, in *Catholic Herald*, 4 October 2020, <https://catholicherald.co.uk/pope-francis-releases-encyclical-letter-fratelli-tutti/>, accessed 11.09.2024).

58. Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, para. 257.

with the members of the United Nations General Assembly.⁵⁹

“war is the negation of all rights and a dramatic assault on the environment. If we want true integral human development for all, we must work tirelessly to avoid war between nations and peoples. To this end, there is a need to ensure the uncontested rule of law and tireless recourse to negotiation, mediation and arbitration, as proposed by the Charter of the United Nations, which constitutes truly a fundamental juridical norm”.

Wars and military conflicts are driven by greed, power and ideology; religion is not a cause but an excuse. They are sadistic acts. Gratification is derived from inflicting pain, suffering and/or humiliation on the other, elements which are not even found in the rules of the jungle. Predators in the animal realm kill to eat, which is a survival instinct; they do not hunt in order to torture. Wars and military conflicts happen when diplomacy fails.

A conflict that has been ongoing for several decades, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, indicates that no one

59. Pope Francis, *Meeting with the members of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organisation: Address of the Holy Father*, (New York: United Nations Headquarters, 25 September 2015), https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/september/documents/papa-francesco_20150925_onu-visita.html, accessed 11.09.2024.

wants a resolution.⁶⁰ In this case, the war is not about religion – Judaic Israel versus Islamic Arab states – but about land and the self-determination of Palestinians (including those of Christian faith) within the territory of the former Mandatory Palestine.⁶¹ Historically,

60. The Israeli–Arab military and political conflict dates to the first arrival of Jewish settlers in Ottoman Palestine in 1882 and was later supported by the 1917 Balfour Declaration which agreed to the setting up of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

61. Although Scrima supported the Arab cause, “his attitude towards the Palestinians and the Arab situation influenced neither the Jewish authorities to act against him, nor the Occidental societies to expel him from the universities where he was a teacher. His arguments were most probably well-sustained, and his attitude was perceived as a personal honest perspective, which was not meant to upset anyone” (Morariu, “Elements of Father Andrei Scrima’s Ecumenical Activity as Reflected in File No. 0005468 from the ‘Securitate’ Archives”, 509.

In the same spirit of Scrima, and while aware of the peace-loving Jewish people whom I have utmost respect, I will be morally failing if I were not to put some questions with respect to the actions of the Israeli authorities: Isn’t the establishment of Jewish settlements in occupied territories a form of expansionism expressed through the Nazi concept of *Lebensraum*, “living space”? Palestinian neighbourhoods are systematically disappearing, as happened to Jewish ones in Nazi Germany. Have the ultra-nationalist Jewish settlers brought far-right political ideologies to power in Israel? With such an ideology in government, will the people of Palestine be subject to a holocaust such as the Jewish people endured during the World War II? The Palestinians have for decades been subject to persecution by the Israeli Government; its present conduct in Gaza tantamount to genocide. With moral clarity, Stephen Kapos – 87-year-old Holocaust survivor from Budapest – unequivocally stated that “Israel is committing genocide in Gaza” (Owen Jones, “Holocaust Survivor Tells Me: Israel is committing genocide”, in YouTube, 26 April 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4PFmz4MNdg>, accessed 11.09.2024).

after the founding of Islam, the relationship between Judaism and Islam was respectable. When Christians persecuted the Jews, Muslims offered them refuge and protected them. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are all Abrahamic monotheistic religions; they have a common origin which grounds their respective intrinsic value systems. Not only do they all worship one God, but they also value moral life based on prayer, almsgiving and fasting. They all share similar values, teachings and morality, as their spiritual traditions have the same roots. Moses, the foremost Hebrew prophet in Judaism, is acknowledged by both Christianity and Islam as one of their major prophets.

The Joint Catholic-Orthodox Declaration of 1965 between the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches did not halt the schism but was a public manifestation of an aspiration for reconciliation. It rejected more than nine centuries of hostility. Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I's decision to adhere to such a declaration was bold. Not all Orthodox leaders agreed with the idea of rapprochement. He was publicly challenged by Metropolitan Philaret, President of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, in 1965 in an open letter, where he argued that

“no union of the Roman Church with us is possible until it renounces its new doctrines, and no communion in prayer can be restored with it without a decision of all churches, which, however, can hardly

be possible before the liberation of the Church of Russia which at present has to live in catacombs. ...

May such treason against Orthodoxy not enter between us".⁶²

Metropolitan Philaret concluded his plea by requesting His Holiness

“to put an end to the confusion, because the way you have chosen to follow, even if it would bring you to a union with the Roman Catholics, would provoke a schism in the Orthodox world. Surely even many of your spiritual children will prefer faithfulness to Orthodoxy instead of the idea of a compromising union with the heterodox without their full harmony with us in the truth.”⁶³

Nowadays, the Catholic and Orthodox Churches are not in “full communion” because of enduring doctrinal and ecclesiastical differences. Yet nearly six decades after this declaration, the relations between the two have improved; certainly, neither side calls the other heretic. No schism within the Orthodox Church arose because of this declaration. On the contrary, in February 2016, Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow

62. Metropolitan Philaret, *A Protest to Patriarch Athenagoras: On the Lifting of the Anathemas of 1054*, (Orthodox Christian Information Center, December 2/15 1965), http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/philaret_lifting.aspx, accessed 11.09.2024. Metropolitan Philaret was the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia from 1964 until his death in 1985.

63. Ibid.

and all Russia and Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, the largest of the Eastern Orthodox churches, met in Cuba and issued a Joint Declaration,⁶⁴ the first of its kind, which called for fraternity and solidarity. Although no immediate rapprochement is foreseen, both primates called for restoration of Christian unity. The declaration includes references to the persecution of Christians in the Middle East, wars in the region, the Greek Catholic Churches and the conflict in Ukraine:

“25. It is our hope that our meeting may also contribute to reconciliation wherever tensions exist between Greek Catholics and Orthodox. It is today clear that the past method of ‘uniatism’, understood as the union of one community to the other, separating it from its Church, is not the way to re-establish unity. Nonetheless, the ecclesial communities which emerged in these historical circumstances have the right to exist and to undertake all that is necessary to meet the spiritual needs of their faithful, while seeking to live in peace with their neighbours. Orthodox and Greek Catholics are in need of reconciliation and of mutually acceptable forms of co-existence.

64. Pope Francis, Patriarch Kirill, “Joint Declaration of Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia”, in *Activities of the Holy Father Pope Francis* (Havana, 12 February 2016), https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2016/february/documents/papa-francesco_20160212_dichiarazione-comune-kirill.html, accessed 11.09.2024. The meeting was made possible through Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev and Cardinal Koch, for the Russian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church, respectively.

26. We deplore the hostility in Ukraine that has already caused many victims, inflicted innumerable wounds on peaceful inhabitants and thrown society into a deep economic and humanitarian crisis. We invite all the parts involved in the conflict to prudence, to social solidarity and to action aimed at constructing peace. We invite our Churches in Ukraine to work towards social harmony, to refrain from taking part in the confrontation, and to not support any further development of the conflict".⁶⁵

These are only two points of the 30-point declaration; both call for ecumenism. Nevertheless, point 25 upset the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, whilst point 26 was disapproved of by the Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate, a "schismatic group" according to the Moscow Patriarchate. The present context consists of one of the bloodiest, deadliest conflicts since the World War II, where civilians bore the brunt of violence.

As history repeats itself and war rages, we should aim to exploit that which strengthens human civilisation, not support acts that bring about its destruction. The way forward goes beyond the strict Christian understanding of the term ecumenism, that is, the aim to bring different Christian denominations closer. Its Greek-Latin etymology is expressive of the more inclusive essence of the term: the Greek word 'oik-

65. Ibid.

oumenē' translates as 'the inhabited world' whilst the Latin 'oecumenicus' translates as 'worldwide'. In this sense, one may read ecumenism as a term aimed at reconciling, building bridges to enrich one another irrespective of one's local or international, official or unofficial, bilateral or multilateral, Eastern or Western, Northern or Southern position.

Reconciliation is not a negotiated peace, nor is it the result of deals to safeguard individualistic, or even worse, egoistic interests. Diversity in ethnicity, denomination, ideology, social status, language, culture or nation is inspirational. Reconciliation brings humanity together in a unity enriched by differences not uniformity. Reconciliation represents metaphorical bridge-building between peoples based on their essence and humanity; it is an opportunity to express humanity.⁶⁶ In national and international fora, one may argue for the Darwinian axiom of "survival of the fittest",⁶⁷ with the national interest prevailing,

66. This is in line with the teachings of Pope Francis: "It is good to cultivate a unity enriched by differences that will not yield to the temptation of a bland uniformity, which is never good. In this spirit, ... discussions centre on appreciating how differing aspects present in our traditions, rather than giving rise to disagreements, can become legitimate opportunities for expressing the shared apostolic faith. ... The Lord's peace is not a 'negotiated' peace, the fruit of agreements meant to safeguard interests, but a peace that reconciles, that brings together in unity" (Pope Francis, *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working Group*).

67. Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (London: John Murray, 1869), 91-164.

but it is imperative to recall that beyond nationality there is humanity. The same applies to the distinct categories within a given society: ethnicity, denomination, ideology, social status, language and culture. Just co-existence amongst all is the future of humanity. Reconciliation is a process; the first step is a desire to maintain amicable relations and the second is finding the courage to take such a step; it is based on mutual respect.

Lino Bianco
Pontifical Gregorian University
September 2024

Word of the Author

In the ecumenical field, primacy, authority, and love are clearly some of the most important topics. They are also relevant at an internal level, inside the different local churches. Consequently, I have tried to investigate them in the past years. I have dealt with aspects like the relationship between primacy and synodality, the way in which ecumenism was understood by the communist regime, the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, the relationship between secularism and political theology, different types of messianism and so on.

I now try to offer the reader some of the most relevant texts written in the last years, in an attempt to invite them to reflect on the role of religion in contemporary society and on the relevance of ecumenism for the public area. I also want to provide certain case studies related to the Romanian context I come from, but also to invite to debate.

I hope this research will be useful to scholars, but also those who want to find more about the relevance of the Romanian theological space for the contemporary

scholarship. Moreover, I have tried to bring into attention current topics, like the most recent encyclical letter of Pope Francis *Fratelli tutti* (2020), which shifts the Catholic social discourse and provides clear directions, being a continuation of other similar documents, such as Pope Francis' *Laudato Si* or Benedict XVI's *Caritas in Veritate*.

At the same time, in order to speak about the role played by the Romanian Orthodox Church and some of its representatives in the ecumenical field, but also to bring into attention the interest the Romanian Securitate had in the topic or the pressure they exerted, I have published documents on the life and activity of Fr. Andre Scrima (1925-2000) and his work in the ecumenical field.

Although it is more of an anthology that brings together topics relevant for the ecumenical field and speaks about potential outcomes and principles, the book: *Ecumenism, primacy, authority and love – faces of a complex theological reality* provides directions, sources and reflections and invites to dialogue and debate. I wish the readers to discover the beauty of the discussion and to deepen their understanding of Christian life, which consist of loving one's neighbour!

The author

Primacy and Syonodality in the Orthodox Church – Patterns of a Complex Contemporary Problem¹

Introduction

There have always been crises in society and in the Church and there will always be². In order to overcome them, the representatives of the two seek constant solutions. Some are related to the self-understanding of a structure, others with its interactions in the social space. In the Christian space, synodality (as it is expressed in the Orthodox tradition), or conciliarity (if we used the term preferred by the Protestants³) could

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1. A first version of this research was published in: *Annals of The "Constantin Brâncuși" University Of Târgu Jiu Letter And Social Science Series*, VII (2022), no. 2: 163-168. The author expresses his gratitude to the editors for the permission to reprint it.
 2. Bernard Peyrous, Sylvie Bernay, *Les crises de l'Eglise. Ce qu'elles nous enseignent*, (Paris : Les Editions Artege, 2022), 9.
 3. Paul Valliere, *Conciliarism: A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 10.

represent a solution. Therefore, in our research, we will focus on the topic of synodality and on its relationship with another important one, namely primacy.⁴

The main goal of this research is therefore to answer the question: how to balance primacy and synodality in the church? At the same time, I will try to define the two terms, to see different perspectives about their relationship and to offer a personal reflection on the topic. In order to do so, I will also resort to representative authors from different Christian backgrounds and compare their ideas. The reflection will therefore aim to investigate two topics which are relevant for the understanding of Christianity and its meaning and to emphasise their ecumenical role.

Primacy and Synodality – The Undergrounds of a Complex Issue

As already mentioned, crises are not something new in the Church. Some of them led to scissions and schisms. Still, as Fr. John Meyendorff shows that:

4. *Serving Communion. Re-thinking the relationship between Primacy and Synodality. A study by the Saint Ireneus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working Group*, (Los Angeles: Maymount Institute Press, TSEHAI University, 2019), 101.

“These various schisms cannot be regarded merely as evidence of an inescapable tendency towards fragmentation on the part of the churches. The Greek and Latin Churches both continued to exhibit the signs of a true Catholicity.”⁵

The understanding of schisms and their cause is also linked to an important aspect that defines the role of the Church, namely the need to be self-critical.⁶ Moreover, it requires us to see and understand the dynamics of the development of the Church and its organisational structures. A scholar who aims to deal with such a topic should also take into consideration the term *Liquid Church*, also anticipated by theologian Daniel Hardy, who linked it to the cultural dynamic of the evolution of the Church⁷, and analysed by theologian Pete Ward, among others.⁸

What the common group “Orthodox-Catholic Saint Irenaeus Group” stipulated in its recent document is that:

“Both Eucharistic experience and canonical tradition show that primacy and synodality depend

5. John Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church. Its Past and Its Role in the World Today* (Crestwood NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1981), 140.

6. Pete Ward, *Liquid Ecclesiology – The Gospel and the Church*, (Leiden: Brill 2017), 164.

7. Daniel Hardy, *Finding the Church*, (London: SCM Press, 2001), 110.

8. Ward, *Liquid Ecclesiology – The Gospel and the Church*.

on one another. In the Eucharist, the fundamental expression of the ecclesial life as a whole, the community and the proestos presiding over it (the bishop or a presbyter delegated by him) are in an interdependent relationship: the community cannot celebrate the Eucharist without a proestos, who, in turn, should not celebrate without a community. In the canonical tradition, a description of the correlation between the "First" and the other bishops is formalized on the regional level in Apostolic Canon 34 (cf. §§ 7.4 and 14.7): the bishops of each province cannot do anything important without the consent of their head, who, from his side, cannot do anything without the consent of all. Primacy and synodality must not be played off against one another. On the contrary, they must be considered as inseparable and as complementing each other in the service of the unity of God's church."⁹

Clearly, the liturgical situation should also be reflected in the administrative life of the Church. Synodality should therefore be a part of its practical life. And the consent of all should be the principle that brings together the two aspects in a symphony of life. According to some theologians, it is the principle that takes us directly to the first centuries of the life of the Church and reminds us of the apostolic succession,

9. *Serving Communion. Re-thinking the relationship between Primacy and Synodality*, 101.

which was also perceived conciliarly.¹⁰ As it is not the purpose of this paper to argue with the author of this affirmation, namely the Metropolitan of Pergam, John. D. Zizioulas, we will just mention it among other aspects that are to be taken into consideration in a historical and theological approach such as this one.

The historical investigation of the way in which the relationship between primacy and synodality was understood led the aforementioned Catholic-Orthodox group of work to arrive at the following statement:

“Together, we affirm that we have much to learn from one another concerning issues of primacy and synodality. The Catholic Church has been able to sustain a strongly functioning primacy, even if some of its manifestations are viewed as problematic by the Orthodox. The Orthodox, on the other hand, have mostly been able to preserve strong synodal structures at local, regional, and more recently, global levels, even if these at times result in difficult situations that give Catholics pause. Thus each side exhibits both strengths and weaknesses, which we can all acknowledge.”¹¹

Thus, the Orthodox are called to look at the Catholic side and see how a functioning primacy can be built

10. See: John. D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church*, (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1985), 204.

11. *Serving Communion. Re-thinking the relationship between Primacy and Synodality*, 109.

and consolidated without totally agreeing with such an idea. On the other hand, the other part is called to see how the local synodal structures could be used at a local, regional and more recently a global level. One must understand that, just like with the practical implementation of a political model, there is no perfect form of life organisation. Moreover, as the same document emphasised, the first millennium of Christianity should not be idealised from the point of view of organisation.¹²

From the Early Church to Nowadays – Evolution of Concepts

In fact, taking into account the historical aspect of the organisation of the Church, one may see that, although it has some similarities with the contemporary society, it was different from the point of view of power centralisation, at least at the beginning of the Church. As an Orthodox, I remain moderate in my assump-

12. „In Orthodox-Catholic dialogue there is a strong tendency to idealize the first millennium. However, in the 506 years between 337 and 843 there were 217 years of schism between Rome and Constantinople, so that one cannot simply speak of an “undivided” Church of the first millennium. Nevertheless, the experience of the first millennium can be highly inspiring in re-establishing communion between our churches (cf. chapter 7).” *Serving Communion. Re-thinking the relationship between Primacy and Synodality*, 43.

tions related to this aspect, but I am also aware of the assertions made by historians like Paul Valliere, who insist on the fact that:

“Early Christianity was not centralized. The first Christian churches were tight-knit local fellowships, neither created nor governed by a central directorate. Nevertheless, these early communities, or at least an appreciable number of them, maintained a surprisingly far-reaching network of relationships with each other, resisting what must have been the ever-present temptation to absolutize the local fellowship.”¹³

One could try to address the rhetorical question of which was first, the primate or the synodality. Certainly, the two are linked. Although Churches like that of Jerusalem were respected, having a kind of honorary primacy due to the fact that the Lord lived there, as was the case with the Apostles’ Council, this did not affect the idea of synodality. All the disciples gathered round and debated topics like the circumcision or the attitude that should be adopted in the case of relationships with the pagans who converted to the new faith in the Resurrection of Jesus. The decision was unani-

13. Valliere, *Conciliarism: A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, 20-21. Cf. Kenneth A. Strand, „Church Organization in the First-Century Rome – a new look at the basic data,” in *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 29, no. 2, (Summer 1991): 139-160, and Ludwig Hertlig SJ, *Istoria Bisericii (History of the Church)* (Iassy, RO: Ars Longa, 2001), 15-43, for a detailed perspective on the topic.

mously accepted despite the fact that, at the beginning of the day, there were different opinions put forward. Therefore, we can definitely say that primate and synodality were linked, without there being a “primacy” of one of them. Moreover, their relationship was rather complementary and the primacy of the oldest Apostle, James the old, was not due to jurisdictional matters, but to the respect that resulted from him being at that time the oldest of the team. Not even Peter, who was later considered the founder of what Rome would use in a different and complex way as a model of primacy, challenged James’ quality.

For this reason, one could ask themselves in what moment these separations appeared and took the form that they still have today. A glimpse of the potential answer can be seen in Peter Norton’s approach to the evolution of the episcopal elections between the 3rd and 6th centuries. He offered a complex landscape of the situation starting from the comments of Evagrius and underlined the following aspects which are relevant for the understanding of the evolution of the Church:

“Evagrius’ comment raises an interesting point: in the larger cities, the size of the clergy, including its many lower orders, combined with the financial resources of the church, would have constituted a not insignificant social resource. At Alexandria, for example, in the early fifth century, the parabolani, a lower order of clergy whose job was to minister

to the sick, numbered some 500–600, while at Antioch in the time of Chrysostom there were some 3000 regular recipients of charitable funds from the church. At the top of this edifice sat the bishop. Thus although the clergy never wore the cingulum, the official's belt of office in the secular world, it is not unrealistic to claim that in episcopal elections, we are looking at the choice of important functionaries within the secular state."¹⁴

If we take into account the fact that Evagrius lived approximatively between 345 and 399,¹⁵ this means that in the fourth century this structure already existed. In order to reach this form, most probably at least a few decades passed. During all this time, the structure, organisation, and status of each category got a better defined role and their importance increased. As for Alexandria, although it was a very important centre, it was only a local one. This does not mean to say that it was the same in all the important centres of the Empire. Most likely, they reached a similar model in the beginning of the fourth century, due to the relevance that the centre of Alexandria had on Eastern Christianity and, at times, on the capital that

14. Peter Norton, *Episcopal elections 250-600: hierarchy and popular will in late antiquity*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4.

15. For more information about his life, activity and thinking, see also: Gabriel Bunge, *Evagrius the Pontic – an introduction* (Sibiu, RO: Deisis Press, 1997); Gabriel Bunge, *The spiritual father and the Christian gnosis according to Evagrius the Pontic*, (Sibiu, RO: Deisis Press, 2000).

Constantin the Great offered to the Empire, namely Constantinople. Sometime between the issuing of the tolerance edict and the 4th ecumenical Council of Chalcedon¹⁶, when a schism occurred between this centre and others from the Christian space, this model and similar ones were exported. What should be noted in relation to this point is the fact underlined by Valliere that there were two categories of conflicts that gave rise to conciliarism, namely those involving discipline and those involving doctrine.¹⁷ This approach on the topic, based on its utility, is a result of how it is perceived. It separates it from an abusive usage and makes it more understandable.

Regarding the primatialism and its relationship with the aforementioned topic, some authors say that its origins must be searched not in the first centuries of the Church but in “the experience of the Western church in the Middle Ages”¹⁸. Unfortunately, the limited space of this research does not allow us to have a deeper approach on the topic or on the fact that “Orthodoxy today exists in a post-imperial environment, even if

16. For its content and relevance, see: Lucian Dîncă, *The Ecumenical Councils Efes, 431 & Chalcedon, 451* (Târgu Lăpuș, RO: Galaxia Gutenberg Press, 2015).

17. „The conflicts that gave rise to conciliarism are often divided into two classes: conflicts involving doctrine and those involving discipline, that is, conflicts over what Christians should believe and how Christians should behave.” Valliere, *Conciliarism: A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, 56.

18. Valliere, *Conciliarism: A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, 119.

many Orthodox have been slow to accept the fact.”¹⁹ Likewise, despite the claim of traditional Churches like the Catholic and the Orthodox that they are more deeply linked with conciliar traditions, compared to other Christian Churches (some voices from the Orthodox space even transform this into a title of glory), Valliere stated that:

“A few Protestant churches did a better job of preserving conciliar structures than their catholic cousins in early modern period. The Presbyterian system and Methodist connectionalism are cases in point. But the scope of Protestant Conciliarism was limited by the divisions within Protestantism. Hence Protestantism, while in some ways responsible steward of conciliarism, lacked ample ecclesial space for its exercise, while the catholic traditions, which possessed the amplitude, allowed conciliarism to be eclipsed by dubious alternatives”.²⁰

Of course, this idea is also debatable. The fact is that Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants alike have searched for conciliarism and saw it as a feasible model of solving the problems of the Church, organising

19. Valliere, *Conciliarism: A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, 247.

20. Valliere, *Conciliarism: A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, 10. Cf. Nicholas Denysenko, „Primacy, Synodality and Collegiality in Orthodoxy – a Liturgical Model,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 48, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 20-44. For a diverse perspective, see also: Christian D. Washburn, „St. Robert Bellarmine, Conciliarism, and the Limits of Papal Power,” *Perichoresis*, 18, no. 6, (December 2020): 21-40.

its structure and, at the same time, understanding primacy from a pragmatic point of view.

Conclusions

As stipulated in the document of the Saint Ireneus group of Orthodox-Catholic dialogue²¹, primacy and synodality should be seen as complementary not as competing with each other. Both the Orthodox and the Catholic Church have something to learn from each other. The former about the way in which primacy can be applied in a complex context, the latter about how conciliarity has helped the Church survive and get organised, without excluding the idea of primacy, but transforming it in a matter of honour and in a theoretical rather than practical principle. In my opinion, both Churches should take a look at the historical evolution and the outcomes of the two topics (in order to understand when, where and how they appeared and how influences like the Roman system of dioceses influenced their order). At the same time, they should analyse how fear and the desire to stay away from the idea of primacy has led to a different model of

21. *Serving Communion. Re-thinking the relationship between Primacy and Synodality*, 101.

conciliarity (in the Protestant space). I also think that primacy and synodality could be well balanced in the Church if their understanding is administrative rather than doctrinary and if their role is practical rather than absolute. If this was taken into account, aspects like primacy would no longer represent stumbling blocks in Orthodoxy (where different Churches still debate about the role played by one or the other in the decision-making process). Likewise, synodality would not be so difficult to accomplish (it should not be forgotten that the Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete took place after a long period without anything similar in the Orthodox space and some of its decisions suffered because of the difficulty to bring together the heads of different local Churches).²² At a spiritual

22. For more information related with the topic, its ecclesiological and social outcomes, see also: Iuliu-Marius Morariu, "The Romanian Delegations to the Holy Pan-Orthodox Synod of Crete (2016) and to the its preliminary assemblies and their importance for theological discussions", in *Teologia*, nr. 69 (2016), no. 4, 78-85; Iuliu-Marius, "Bioethics in the Discussions of the Pan-Orthodox Synod from Crete (2016)", in *Asstra Salvensis*, 4 (2016), no. 7, 247-254; Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Towards the social doctrine of the Orthodox Church: The document 'For the Life of the World' of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (2020)", in *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 77 (2021), no. 4, a 6545, 1-6; Iuliu-Marius Morariu, "The social thought of the Orthodox Church reflected in the documents of the Holy Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete (2016)", in *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 75(4), 2019, a5471, 1-6; Iuliu-Marius Morariu, "Eastern Orthodox Churches and Ecumenism according to the Holy Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete (2016)", in *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, vol. 74, no. 4, 2018, 4954, 1-5.

level, I would say that any approach dedicated to the topic should not put first the administrative aspects, the pride of a person or a community or its role, but prayer. Only thus would balance be easily achieved.

Secularism and Political Theology.

Case study: The Voice of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada in Civil Society

Introduction

Secularism is clearly a complex topic that often causes worries in the religious sphere. Defined by scholars as a form of separation of the state from the monopoly of the Church (sometimes with emphasis on its fight against an ecclesiastical governing) and by the representatives of civil society as a form of emancipation of the state from the Church,¹ with derivatives like “secularisation”, which in the Romanian space can also

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1. For more information and different perspectives on the topic see also: Rene Remond, *Religie și societate în Europa - secularizarea în secolele al XIX-lea și XX (1780-2000)* (*Religion and society in Europe – secularisation in the 19th and 20th centuries (1780-2000)*), (Iassy: Polirom, 2003); Gavin D’Costa, *Theology in the Public Square: Church, Academy, and Nation*, (Hoboken: New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell, 2005).

have a more pragmatic meaning,² secularism is undeniably a reality that invites the Church and the state to define more deeply their roles and to cohabitate.

The relevance of the topic is proved by the rich literature dedicated to it and by the authors who often share contradictory opinions on its meaning. Therefore, while philosophers like Berdyaev see modernity and its main fruit, Secularism, as a form of regress and return to the Middle Ages,³ others see it as a malady or a threat to Christian values⁴ and some question the slow pace of democratisation and try to link it with the role played by the Orthodox Churches⁵ in the states where this is a problem. Some researchers, on the other hand, simply emphasise the complexity of the phenomenon and its dynamics over the years⁶.

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2. Thus, for example, in the Romanian context, secularisation is also related with the action of the Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza who united Moldavia and Wallachia and ruled between 1859 and 1866 and who confiscated the fortunes of the monasteries from those countries and offered them to the peasantry. See: ****, Secularizarea averilor bisericesti (1863): motivații și consecințe (The secularisation of the monasteries fortunes (1863): motivations and consequences)*, (Bucharest: Basilica Publishing House, 2013).
 3. Nicolai Berdiaev, *Un nou Ev Mediu (A new Middle Ages)*, (Craiova: Omniscope, 1995).
 4. Ioan Bizău, *Viața în Hristos și maladia secularizării (Life in Christ and the Secularisation Malady)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Patmos, 2002).
 5. Olivier Gillet, *Religion et nationalisme. L'idéologie de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine sous le régime communiste*, (Bruxelles: Editions de L'Université de Bruxelles, 1997), 5.
 6. See for example: Nyazi Berkes, *The development of secularism in Turkey*, (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964).

Doubtlessly, in spite of the complexity of the topic and of its different meanings, secularism is related to both political theology⁷ and the role played by the Church in the public space. Rowan Williams even tried to put forward a new concept, namely that of “pragmatic secularism”. According to him:

“it defines an exclusive public orthodoxy of a new kind, and works on the assumption that only the sort of loyalty is really possible. Loyalty to your faith will be a matter of private preference, perhaps even very powerful private emotion, but cannot stand alongside loyalty to the state, to the supposedly neutral public order of rational persons.”⁸

As Christians, we must accept that the current role played by the Church in society is different from the

7. Defined by the specialists as it follows: „We use the term “political theology” in the sense of a theological approach to the political. Specifically, it refers to the ways theologians conceive of the relationship of the Church and the Church’s mission to bring about salvation in relation to the political sphere as a system of power and institutions. The task of the theologian is to argue from biblical, dogmatic, and ethical sources of revelation. In light of the inevitable interrelationship of religious and political spheres worldwide, the theological challenge is to take a new look at the situation brought about by political modernity and to attempt to formulate adequate theological responses.” Kristina Stoeckl, Ingeborg Gabriel, Aristotle Papanikolaou, eds., *Political Theologies in Orthodox Christianity. Common Challenges – Divergent Positions*, (T&T Clark Theology), (Edinburgh: T&T Clark and Bloomberg, 2017), 2.

8. Rowan Williams, *Faith in the public square*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 3. Cf. Anthony Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic: People and power of the New Rome*, (Cambridge: Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015), 20.

one it had one or two centuries ago. Moreover, as the Catholic space has often emphasised (see for example Pope Francis' last encyclical letters), the seeking of the common good is clearly one of the main tasks of any Church.⁹ Consequently and given the complexity of the topic, we will try to present a case study on how a particular community can use its principles and efforts in order to be present in the public space. The chosen subject is the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada.¹⁰ Founded in 2016, when a part of the parishes of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of America were added to it and the diocese became part of the newly-formed Metropolitan structure, the small diocese cannot be considered one of the most important voices that influence the decisions of the Canadian state. Nonetheless, it has certain initiatives that bring people together in view of serving the common good.

The question that the present paper will try to answer is: how does the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada influence civil society? Certainly, other secondary questions may arise, but we will try to answer them at the right time. Some of the most important sources we will use include monographs, memorials or stud-

9. Cf. Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*, (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2011).

10. For more information about its history, see: <https://www.episcopia.ca/index.php/en/who-we-are/history>, accessed 16. 12. 2022.

ies dedicated to the Romanians of Canada,¹¹ together with chronicles from different journals and other documents that may be useful to our investigation. The work will try not to focus too much on the historical narrative, although in certain moments it will also be necessary to present the history of the institution or certain moments of historical relevance, but rather to emphasise how the institution tries to make its voice heard and its opinions seen in society.

The Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada and Its Voice in Civil Society

Given the dimensions of this investigation, we will not be able to present all the details of the history of

11. Like for example: Fr. Gherorghe Henția, *O călătorie în America (A travel to America)*, eds. Gabriel-Viorel Gârdan and Daniel Alic, (Cluj-Napoca: Cluj-University Press, 2014); Gabriel-Viorel Gârdan, Daniel Alic, „Gheorghe Henția, istoricul unei călătorii în America de Nord (Gheorghe Henția – the history of a travel in North America),” In: *Gheorghe Henția, A travel to America*, eds. Gabriel-Viorel Gârdan and Daniel Alic (Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press, 2014): 5-26; Ioan Casian, „Românii din America și viața lor religioasă (Romanians from America and their religious life)”, in *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, 68, no. 11-12 (Winter 1950): 588-602; Gabriel-Viorel Gârdan, *Episcopia Ortodoxă Română din America – parte a Ortodoxiei Americane (Romanian Orthodox Diocese of America – part of the American Orthodoxy)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press, 2007); Gabriel-Viorel Gârdan, *Românii Ortodocși din America. Documente (Romanian Orthodox from America – Documents)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Pres, 2010).

the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada. However, it should be mentioned that, despite the short time that has passed from its founding at the Archdiocesan Congress of the Romanian Archdiocese of the two Americas held in Hamilton, Ontario on 1-3 July 2016, later approved by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church on October 28-29th of the same year,¹² the institution has a long and rich history. When speaking about the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada, we must also take into account the parishes that are part of it. Some of them have a history that starts with the Romanian emigration to Canada, sometime in the second half of the 19th century (although there were Romanians here previous to this moment, this was when compact Romanian communities appeared in areas like Alberta,).¹³ Therefore, parishes like the one from Timmins (On) or the one from Boian (Ab) have almost 100 years of continuous existence. The complex history of the Romanian Orthodox diocese of Americas, which starts in the 3rd decade of the 20th century, was also marked by separations, like the one from 1958, when an important part of the Diocese decided to break off from the official hierarchy of the Romanian

12. <https://www.episcopia.ca/index.php/en/who-we-are/history>, accessed 16. 12. 2022. See also: Romanian Metropolis of the two Americas, *Historic moments in Romanian Orthodoxy in America* (Chicago: Dinasty Books, 2018).

13. For more information about their history, see: ***, *Romanians in Alberta*, (Edmonton: Canadian Romanian Society of Alberta, 1998).

Orthodox Church (accusing them of being servants of the Communist regime) and become a separate diocese that later joined the OCA.¹⁴ Unfortunately, subsequent discussions with the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate (in 2010) did not solve the problem, although important steps were taken on the path towards unity. Consequently, today there are still Romanian parishes in Canada that do not belong to the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada. Notwithstanding, there are currently 22 parishes, 2 missions, and 4 Cathedrals (Saint-Hubert, which is the diocesan one, Montreal, Windsor and Edmonton)¹⁵ that belong to the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada for a population of 235,050 people¹⁶, as reported in 2016 by official documents. There are also about 10 parishes that belong to the “Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America” (belonging to the OCA) or “Vatra”, as it is called by Romanians (due to the fact that their headquarter was at “Vatra Românească” all around Canada. However, since the topic of our investigation is the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada, we will focus only on

14. For more information about the topic see: Gerald J. Boban-go, *The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America: the first half century 1929-1979*, (Jackson, Michigan: Romanian-American Heritage Center, 1979), but also, Gârdan, *Episcopia Ortodoxă Română din America – parte a Ortodoxiei Americane (Romanian Orthodox Diocese of America – part of the American Orthodoxy)*.

15. <https://www.episcopia.ca/index.php/en/structure/parish-directory>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

16. <https://www.episcopia.ca/index.php/en/structure/parish-directory>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

those belonging to the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate that we have information about.

When speaking about the voice of a diocese or a parish in society, first and foremost one must clearly take into account how the institution communicates with people. In the case we are investigating, the diocese has a functional website in Romanian, English, and French.¹⁷ Romanian is the mother tongue of the majority of the faithful, while English is the official language of Canada and French is the official language of the province of Quebec and is also used in other provinces. If we take a look at the content of the website, we can find information about the history of the institution, its status, the council that coordinates its activities, the relationship with other institutions, its publication (*The Word journal*), the bishop, the Metropolitan structure that it is part of, but also a section of news. Sometimes, the website is used as a source of inspiration for other organs of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate like the *Lumina newspaper*,¹⁸ or *basilica.ro*,¹⁹ its portal, but also for other websites of Romanian dioceses and metropolitan churches. From time to time, Orthodox portals from the American

17. <https://www.episcopia.ca/index.php/ro/>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

18. Cf. <https://ziarullumina.ro/actualitate-religioasa/diaspora/>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

19. <https://basilica.ro/category/diaspora/>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

space like orthochristian.com take on news published there. One interesting aspect is that the journal of the diocese, *Cuvântul – The Word – Le Verbe*,²⁰ which hosts theological articles, chronicles of the events related to the life of the diocese, information about the youth, the Romanian culture and tradition, Romanians in the world, and Orthodoxy all around the world, in Romanian, English and French, can be found, with a short delay compared to its publication (one or two issues, depending on the season), in pdf version on the website, from where it can be freely downloaded. Why are these aspects important and speak about how the voice of the diocese can be heard in civil society? In the first place, the website represents the interface of the institution with the faithful or sympathisers, with the pan-orthodox context, but also with anyone who wants to take information about the history of the institution, its structure, its events or the schedule of the diocesan Cathedral (which is constantly updated). However, there is a drawback of the website. It does speak about how the institution sees itself (and also provides a contact address where those who want to get in contact with its representatives have the possibility to do so). Still, it is not enough in order to have a voice that makes you more visible. Probably some cooperation with other websites (like information or

20. <https://www.episcopia.ca/index.php/ro/publicatii/revista-cuvantul>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

newspaper websites from Canada) would be useful. In addition, the fact that the bishop has messages related to the main events of contemporary society or speaks about the day of the mother, peace and so on is important. If he also invited the faithful or those who read the website to have public initiatives (or, why not, to vote on a certain project), visibility of the website would increase. The same would also be good for the Facebook page of the institution, which is also trilingual and updated, but not sponsored, which is why the institution only has about 3,000 followers and likes.²¹

Let us now take a look at the websites of the parishes that are part of the diocese. Almost all of them have their own website, which is important. Nowadays the internet represents an important factor of communication for the Church too. “The “Saint George Diocesan Cathedral from Saint-Hubert, QC has a website that is easy to access and provides information about the schedule of the liturgical services, the priests, the women’s committee, the council of the parish, and the youth; it even has a photo gallery and a section dedicated to the youth of the parish.²² The website also contains news about the activities organised by the parish, illustrated by photos. Nonetheless, a big

21. <https://www.facebook.com/Episcopia.ca>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

22. <http://www.sfgheorghe.ca/>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

weakness is the fact that it is only in Romanian. The other Cathedral from the neighbourhood, namely “Saint John the Baptist” from Montreal, which has already reached 49 years of existence, also has its own website.²³ Unfortunately, like the previous one, it is only in Romanian, which makes it difficult to access by people who are not Romanian or do not speak the language. Moreover, the information from the news section is not updated, meaning that is not a relevant tool from this point of view. On the other hand, the website of the Cathedral of Windsor²⁴ is updated. It contains information about its history and schedule and has a link to the Facebook page and to live broadcasts, but it is also only in Romanian. And these are only a few examples. Therefore, one important reason why the voice of parishes is not heard enough in the local communities they are part of is that they perceive themselves only as local communities, not as general representatives of Orthodoxy.

Regarding other aspects, it must be mentioned that, as a part of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Romanian Orthodox bishop of Canada takes part in the Pan-Orthodox events of the country. However, there is no common organ that brings together the voices of all the canonical episcopates from the USA and Canada. Instead, there are initiatives like the

23. <http://bor-montreal.ca/>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

24. <https://stgeorgewindsor.ca/>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

“march for life²⁵ where the bishop is present, together with the delegates of the parish. Moreover, the relationship with the youth is not neglected. The metropolitan organisation ROYA²⁶ also has a vice-president from Canada and organises activities for the youth, not only Romanian or Orthodox, but also for young people from different confessional backgrounds. In addition, the vice-president attends events from the civil space and is present in magazines for Romanian²⁷ and local televisions. At the same time, the bishop attends Romanian and local cultural events, which makes his voice heard, and takes part as a permanent guest in the events organised by different consulates all around Canada. The Saint Maximus the Confessor Centre of the Diocese, approved by the Holy Council of the Romanian Orthodox Church in October 2022, can also be an important tool in making the voice of the diocese heard among Romanians and foreigners alike. At the moment, it is premature to speak about its role and activity, given that, in the few months since its creation, it has only hosted a few conferences.

These would be in a nutshell the most important aspects that speak about how the voice of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada is heard in civil soci-

25. Cf. <https://marchforlife.ca/>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

26. For information about its activity, see also: <https://www.facebook.com/ROrthodoxYouth/>, 17. 12. 2022.

27. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRbYZK2ThVk&t=308s>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

ety. The website of the diocese and of the parishes, together with the journal it publishes and with the presence of the bishop in different television or radio discussions or debates, as well as the participation of different priests and representatives of the ROYA to public events are important tools in the transmission of the message of the institution and in providing an Orthodox perspective on different topics. Nonetheless, as we could see, there are still many other things that could be done.

Conclusions

Doubtlessly, the size of this paper does not allow us to make an exhaustive presentation of the topic, but rather to provide an overview of the main aspects that we considered as being important. It must be said that, compared to other countries from the European space, for example, the level of secularisation is deeper. Events like the “*revolution tranquille*”²⁸ have shifted the approach on religion and there are still debates related to the situation of the indigenous people and how certain Catholic priests abused them. In this context, in a space where religion is considered to be

28. For more information about the topic see also: <https://books.openedition.org/pum/15288?lang=fr>, accessed 17. 12. 2022.

part of one's private life,²⁹ the work of the Romanian Orthodox diocese and its parishes is sometimes heard and seen as important. As to other things that could be done, a radio of the diocese would be a useful project to think of. A joint diploma with a lay university would also increase the role played by the institution in the public sphere. At the same time, in terms of communication, a milestone would be to have, at least occasionally, a Liturgy entirely in English or French, depending on the province. Most Churches have only passages of the Liturgy in the official language. What would also help is to have the websites of the parishes translated into English and French and to organise more activities with the youth. The camps for the youth organised a few times a year in Mono (ON) are important, but there are definitely other events that could bring young people in the limelight.

29. Cf. Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*, 14.

Religion and Public Diplomacy – Patterns of a Complex Relationship

Introduction

The role of religion in the public sphere has already been emphasised by the scholars.¹ There are also works on how it influenced the evolution of different international organisation like the European Union, based on archive documents.² Pope Francis in his encyclical letters³ and others who dealt with this complex topic

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1. See for example: Rowan Williams, *Faith in the public square*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2012); Gavin D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square: Church, Academy, and Nation*, (Hoboken: New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell, 2005).
 2. A complex analysis can be found in: Lucian N. Leuştean, *The Ecumenical Movement and the Making of the European Community*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
 3. Such a document can be considered for sure the *Laudato Si* encyclical letter where in paragraphs like the 18th one it is emphasized the aforementioned aspect. For its content, see: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html, accessed 22. 02. 2023. For an analysis of the topic, see also: <https://www.english.op.org/godzdogz/laudato-si-the-common-good/>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

tried to emphasise that seeking of the common good must become a priority for the contemporary world.⁴ Moreover, the role of diplomats like Dag Hammarskjöld (1905-1961), who used their Christian principles in the field of dialogue in the international space⁵ and proved that religion can influence how society understands or uses peace or dialogue in the political area, must be taken into consideration when speaking about this topic.

Given the relevance of religion for the public space and how it can be used to offer solutions to contemporary topics, we have tried to answer the question: *what is the role of religion in public diplomacy?* Based on the literature we have consulted, we will try to analyse if it can be seen as a tool in solving crises or in the field of dialogue. The investigation, which will be a qualitative one, will focus on certain case-studies related to the contemporary society. The literature used comes both from scientists who have investigated the topic and from various electronic sources related to the topic.

4. Cf. Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*, (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2011).

5. For more information about their life and activity, see also: Dag Hammarskjöld, *Markings*, (London: Faber&Faber, 1972); Bernhard Erling, *A reader's guide to Dag Hammarskjöld's Markings*, (St. Peter, MN: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 2009).

Religion and Public Diplomacy – A Complex Relationship

Some used the history of Christianity to define areas like the Byzantine Empire as a political society⁶. Others bring into attention the scaffolds of the Church⁷ in a successful attempt to show that, despite their historical relevance, they do not represent aspects ontologically related to its existence or elements without which the Church would not exist. In this context, we must not neglect that public diplomacy has both inter-Christian and global relevance. Thus, in matters like the relationship between primacy and conciliarity, diplomacy can clearly be a starting point for dialogue⁸. Diplomacy could also be used with visible results in aspects like the relationship between churches, the relationship between churches and the state, global politics or geopolitics. At an intrinsic level, diplomacy can be used in the Christian field to solve the internal

6. Anthony Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic: People and power of the New Rome*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015), IX.

7. Cyril Hovorun, *Scaffolds of the Church: Towards Poststructural Ecclesiology*, (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2017).

8. See: Paul Valliere, *Conciliarism: A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 52. See also: John Chryssavgis (ed.), *Primacy in the Church*, vol. 1-2 (New York: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, Yonkers, 2016); *Serving Communion. Re-thinking the relationship between Primacy and Synodality. A study by the Saint Ireneus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working Group*, (Los Angeles: Maymount Institute Press, TSEHAI University, 2019).

crises within the same Church or misunderstandings between different Churches. The ecclesiological, but also the theological problems related to the recognition of the new Ukrainian Orthodox Church or the attitude of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church belonging to the Moscow Patriarchate in relation to the War could also be tackled using diplomacy. The same is valid for the issues related to the recognition of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. These are only a few examples from the Orthodox area. At the moment, the Ukrainian issue is important because the war context presents situations where religion is used in a political context. On the one hand, the West together with the Ukrainians try to use the newly recognised Church ruled by Metropolitan Epiphany against the Russians and their imperialist ideas (while the Ecumenical Patriarchate considers its primacy as a privilege of the Patriarchate)⁹. On the other hand, the same accuse the Church belonging to the Moscow Patriarchate of being a satellite filled with Russian agents. At the same time, the aforementioned Patriarchate also tries to justify its presence there and to use the Metropolitan structure ruled by Metropolitan Onuphrios in their help. In this case, diplomacy would clearly be useful in overcoming

9. Aspect that, according to the Ecumenical Patriarchate is related not only with the geopolitical situation, but also with jurisdictional matters and with the ideas like „*primus sine paribus*“. For more information about the concept, see: Chrystsavgis (ed.), *Primacy in the Church*, 2, 560-561.

the crisis and probably also in the process of finding and establishing peace, which seems to be ever more necessary.

***Russkiy Mir*, Church and Political Diplomacy**

As the scholars who approached the topic tried to demonstrate, religion has not become an isolated mark of private life in the contemporary society. Its relevance is visible and the ways in which it can influence society are multiple. Therefore, as researchers underline:

“Religion is not an isolated component of public life. It overlaps with other aspects of local, national, and global culture, and it certainly is related to many facets of politics. The United States and other Western countries have gradually and sometimes painfully learned this.”¹⁰

More than in Western societies, in Eastern European ones, as is the case with Russia, the influence of diplomacy is considerable. The recent War between Russia

10. Philip Seib (ed.), *Religion and Public Diplomacy*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.

and Ukraine are proof of it. The use of the head of the Church, Patriarch Cyril, or, in other words, its involvement in political matters had an important impact on society. This clearly generated controversies and discussions at a higher level. But this is not the only example we can offer. There are many others. One of them is, for example, *Ruskiy mir*.

Founded in 2007 with the approval of Vladimir Putin, it has as main purpose the promotion of Russian culture and language in the world¹¹. Moreover, Putin insisted at that time on the fact that, due to Russian being part of the joint heritage of many people, it would never become a tool for hatred, isolationism and so on. He thus underlined that:

“The Russian language not only preserves an entire layer of truly global achievements but is also the living space for the many millions of people in the Russian-speaking world, a community that goes far beyond Russia itself. As the common heritage of many peoples, the Russian language will never become the language of hatred or enmity, xenophobia or isolationism.”

“In my view, we need to support the initiative put forward by Russian linguists to create a National Russian Language Foundation, the main aim of which will be to develop the Russian language at home, support Russian language study programmes

11. <https://ruskiymir.ru/en/fund/>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

abroad and generally promote Russian language and literature around the world.”¹²

The name of the foundation was inspired by the term “mir”, which in Russian means peace. At the time of its opening, it was a joint project of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education and Science. It was supported, as mentioned on the official website of the foundation, by both public and private funds. Its head was Vyacheslav Nikonov, at the time the “Dean of History and Political Science at the International University in Moscow and founder of the Polity Foundation”. Its board included Russian academics led by the Rector of the St. Petersburg State University.¹³ After reading this, one could say that the institution is an academic one, highly trusted and bringing together scholars and specialists in the Russian language and culture with the purpose of sharing their knowledge and connecting the Slavic world.

Until the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the *Russkiymir* was definitely an important tool in promoting the Russian culture around the world. After this moment, it became ever clearer that the concept was confiscated by Russian politics and used as an instrument of propaganda. Moreover, President Vladimir Putin was helped in this process by Patriarch Cyrill. Thus, as a group of more than 1,500 scholars (as it can be seen

12. <https://russkiymir.ru/en/fund/>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

13. <https://russkiymir.ru/en/fund/>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

from the open list in the end of the document) emphasised in a document of protest, that the foundation started to be confiscated by an ideology:

“The support of many of the hierarchy of the Moscow Patriarchate for President Vladimir Putin’s war against Ukraine is rooted in a form of Orthodox ethno-phyletist religious fundamentalism, totalitarian in character, called *Russkii mir* or the *Russian world*, a false teaching which is attracting many in the Orthodox Church and has even been taken up by the Far Right and Catholic and Protestant fundamentalists.

Against this “Russian world” (so the teaching goes) stands the corrupt West, led by the United States and Western European nations, which has capitulated to “liberalism”, “globalization”, “Christianophobia”, “homosexual rights” promoted in gay parades, and “militant secularism”. Over and against the West and those Orthodox who have fallen into schism and error (such as Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and other local Orthodox churches that support him) stands the Moscow Patriarchate, along with Vladimir Putin, as the true defenders of Orthodox teaching, which they view in terms of traditional morality, a rigorist and inflexible understanding of tradition, and veneration of Holy Russia.”¹⁴

Doubtlessly, the attitude of the Moscow Patriarchate in the context of the war is a negative example of di-

14. <https://www.acadimia.org/en/news-announcements/press/963-a-declaration-on-the-russian-world-russkii-mir-teaching>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

alogue and diplomacy in a delicate context. A good example of Church, or rather ecumenical diplomacy would be, in this situation, the attitude of the World Council of Churches. Its acting secretary general, Fr. Ioan Sauca, wrote an irenic letter¹⁵ to the Patriarch of Moscow and even paid him a visit¹⁶ in which the two discussed about the relevance of peace and the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in those times. Although the letter did not receive quite the expected answer,¹⁷ after the visit, the tone of the Russian Patriarch became calmer and his approach more peaceful. The academics who wrote about *Russkiy Mir* and its actions tried to do the same. Since they saw how the idea was used with propagandistic purposes that did not serve the Orthodox interests, the scholars who wrote the letter insisted on the errors made and invited those responsible to correct them. In addition, their letter clearly stated that the common Christian values should take precedence. Thus, for example, they insisted on the need to go beyond division and offered references

15. <https://norththompsonpc.ca/2022/03/world-council-of-churchs-acting-general-secretary-writes-to-patriarch-kirill-of-moscow/>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

16. <https://religionnews.com/2022/10/20/wcc-head-meets-with-russian-orthodox-patriarch-kirill/>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

17. <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/response-by-hh-patriarch-kirill-of-moscow-to-rev-prof-dr-ioan-sauca-english-translation>, accessed 23. 02. 2023.

both from the Bible and from important authors of the first centuries of Christianity:

“We affirm that division of humanity into groups based on race, religion, language, ethnicity or any other secondary feature of human existence is a characteristic of this imperfect and sinful world, which, following the patristic tradition are characterized as “distinctions of the flesh” (St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 7*, 23). Assertion of superiority of one group over others is a characteristic evil of such divisions, which are entirely contrary to the Gospel, where all are one and equal in Christ, all must answer to him for their actions, and all have access to his love and forgiveness, not as members of particular social or ethnic groups, but as persons created and born equally in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26).¹⁸

The document had two important directions. One was to affirm certain principles, the other to condemn. Without being a document of the Church or the synod, it is still important from several points of view. Its authors stated that:

“We therefore condemn as non-Orthodox and reject any teaching that attributes divine establishment or authority, special sacredness or purity to any single local, national, or ethnic identity, or char-

18. <https://www.acadimia.org/en/news-announcements/press/963-a-declaration-on-the-russian-world-russkii-mir-teaching>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

acterizes any particular culture as special or divinely ordained, whether Greek, Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian, or any other.”¹⁹

Concluding Remarks

As we have showed, diplomacy plays an important role in the life of the Church and is also an important tool that can be used by religion in its dialogue with the world. Christian values are no longer just aspects related to the inner life of a local Church, especially in a world of globalisation. Consequently, in order to be understood and assumed by others, they must be expressed using the language of diplomacy. Although sometimes this road seems slow and does not always bear the expected fruits in a short period of time, it does prove to be useful. On the one hand, diplomacy draws attention to potential dangers, inviting the public opinion to think about their meaning and potential outcomes. On the other hand, it brings into debate the understanding of a certain problem and presents actual perspectives based on arguments (in our case, the relevance of peace is presented with the use of

19. <https://www.acadimia.org/en/news-announcements/press/963-a-declaration-on-the-russian-world-russkii-mir-teaching>, accessed 22. 02. 2023.

Biblical arguments, namely that there must be no division based on race, gender or other similar aspects, and with the help of writings authors from the first Christian century). At the same time, it represents an invitation for the addressees to reconsider their position. It is also a platform for potential dialogue and a way of saying to the world that religion is interested in how the world goes and tries to help in case of danger.

Messianism and Its Role in the Political Ideologies from the Romanian Space of the 20th Century

Introduction

Historically Related to the promise made by God to the chosen people and in Christianity to Jesus, seen as the Messiah and the accomplishment of the promise made by prophets¹, Messianism has had different meanings over time. That is why, it is nowadays related to topics like political theology and it is often said that in times like the “short century”², characterised by “the clash of civilizations”³, it can also be related

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1. For a deepen analysis of the topic, see: Eugen J. Pentiu, *Iisus Mesia în Biblia Ebraică (Jesus the Messiah in the Hebrew Bible)*, (Bucharest: Basilica Romanian Patriarchate Press, 2016).
 2. See: Francis Fukuyama, *Sfârșitul istoriei și ultimul om (The end of history and the last man)*, (Bucharest: Paideia, 1997).
 3. Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, *Ciocnirea civilizațiilor și refacerea ordinii mondiale (The clash of civilizations and the remaking of the global order)*, (Bucharest: Antet, 1997).

to the understanding of ideologies, which all have a connection with it.

Due to its practical relevance, we have decided to investigate it in this paper, in order to provide an overview of its influence in the Romanian space of the 20th century. Therefore, the research will try to answer the question: *What does messianism mean for the political ideologies from the Romanian space of the 20th century?*. Being aware of the complexity of such an endeavour and in order to have a scientific approach, we will do a qualitative research, based on a case-study (which focuses on the Legionary Movement and on Communism). Our main goal is to analyse the relation between the Ecumenical Movement, Society and Christianity and to see how they have influenced one another in the twentieth century, in an attempt to “display advanced insight into how various Christian communities have participated in, interacted in and been shaped by the Ecumenical Movement”, to “demonstrate the ability to analyse themes that surfaced in the Ecumenical Movement debates and represent them accurately”, and to “reflect critically on the conditions of ecumenism”⁴. Clearly, when speaking about ideologies like the one of the Legionary Movement, the most important far-

4. https://ths.instructure.com/courses/2206/files/169637?-module_item_id=55571, accessed 14. 12. 2022.

right movement with fascist tendencies⁵, a scholar should reflect critically on the condition of ecumenism in interwar Romania, considering the religious background of the movement. This brings us closer to the second above mentioned goal. Moreover, in order to have a more complex image of the topic and to link it to the other two goals, we will try to also focus on the communist regime and its relationship with the ecumenical space.

As expected, considering the size of this work, we will not manage to have an exhaustive approach on the topic, but we will try to emphasise the landmarks of Messianisms and to focus on their social and religious role. Their main methods used will be the historical and critical inquiry based on literature reviews.

The Legionary Movement and Messianism

When approaching topics like the Legionary Movement, one must emphasise from the very beginning that today there is already a rich literature on the topic, both in Romanian and in other languages.⁶ While

5. Roland Clark, *Sfântă tinerețe legionară. Activismul fascist în România interbelică (Holy Legionary Youth. Fascist activism in Interwar Romania)*, (Iași: Polirom, 2015).

6. Among the important sources we mention there the ones that we will use in the present demarch and that we consider

some authors focus on the meaning of the movement in the Romanian interwar history, others insist on the relevance of its leader, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu to its later impact and development. At the same time, the primary sources like the books of the “Captain” (as he was called) or those of his followers are now available,⁷ which helps those interested in the topic to build a more complex image.

When speaking about the messianism of the Legionary movement, we must definitely take into account the personality of the leader. From the beginning, the idea of “Captain” as leader of the movement suggested a messianic vision. The fact that the Legion was related to the Archangel Michael strengthened and confirmed

among the recent relevant titles: Peter Davies, Derek Liynch, „Historyography”, In: *The Routledge Companion to Fascism and the Far Right*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 42-57; Clark, *Sfântă tinerețe legionară. Activismul fascist în România interbelică (Holy Legionary Youth. Fascist activism in Interwar Romania)*; Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Ascensiunea și căderea „Căpitanului” (Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: the Ascension and the fall of the „Captain”)*, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2017); Tatiana Niculescu, *Mistica rugăciunii și a revolverului. Viața lui Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (The mystics of prayer and of the gun: life of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu)*, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2017), work that is rather a vulgarisation one, but it offers a well-written and complex biography of the Legionary Movement leader and: Mihai Stelian Rusu, „Romanian Fascism, Political Charisma, and National Messianism: Bibliographical Reflections upon the Legionary Movement,” in *Saeculum*, 1, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 125-149.

7. See for example: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Pentru legionari. Vol. I (For the Legionaries. First volume)*, (Sibiu: „All for the Country Press, 1936); Ion Banea, *Căpitanul (The Captain)*, (Sibiu: The service for the Legionary Propaganda, 1936).

the idea. But most important was the charisma of the leader. As contemporary researchers emphasise:

“Codreanu presented all the psychological traits characteristic of a charismatic personality identified by Robert C. Tucker (1968): (a) the visionary ability to imagine an alternative sociopolitical order to the status quo, (b) the unusual power to convince the masses of the legitimacy of this vision, (c) a sense of a mission for the accomplishment of which he has discovered his calling, accompanied by (d) an unbounded confidence in the ultimate purpose and ultimate victory of the mission as well as in (e) his own personal ability to carry it out.”⁸.

The fact that people often associated him with angels (being their messenger)⁹ and that he promoted an of ultra nationalistic mystique¹⁰ which specialists think is inspired by orthodoxy¹¹ help understand its Messianisms. All these elements, together with others made

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8. Rusu, „Romanian Fascism, Political Charisma, and National Messianism: Bibliographical Reflections upon the Legionary Movement,” 140. Cf. Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Ascensiunea și căderea „Căpitanului”* (*Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: the Ascension and the fall of the „Captain”*), 748-749.
 9. Niculescu, *Mistica rugăciunii și a revolverului. Viața lui Corneliu Zelea Codreanu* (*The mystics of prayer and of the gun: life of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*), 123, where the author refers to an episode where the people identifies him with the delegate of the Archangel Michael.
 10. Francisco Veiga, *Istoria Gărzii de Fier 1919-1941* (*History of the Iron Guard 1919-1941*), (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1993).
 11. Rusu, „Romanian Fascism, Political Charisma, and National Messianism: Bibliographical Reflections upon the Legionary Movement,” 133.

the scholars who investigated it to see it as a form of fascism.¹² A theologian and philosopher from the Romanian interwar period, who was affiliated with the Far-Right Movement because of some of his ideas, Nichifor Crainic, spoke about this aspect in some of his articles. He saw a great similitude between the Movement and fascism in that they both put religion on the first place (Catholicism for fascism,¹³ Orthodoxy for Romanians). He insisted on the fact that any political way of life which is rooted in religion gains stability. In agreement with Mussolini, he underlined the fact that:

“The man who believes in the spiritual order of the world does not lose its confidence. He knows that the disorder is a passing accident and that the order is given by the intimate nature of this world. Under the times, only this part that is useless and has no base in itself or outside itself is destroyed. The man of faith, the man of conviction dominates the world: he creates the time, the history. This is why I have told you: I do not think like the old man Miron Costin that the poor man is under the times; I believe like Benito Mussolini that the force of the man destroys the monster’s head.”¹⁴

12. *Ibid.*, 134.

13. Christine Alix, *Le Saint-Siege et les Nationalismes en Europe (187-1960)* (Paris: Les Editions de Sirey, 1962), 282.

14. Nichifor Crainic, “Puncte cardinale în haos (Cardinal Points in Chaos),” in *Gândirea*, 11, no. 12 (Winter 1931): 469-476. The idea can be also found in articles like: Nichifor Crainic, „Rasă și religiuine (Race and religion),” in *Gândirea*, 14, no. 2 (Spring 1935): 57-66; Nichifor Crainic, „Roma Universală (Universal Rome),” in *Gândirea*, 14, no. 4 (Spring 1935): 169-175.

While considering these aspects that can definitely help the reader to understand the evolution of the phenomenon in the Romanian history and how historians have perceived it, we must also insist on certain aspects that set it apart in the general context of the time. Therefore, as Schmitt noted, "it was the only student movement in recent European history that succeeded in moving from the university campus into the people".¹⁵ Indeed, in the beginning of the third decade of the 20th century, when it started, it was rather a student's movement in Iași, the most important city of the Moldavian part of Romania. Its transfer to larger society was quite fast, as was its metamorphosis. As specialists emphasised:

"The Legion also holds another superlative: it was in interwar Europe the fascist organization that achieved the widest mass mobilization, regardless of social class, in relation to the total population."¹⁶

Codreanu's charismatic dialectic led to a complex messianism that influenced the Romanian interwar period and later stained its image and that of the intellectuals who joined it. The question that arises is simple: which was the role of the Movement in the ecumenical field. At the time, at the beginning

15. Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Ascensiunea și căderea „Căpitanului”* (Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: the Ascension and the fall of the „Captain”), 260.

16. Rusu, „Romanian Fascism, Political Charisma, and National Messianism: Bibliographical Reflections upon the Legionary Movement,” 136.

of the Ecumenical Movement, artisans of the unity like Nathan Soderblom corresponded with important Romanian Orthodox theologians and with leaders of the Church like Nicolae Bălan from Sibiu¹⁷; there was an interest of the Orthodox Church in ecumenical dialogue. Moreover, among the important voices of the Legionary Movement there were well-known theologians (like the aforementioned Crainic), who maintained relationships with theologians from other spaces, like Carl Schmitt. At the same time, the aforementioned Movement also tried to associate its name with the Romanian Orthodox Church in order to gain supporters (which was sometimes criticised by its leaders). In this context, the question as to the role of the Legionary Movement in the ecumenical field seems to be legitimate.

What is interesting is that, while there were connections with other political spaces ruled by totalitarianism, like Hitler's Germany or Mussolini's Italy, the nationalism promoted by the Romanian Far-Right Movement and the emphasis they put on the domestic spirit and relevance¹⁸ kept them away from the dialogue with other confessional areas. They therefore

17. For the contents of their correspondence, see: Macarie Drăgoi, ed., *Artisan of Christian Unity between North and East: Nathan Soderblom. His correspondence with Orthodox personalities (1896–1931)*, (Stockholm: Felicitas Publishing House, 2014).

18. Nichifor Crainic, "Spiritual authoton (The Autochton Spirit)," *Gândirea*, 17, no. 4 (Spring1938): 161-169.

did not get involved in the Ecumenical Dialogue or Movement. Thus, despite its deep religious meaning and its connections with a mystique that embraces nationalist forms, the Messianism of the Legionary Movement can be classified, at least from this point of view (which is disputed by Schmitt)¹⁹ as an “oriental despotism”²⁰; it is not open to meeting others, sharing their values or agreeing with them. While the anti-Semitic side of the Movement generated violence that was often perceived as having a political connotation,²¹ and the vision of “national Christian socialism”²²

19. Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: Ascensiunea și căderea „Căpitănelului”* (Corneliu Zelea Codreanu: *the Ascension and the fall of the „Captain”*), 361. See also: Constantin Iordachi, „Charisma, Religion, and Ideology: Romania’s Interwar Legion of the Archangel Michael”, In; John R Lampe, Mark Mazower, (eds), *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe*, (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2004), 19-42.

20. Rusu, „Romanian Fascism, Political Charisma, and National Messianism: Bibliographical Reflections upon the Legionary Movement,” 128.

21. *Ibid.*, 128.

22. „Visible since the “Christian National Socialism” preached by the Guard of National Conscience at the beginning of the 20s, the modernism of the Legion gains prominence especially after the mobilization of the workers started in 1936. The holy sun from the sky of legionary Romania was to shine over a country “of factories and the glowing furnaces of an urban, industrialized and respected country in modern Europe”. A modern Romania, but at the same time well rooted in the past, in which furnaces and bell towers, uniforms and cassocks, modernization and salvation were interspersed. These were the binomials whose antinomy legionarism aimed to defuse and fuse in an alternative modernity that looked forward to the future, but remained firmly anchored in the past.” *Ibid.*, 129.

brought about an interesting concept of modernity, the religious side was not violent, but rather isolationist. Without instigating to hatred among Christians, the representatives of the Legionary Movement insisted on the relevance of promoting an idealised version of Orthodoxy, marked by nationalism and closed to any potential ecumenical dialogue. It is debatable to which extent the recent development of ultra-conservatorism in Orthodoxy (or, according to others, fundamentalism) is as a consequence of the ideas of the Movement or not. Unfortunately, the size of this study does not allow us to have a closer look at this topic.

Communism and Messianism

In the Romanian space, the Communist rule, which lasted between 1946 and 1989 also had its messianic vision. It must be noted that this vision fluctuated or even metamorphosed throughout its history. Therefore, while in the first years it was related to the cult of Stalin and the Russians, later, during Gheorghiu Dej's rule, it put him in the centre and then, in the last decade and a half of Ceaușescu's rule, there was his cult of personality.²³

23. Accf. Virgil Tănase, *Leapșa pe murite (Leaps on death)*, (Bucharest: Adevărul Holding Press, 2011).

As the size of this research does not allow us to offer an exhaustive analysis of the topic, we will try to see the relationship of Romanian Communism with the Ecumenical Movement. Although invited to join the World Council of Churches in 1948, the Romanian Orthodox Church only became part of it in 1961. Until then, the authorities of the Communist regime, who at the time were also involved in the life of the Romanian Orthodox Church, considered the membership as dangerous. Later on, they regarded the Council as a tool that could help them to make pretense of encouraging the freedom of religion.²⁴ They took active part in the meetings and debates of the Council and sent young people to study at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute.²⁵ Some of these students later became leaders of the Church. What was important is that, despite the attempt to politicise the WCC through the presence of representatives of the Communist regime at its events, there were also personalities whose contribution to ecumenism was noteworthy. Such was the case of Fr.

24. For more information about the topic see: Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „The Romanian Orthodox Youth in the Ecumenical Movement: History and Potential Future”, In: Joy Eva Bohol, Benjamin Simon (eds.), *Let the Waves Roar Perspectives of Young Prophetic Voices in the Ecumenical Movement*, (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2021), 147-156.

25. Anu Talvivaara (ed.), *50 Years 1952-2002 of Ecumenical Formation at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey part of the World Council of Churches attached to the University of Geneva*, (Orthodruk: Bialystok, 2003), 38-39.

Ioan Bria²⁶, who spoke about the richness of Orthodoxy and its potential valorisation in the ecumenical field and also built bridges of dialogue, emphasising whenever he could how the complicated relationship between Church and state defined Romania in those years.

Moreover, in spite of the cult of personality that existed in Romania during the rule of Ceaușescu and the restrictions faced by religion, there were ecumenical meetings hosted in places like the Cernica monastery. The Theological Orthodox Institute of Bucharest received students and professors from other denominational spaces and Romanian theologians were sometimes allowed to visit other spaces in order to develop a complex ecumenical activity.

At the same time, theologians like Fr. Andre Scrima (1925-2000), who managed to run away at the beginning of Communism, put pressure on the regime thorough international organisations, so that the authorities acted more carefully when interacting with leaders of the Church like Patriarch Justinian Marina, or with important voices of the Romanian

26. Nicolae Moșoiu (coord.), *The Relevance of Reverend Professor Ion Bria's Work for Contemporary Society and for the Life of the Church. New Directions in the Research of Church Doctrine, Mission, and Unity*, (Sibiu: Andreiana Press, 2010); Daniel Buda, "The relevance of Reverend Professor Ion Bria's work for contemporary society and for the life of the church", in *The Ecumenical Review*, 62, no. 4 (Winter 2010): 433-435.

Orthodox theology who were persecuted, such as Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae or Fr. Benedict Ghiuș.

Conclusion

As we have tried to show in this research, messianism was important for the political ideologies from the Romanian space in the 20th century. Both the Legionary Movement, which was classified among the far-right movements, and Communism had their own messianisms. In all situations, elements like the charisma of the leader and the leader's cult of personality (with Corneliu Zelea Codreanu as example of the former and Dej and Ceaușescu as examples of the latter) were important. Likewise, religion was used as a tool. While the Legionaries did not consider it important to use religion in an ecumenical context, the Communists understood that religion could be used as a tool to keep the appearance of religious freedom. They therefore accepted that the Romanian Orthodox Church, which held the majority in Romania, joined the World Council of Churches. Despite political pressures, the involvement of the Church in the Ecumenical Movement bore fruits that are still important today and that contributed to the creation of bridges of dialogue with other Churches.

Fr. Andre Scrima's Activity from France Reflected in the Dossiers of the Securitate¹

Introduction

Father Andre Scrima was clearly an important Orthodox personality of the twentieth century. The fact that today, more than two decades after his death, scholars still publish articles, studies and monographs on his work and message² and that there are constant con-

1. Present article was previously published in: *Symposium*, XXIX (2022), no. 1: 85-102. The author expresses his gratitude to Fr. Prof. PhD. Theodor Damian, the director of the journal, for the permission of reprint it.
2. See for example: Ioan Alexandru Tofan, *Omul lăuntric. André Scrima și fizionomia experienței spirituale (The inner man. André Scrima and the physiognomy of spiritual experience)*, (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishing House, 2019); Ioan Alexandru Tofan, *André Scrima, un „gentleman creștin”. Portret biografic ((André Scrima, a “Christian gentleman”. Biographical portrait)*, (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishing House, 2021); Iuliu-Marius Morariu, “Ecumenism and Communism in the Romanian Context: Fr. Andre Scrima in the Archives of the Securitate”, in *Religions*, 12 (2021), no. 9: 719. Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Elements of Father Andrei Scrima's Ecumenical Activity as Reflected in File No. 0005468 from the “Securitate” Archives”, in *Review*

ferences, workshops and other manifestations which speak about his heritage proves that his work was prodigious and his message continues to be valid.

Consequently, one could ask what can be said new about his work and activity. This question will get at least a partial answer in this research. We will try to see how his activity from France is reflected in the former Securitate Archives. Like all important Romanians who lived in exile, Fr. Scrima was also under surveillance. Therefore, the aforementioned archives currently contain three dossiers dedicated to him and his activity in Romania, previous to his departure, and abroad.³ In this study, we will use as main source mostly one of these dossiers⁴, which was we only partially presented in previous articles. We will take into account all the time he lived in France (shortly after his departure from Romania, after his arrival from Benares, but also in different moments of his life) and we will include in the investigation a

of *Ecumenical Studies*, 12 (2020), issue 3: 497-511; Teodor Baconsky, *Turn înclinat. Fragmente de arheologie profetică (Leaning tower. Fragments of prophetic archaeology)*, (Bucharest: Curtea Veche Publishing House, 2007), 240-244; Teodor Baconsky, *Ispita binelui. Eseuri despre urbanitatea credinței ((The temptation of good. Essays on urbanity of faith)*, (Bucharest: Anastasia Press, 1999), 158-159.

3. Namely: Archives of the National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives (from now on quoted: ACNSAS), *Fond informativ*, file no. 0005468, vol. I; ACNSAS, *Fond informativ*, file no. 0005468, vol. II; ACNSAS, *Fond SIE*, file no. 2601.

4. This one will be: ACNSAS, *Fond SIE*, file no. 2601.

few of the most important documents we used. The research will be a qualitative one, a case-study whose aim is to illustrate the mechanisms used by the Securitate in their surveillance and how its representatives perceived and understood the life and work of the Romanian theologian, who was an important voice of the Romanian exile during the communist period.

Fr. Andre Scrima's Activity from France Reflected in the Dossiers of the Securitate

The first contact of Fr. Scrima with France took place shortly after his departure from Romania. The Securitate was informed about this; sources like "Costică" wrote a long note on October 20th 1957 about this aspect⁵. As expected, it was not the visit that interested

5. „Scrima Andrei arrived almost a year ago in India, after contacting the bishop of Malta and staying in Switzerland, Italy and then in Paris.

He asked to be sent to him four volumes from Philatelia translated by the priest Stăniloae Dumitru. Priest Stăniloae Dumitru brought from Sibiu these collections of philokalties, where he has them stored. The Patriarch would have wanted Stăniloae Dumitru to make twenty copies available to him, but Stăniloae Dumitru informed him that he had no more, which is not true.

Scrima Andrei arrived abroad, has given interviews similar to the one from the French magazine "La reforme" and other English, German, etc. magazines." ACNSAS, *Fond informativ*, dossier no. 0005468, vol. I, f. 55.

the Romanian official, nor the places where he went, but what he did. They monitored the people he met and paid close attention to his public appearance and his writings from that period. Among the notes dedicated to his first stay in France is a long chronicle to an interview he gave to Olivier Clement⁶. Later on,

-
6. The article written by Andrei Scrima and published by Olivier Clement in French is entitled "The Romanian Orthodox Church or the miracle of the incessant prayer." It is a kind of interview, sprinkled with quotes from the words of Patriarch Justinian, and the content is, in short, the following:
- The Romanian Orthodox Church has kept, under communism, a relatively privileged and middle situation of superiority to those available to the Russian church in the Soviet Union;
 - within the Romanian Patriarchate, the network of ecclesiastical schools has remained almost intact (10 seminaries and 2 higher theological institutes) and now depends only on the church, which pays special attention to it;
 - The Romanian Orthodox Church currently has 5 publishing houses and regularly publishes 3 patriarchal magazines and 5 metropolitan magazines, all able to compete with the best theological publications in the West;
 - The Church has recently (?) received the right to teach high school religious education in the state schools and lives somewhat under a regime approved by the state, which helps in material relations;
 - This privileged situation is explained by the exceptional personality of Patriarch Justinian, an old friend of Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej, whom he hid from the police (?) during the repression of a strike;
 - Patriarch Justinian, perfectly loyal to the state, has from the beginning put the activity of the Church above any policy;
 - "In the thinking that guides the cultural and economic life of the present Romanian state, none of the ideas that constitute the overall vision of any religion and even more of the Christian religion of Orthodox confession, can be found," and yet, each remaining in his position and maintaining the hope of a peaceful triumph, "an atmosphere of peace and respect characterizes the relationship between the state and the church" (quoted from a speech by Patriarch Justinian). ACNSAS, *Fond informativ*, dossier no. 0005468, vol. I, f. 55.

translations of the text and summaries of the main ideas were included in the dossier, with a focus on the social and political aspects touched upon, rather than on the theological ones⁷.

The surveillance authorities also intercepted the correspondence he sent from France or about France. Among the most representative documents from this category was a letter he sent from Benares to Archimandrite Benedict Ghiuș on August 6th 1957.⁸ Here, the Romanian theologian made a complex description of his journey, in an attempt to share his enthusiasm and impressions with his mentor and former abbot. Taize and Paris were important stops during his visit. Scrima spoke about what he found there, being impressed by the ecumenical openness and the way in which the rule of Saint Benedict could be applied in an ecumenical context. Speaking about Paris, he emphasised in a rather poetic language the impressions he had and complained that, given his schedule and the tasks he was asked to accomplish, he did not have enough time to visit it thoroughly:

“And then came Paris. Like Switzerland and like absolutely every place and country I’ve been to, France has meant to me the people. You remember my favourite adage about inner travel: it wasn’t a

7. ACNSAS, *Fond informativ*, dossier no. 0005468, vol. I, f. 352.

8. ACNSAS, *Fond informativ*, dossier no. 0005468, vol. I, f. 353-364.

mess, it was a premonition. I now understand that the inner itinerary is the one that passes through people and therefore through history. Not the one that goes through landscape and geography. Paris was supposed to be for me the encounter - the most authentic and delicious one - with Catholicism, as I could not have experienced it anywhere else. The city remained, I couldn't say unknown, but from the beginning I didn't even notice the spring triumphantly entering the city. I didn't visit the Louvre Museum (it was shown to me from afar one day by two SJ fathers who were accompanying me on my way. I didn't see the Picasso retrospective. It was sung in a new interpretation. On top of that, I didn't even notice the Arabian fireworks overflowing one evening over the Seine to greet an imperial procession. I went to the National Library once to work; I forgot to tell you that in Switzerland I was offered a contract, which I signed with a German house in Gotingen to republish "Protestantische Real Enzyklopadier", and which asked me to contribute with an article on some issues of spirituality. I handed in the article ahead of time (here it's done differently.) So, almost as an irony, I didn't see Paris, although I lived in it and met its people. But on my way, it remained one of the significant and most blessed stops"⁹.

Then, he emphasised the contacts he had with the Catholics, he described the atmosphere from *Istina* centre, his director C. J. Dumont¹⁰, but also the

9. ACNSAS, *Fond informativ*, dossier no. 0005468, vol. I, f. 354.

10. C. J. Dumont (1923-2001) was an important historian and clergyman of the 20th century, that was also the director of the Catholic Centre *Istina* from Paris, known for its openness to

crisis that at the moment was affecting the Catholic Church¹¹, and the personal history of some of Fr. Ghiuș' friends who lived there. The Securitate was aware of all this information. Its agents intercept Fr. Scrima's correspondence and read it, trying to see if there was any political.

Later on, in the seventh decade of the 20th century, when Fr. Scrima went to France again, the Securitate started a new series of notes about the time he spent there. Thus, on March the 6th 1969, there was a note mentioning his relationship with Ioan Cușa¹², with His

the ecumenical dialogue. For more information about his life and activity, see also: <https://alleanzacattolica.org/jean-dumont-1923-2001/>, accessed 22. 08. 2021 și <https://journals.openedition.org/dominicains/1228>, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

11. „The Catholic Church is obviously going through a crisis that I would also briefly frame in the 3 points above: but it is a recognized crisis, consciously assumed. The critical moment returns formally to the same old confluence between the new situation of the Church (living community of believers) and the rigid, sometimes intractable, leadership of the Vatican. (Personally, I have the impression that this rigidity is not without a benefit for the quality of new realities: it requires a control, a selection, a period of verification and maturation, which prevents fantasy, improvisation, imposition, in Romanian said nonsense, which is always our sweet temptation to spiritual life). Here, a French prelate said to me one day: Aue voulez-vous mon cher, it seemed last year that the Almighty had decided to get rid of the current pope, but then he changed his mind.” ACNSAS, *Fond informativ*, dossier no. 0005468, vol. I, f. 355.
12. Ioan Cușa (1925-1981), Romanian of Macedonian origins that was an important personality of the Romanian exile from France and the holder of „Ethnos” publishing house. For more information about his life and activity and about his

Beatitude Patriarch Justinian, besides other aspects from his daily life. The information was followed by a complex resolution¹³ asking to define his relationship with people like the aforementioned, to check other Romanian theological personalities, such as Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, Alexandru Mironescu, Alexandru Elian, and Teodor M. Popescu, all of them well-known personalities from the Romanian cultural space, in order to see the nature of the relationship they had with Fr. Scrima. The resolution also encouraged to convince him to join a potential cooperation with the repressive organs. It is interesting why such a resolution was needed so soon, as on September the 16th 1968, therefore almost 6 months earlier, the institution was informed about his financial status, his meetings with Fr. Stăniloae, his relationship with Cuşa and his activity¹⁴.

On December the 12th 1968, the “Narcisa” source drew the attention of the Romanian Securitate to the fact that Fr. Scrima travelled to USSR and that he intended to become the bishop of the Romanian community from Paris¹⁵. His refusal to become a bishop and his hostile attitude towards Communism will made the authorities from Bucharest angry.

relationships with the Romanians from the exile, see: http://artl.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/cultural_9_pag-29-30-ioan-cusa-a-n.pdf, accessed 11. 05. 2022.

13. See the second document from the appendix of the article.

14. A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, dossier no. 2601, f. 16-17.

15. A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, dossier no. 2601, f. 15.

However, they were aware of his intellectual prestige, the influence he had on religious leaders and the attempts he made to bring Orthodoxy and Catholicism together. There are several notes on these subjects, like the one from June the 22nd 1968 written by the "Văleanu I." source¹⁶, most probably a theologian close to the Archimandrite, which explains the calm and rather favourable tone. Another note, dated on October the 19th 1967¹⁷, was signed by the "Petroniu" source and contains a brief review of his life and activity in France and in other spaces, and another one, from June the 12th 1967, presents Fr. Scrima's meeting in Paris with the rector N. Nicolaescu of the Romanian Orthodox Theological Institute of Bucharest. All these notes can be read below in the appendix of this research.

In conclusion, we can say that the Securitate was interested in Fr. Scrima's work from Paris and France. They tried to find out what he thought, what he wrote, how he saw Communist Romania and the Romanian Orthodox Church and whether he could become a collaborator of the regime. At the same time, they were aware of the relationship he had with important people and the relevance of his work in the ecumenical field. That is why they were even frightened by the potential impact of his words.

16. A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, dossier no. 2601, f. 18-20.

17. A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, dossier no. 2601, f. 52-54.

Appendix

I.

6.03.1969. Bucharest. Informative note about
Fr. Andrei Scrima and his activity in Paris.

D. G. I. E DIRECTION VII

CLASSIFIED

- 21 - single copy

March 6, 1969

NOTE

ANDREI SCRIMA. He lived for a long time at the "ISTI-NA" study centre. After the centre was moved to rue de la Slaciere (new building), he was harder to find. He lives more at CUȘA ION. He travels a lot especially in the East. In fact, he intended to settle in a monastery in this region.

They say he was the representative of the Patriarchate of Constantinople at the Second Vatican Council. In any case, he is a well-trained element.

Good relations with and close to H.B. the Patriarch of Romania. Correspondence and oral messages. It seems that thanks to him H. B. the Patriarch changed his mind about GHEORGHIU. Cold, antagonistic relationships with him.

His intentions, plans and the people who help him travel so often are unknown.

8275

dactilo. ON.

item 548

State Security Council

CLASSIFIED

DGIE/722

unique copy

25. VII. 1968.

Original

06.03.1969. București. Direcția Generală a VII-a a Securității, caracterizarea lui Andrei Scrima și a activității lui.

D.G.I.E. DIRECȚIA A VII-A
STRICT SECRET

- 21 - exemplar unic

6 martie 1969

NOTĂ

ANDREI SCRIMA. A locuit multă vreme la centrul de studii „ISTINA”. După mutarea centrului în rue de la Slaciere (construcție nouă) poate fi găsit mai greu. Locuiește mai mult pe la CUSA ION. Călătorește mult prin Orient mai ales. De altfel avea intenția de a se stabili la vreo mănăstire din această regiune.

A fost, zice-se, reprezentant al Patriarhiei Constantinopol la Conciliul Vatican II. În tot cazul este un element bine instruit.

Bune relații și om de încredere al P. F. Patriarh al României. Corespondență și mesagii orale. Se pare că datorită lui P. F. Patriarh și-a schimbat părerile de GHEORGHIU. Relații reci, antagoniste cu acesta.

Nu se cunosc intențiile sale, planurile sale și nici persoanele care îl ajută să călătorească atât de des.

8275

dactilo. P. E.

poz. 548

A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*,

Dossier no. 2601, f. 11.

II.

1.08.1968- 1.08.1969. Bucharest. Resolution in the "SONY" case, regarding the measures that should be taken against

Fr. Andrei Scrima and his activity

APPROVED

Major (illegible signature)

MEASURE PLAN

in the "SONY" case for the period 1.VIII.968-1.VII.1969

The analysis of the data we have about "SONY" shows that this case must be worked on actively and carefully, either to determine the opportunity and the possibility of attracting him towards collaboration, or (if this is not feasible) to know in as much detail as possible the hostile activity he carries out against our Country and to counter it.

In order to achieve the above goal, it is proposed to pay attention to the following tasks for a first stage:

- knowing his present activity and related to this the nature of his relations with the Vatican, with the French and West German authorities and possibly the C.I.A.;
- the purpose of his repeated trips to Israel, Rome and Freiburg (F.R.G.);
- establishing his true sources of income since, without having any public office and without doing business, he has a good financial situation;
- determining the nature of his connections with PAUL¹ MIRON and CUȘA ION, the intentions and purpose to

1. Initially spelled „Radu” and later corrected.

- which these three elements, directly or through intermediaries, seek to contact Romanian intellectuals (writers, teachers), who travel to France and the F.R.G. ;
- knowing the nature of the connections and relations he has with elements from the leadership of the Romanian Patriarchate;
 - establishing his close people in the country and how he keeps in touch with them;
 - knowing the degree of affection he has for his relatives in the country and the feelings he has for our country today;

In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, the following measures must be taken in the following period:

- 1) Training and directing the informants "Petroniu", "Ionatan" and "Stamate", and

Deadline: the whole period

- 2) Analysing the possibility to use in this action some elements (priests, intellectuals) on the line of the Direction I that also go to France or the F.R.F. G. and embarking with them, according to their possibilities, upon some informative combinations.

Deadline: 30.XII.1968

- 3) As "SONY" wishes to contact an official of the Romanian Embassy in order to collaborate with writers in the country in the "PRODROMOS" magazine, action will be taken to contact him through an undercover officer.

Deadline: 30.I.1969

4) Carrying out checks at Directorate I on the following: prof. MIRONESCU, D. STĂNILOAE, T. M. POPESCU, AL. ELIAN and the nun ACHILINA CROITORU: These elements from the country have been on good terms with SONY, and he is currently interested in their situation. Depending on the result of the checks, the possibility of acting on SONY through some of the above will be studied.

Deadline: 30.III.1969

5) intercepting SONY's correspondence with people in the country.

Deadline: 15.VIII.1968

6) Studying the possibilities that SONY has from fugitives to support the Romanian Orthodox Church and whether he would be interested in taking over its leadership. The aversion that SONY has towards V. BOLDEANU will be exploited in achieving this measure.

Deadline: 30.V.1969

7) Studying the possibility of installing equipment at his home in Paris².

Deadline: 30.I.1969

8) Given his tendency to entertain relationships with various women, an attempt will be made to place an informant woman from the country or from abroad in his company.

Deadline: 30.VI.1969

Head of office

illegible signature

2. Manuscript marginal note: „Negative!”

Original

PLAN DE MĂSURI

în cazul „SONTY” pe perioada
1.VIII.1968-1.VII.1969

Din analiza datelor pe care le deținem asupra lui „SONY” se desprinde concluzia că acest caz trebuie lucrat activ și organizat, fie pentru a stabili oportunitatea și posibilitatea atragerii sale la colaborare, fie (dacă acest lucru nu este realizabil) pentru a cunoaște cât mai amănunțit activitatea ostilă pe care o desfășoară împotriva Țării noastre și a o contracara.

În vederea realizării scopului de mai sus se propune a avea în atenție pentru o primă etapă următoarele sarcini:

- cunoașterea activității sale prezente și legat de acesta natura relațiilor pe care le are cu Vaticanul, cu autoritățile franceze și vest-germane și eventual C.I.A.;
- scopul deplasărilor sale repetate în Israel, la Roma și Freiburg (R.F.G.);
- stabilirea adevăratelor sale surse de venituri din moment ce, fără a avea vreo funcție publică și fără să se ocupe de afaceri, are o situație materială bună;
- determinarea naturii legăturilor sale cu PAUL¹ MIRON și CUȘA ION, intențiile și scopul în care aceste trei elemente, direct sau prin intermediari, caută să contacteze intelectualii români (scriitori, profesori), care se deplasează în Franța și R.F.G.;

1. Scris inițial „RADU” și apoi corectat.

- cunoașterea naturii legăturilor și relațiilor pe care le are cu elemente din conducerea Patriarhiei române;
- stabilirea relațiilor sale apropiate din țară și modul în care ține legătura cu acestea;
- cunoașterea gradului de afecțiune pe care-l are față de rudele din țară și sentimentele pe care le nutrește față de țara noastră în prezent;

Pentru realizarea obiectivelor de mai sus se impune a se întreprinde în perioada ce urmează următoarele măsuri:

1) Instruirea și dirijarea informatorilor „Petroniu”, „Iontan” și „Stamate” și

Termen: toată perioada

2) Studierea posibilităților de a folosi în această acțiune unele elemente (preoți, intelectuali) pe linia Direcției I care pleacă și în Franța sau R.F.G. și întreprinderea cu aceștia, în funcție de posibilitățile lor, a unor combinații informative.

Termen: 30.XII.1968

3) Întrucât „SONY” dorește să ia legătura cu o oficialitate din cadrul Ambasadei Române în scopul realizării unei colaborări a scriitorilor din țară la revista „PRODRAMOS”, se va acționa pentru contactarea sa de către un ofițer sub acoperire.

Termen: 30.I.1969

4) Efectuarea de verificări la Direcția I asupra următorilor: prof. MIRONESCU, D. STĂNILOAE, T. M. POPESCU, AL. ELIAN și călugărița ACHILINA CROITORU: Aceste elemente din țară s-au aflat în bune relații cu SONY, iar

în prezent acesta se interesează de situația lor. În funcție de rezultatul verificărilor se vor studia posibilitățile de acțiune asupra lui SONY prin unele persoane de mai sus.

Termen: 30.III.1969

5) punerea în interceptare a corespondenței pe care SONY o poartă cu persoane din țară.

Termen: 15.VIII.1968²

6) Studierea posibilităților pe care SONY le are în direcția sprijinirii Bisericii ortodoxe române de la fugari și dacă ar fi interesat să treacă la conducerea acesteia. Se va exploata în realizarea acestei măsuri și averșiunea pe care SONY o nutrește față de V. BOLDEANU.

Termen: 30.V.1969

7) Studierea posibilităților de a se instala tehnică la domiciliul său din Paris³.

Termen 30.I.1969

8) Dată fiind tendința sa de a intra în relații cu diverse femei, se va încerca plasarea în anutrajul său a unei informatoare din țară sau străinătate.

Termen: 30.VI.1969

Șeful biroului
semnătură ilizibilă

A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, Dossier no. 2601, f. 12-14.

2. Notă marginală manuscris: Aveți nevoie de aparatură specială?

3. Notă manuscrisă marginală: Nu!

III.

III. 10. 12. 1968. Bucharest the "Narcisa" source informs about the fact that Scrima travelled to the USSR.

1815/E

10.12.1968 23.55

NARCISA

Urgent

"E"

In a small circle of Romanian emigrants from Paris, it is discussed that the emigrant ANDREI SCRIMA made a secret trip to the USSR during this year.

In connection with this, the comments made seek to clarify the recent attitude of ANDREI Scrima, who on the one hand intensifies his activity within the Romanian emigration, especially on the cultural line, around the magazine "PRO-DROMOS", and on the other hand avoids taking hostile open and categorical anti-communist attitudes in general or against the government of the Republic of Romania in particular.

As a result, Mămăligă Leonid and Virgil Ierunca release hypotheses according to which Andrei Scrima is the man of the Soviets. At the same time, in the comments made, they renew the suspicions that circulated among emigrants in the past years that Andrei Scrima intensified his activity on the emigration line in order to become an Orthodox bishop and to take over the leadership of emigration; it is considered

that at the basis of the activity of Andrei Scrima, who is known as a very intelligent element, there must have been a plan and we don not rule out the possibility that his plan may be Soviet inspired.

The source follows.

ss. Andreescu

22.998

Original

10.12.1968. București. Sursa „Narcisa” despre activitatea lui Andrei Scrima la Paris și pretextata sa vizită în URSS.

1815/E

10. 12. 1968 23.55

NARCISA

Urgent „E”

Într-un cerc restrâns de emigranți români din Paris se discută că emigrantul ANDREI SCRIMA ar fi făcut în cursul acestui an o călătorie secretă în URSS.

În legătură cu aceasta în comentariile ce se fac se caută a se lămuri atitudinea din ultimul timp a lui ANDREI Scrima, care pe o parte își intensifică activitatea în cadrul emigrației române, îndeosebi pe linia culturală, în jurul revistei „PRODROMOS”, iar pe de altă parte evită să ia atitudini ostile deschise și categorice anticomuniste în general sau potrivnice guvernului R. S. România în special.

Ca urmare, Mămăligă Leonid și Virgil Ieruncă emit ipoteze conform cărora Andrei Scrimă ar fi omul sovieticilor. Totodată în comentariile ce se fac, ei reînnoiesc bănuielile ce au circulat în emigrație anii trecuți că Andrei Scrimă și-a intensificat activitatea pe linie de emigrație în scopul de a deveni episcop ortodox și de a prelua conducerea emigrației, se consideră că la baza activității lui Andrei

Scrima, care este cunoscut ca element foarte inteligent, trebuie să existe un plan și nu exclude ipoteza ca planul său să fie de inspirație sovietică.

Urmează sursa.
ss. Andreescu

22.998

A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*,
Dossier no. 2601, f. 15.

IV.

06.09.1968. Bucharest. Note to the Council of State Security about Andrei Scrima and his situation.

CLASSIFIED

STATE SECURITY COUNCIL single copy

D. G. I. E. DIR. -A / 21 6 sept. 1968

NOTE

ANDREI SCRIMA, settled in Paris, changed his address this year and lives with ION CUȘA, where the accommodation is free. At the end of April this year he was in Constantinople, where he had meetings with the two patriarchs ATENAGORAS and JUSTINIAN of Romania. On the occasion of this meeting, both patriarchs wanted to make him bishop, but ANDREI SCRIMA refused. "To get rid of their insistence", he moved from the patriarchal palace to the hotel. After the meeting in Constantinople, he came to Freiburg in the F.R.G. to meet with the source. He spent a total of 10 days in Freiburg where he had daily meetings with the source and then with the priest DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, a professor at the Theological Institute, who gave two lectures on theology and especially on Romanian Orthodoxy and the ecumenical movement. STĂNILOAE had a good influence on him, in the sense that he showed him that he had to support the Romanian cultural and spiritual interests and also the interests of the Romanian church to which, however, his soul belongs. He then accused him of refusing to become a bishop. The source noted that ANDREI SCRIMA, with all the special qualities he has, is afraid of responsibility. With the source, he discussed at length the

issues of world politics, Romania's foreign politics and orientation, then about the orientation and improvement of the "Prodromos" magazine, with which he insistently asked the source to collaborate. The source then discussed with SCRIMA about the opportunity of PAUL MIRON's visit to the country and in the end convinced SCRIMA that he agreed with this visit. He then returned to Paris, from where he left to Vienna, where he participated in the visit of Patriarch JUSTINIAN, both with the cardinal KONIG and separately. After Vienna, Scrima returned to Paris, being sent by the patriarch to Paris, to negotiate matters related to the Romanian church in Paris. From Paris he left again to Constantinople and there Scrima retired for some time to his monastery in Lebanon.

From all these places ANDREI SCRIMA wrote regularly to the source. The retirement to the Lebanese monastery is also due to the fact that during this period he has great financial difficulties, owing a lot of money to CUŞA. CUŞA is his main sponsor. In addition to this source, SCRIMA also receives small sums from a Theological Academy in France, where he is professor and vice-president, and from the Catholic organization "Deutsche Caritas Verband". Also, a year ago, he received from America the amount of \$2,000, which was sent to him in Paris, for the courses he had to take at Harvard University, amount that he has already spent. That's why he'll probably have to go to America for these courses at the beginning of next year.

dactilo: P. E.

two files

Original

STRICT SECRET

CONSILIUL SECURITĂȚII STATULUI exemplar unic
D. G. I. E. DIR. -A / 21 6 sept. 1968

NOTĂ

ANDREI SCRIMA, stabilit la Paris, și-a schimbat anul acesta domiciliul și locuiește la ION CUȘA, unde nu îl costă întreținerea. La sfârșitul lunii aprilie a acestui an a fost la Constantinopol, unde a avut întrevederi cu cei doi patriarhi ATENAGORAS și JUSTINIAN al României. Cu prilejul acestei întâlniri, ambii patriarhi au vrut să-l facă episcop, dar ANDREI SCRIMA a refuzat. – Ca să scape de insistențele lor, s-a mutat de la palatul patriarhal la hotel. După întrevederea de la Constantinopol, el a venit la Freiburg în R.F.G., pentru a se întâlni cu sursa. La Freiburg a stat în total 10 zile în care a avut zilnic întâlniri cu sursa și apoi cu preotul DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, profesor la Institutul teologic, care a ținut două conferințe cu caracter teologic și în special despre ortodoxia română și mișcarea ecumenică. STĂNILOAE a avut o bună influență asupra lui, în sensul că i-a arătat că trebuie să sprijine interesele culturale și spirituale românești și de asemenea, interesele bisericii românești căreia totuși sufletește îi aparține. Apoi i-a reproșat că a refuzat să devină episcop. Sursa a remarcat că lui ANDREI SCRIMA, cu toate calitățile deosebite pe care le are, îi este frică de răspundere. Cu sursa a discutat îndelung probleme de politică mondială, de politică și

orientare externă a României, apoi despre orientarea și îmbunătățirea revistei „Prodromos”, la care a rugat sursa insistent să colaboreze. Sursa apoi a discutat cu SCRIMA despre oportunitatea vizitei lui PAUL MIRON în țară și până la urmă l-a convins pe SCRIMA care a fost de acord cu această vizită. Apoi acesta s-a întors la Paris, de unde a plecat la Viena, unde a participat la vizita patriarhului JUSTINIAN și cu cardinalul KONIG separat și împreună. După Viena, Scrima s-a întors din nou la Paris, trimis de patriarh la Paris, ca să ducă tratative în ceea ce privește biserica română de-acolo. Din Paris a plecat din nou la Constantinopol și de-acolo Scrima s-a retras pentru câțva timp la mănăstirea sa din Liban.

Din toate aceste locuri ANDREI SCRIMA a scris regulat sursei. Retragerea în mănăstirea din Liban se datorește și faptului că în această perioadă are mari greutăți financiare fiind dator lui CUȘA cu foarte mulți bani. CUȘA este cel care îl subvenționează în principal. În afară de această sursă, SCRIMA mai primește sume mici de la o Academie teologică din Franța, unde este profesor și vicepreședinte și de la organizația catolică „Deutsche Caritas Verband”. De asemenea, acum un an a mai primit din America suma de 2000 \$ care i s-a trimis la Paris, pentru cursurile pe care trebuia să le țină la Harvard University, sumă pe care a și cheltuit-o. De aceea, probabil că la începutul anului viitor va trebui să plece în America pentru aceste cursuri.

dactilo: P. E.

două file

A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, Dossier no. 2601, f. 16-17.

V.

22. 06. 1968. „Casa 6 Martie” (probably Bucharest). Informative note of „Văleanu I.” source about Fr. Scrima, his visits in France and Germany, his cultural influence and his attitude about the Romanian Orthodox Church

- Mr. Șerbănoiu I
- “Văleanu I.”
- house “ March the 6th”
- June 14th 1968⁴

131/SI/ - June 22nd 1968

CLASSIFIED

copy no. 2

NOTE

The source informs you that while he was in Freiburg (the FRG) Fr. ANDREI SCRIMA from Paris came to visit him and listen to his conference. Before the source went to the FRG, GHIUȘ Benedict told the source that if he went to Paris he would bring SCRIMA, BOLDEANU, and bishop TEOFIL with him to attend the conference of the source, but GHIUȘ did not go to Paris and ANDREI SCRIMA came alone, knowing probably from the patriarch about the departure of the source to the FRG. ANDREI SCRIMA stayed in Freiburg for about a week, during which time they met 3-4 times, at the hotel where the source lived and at PAUL MIRON’s house. The source mentions that he was in a rather friendly relationship with ANDREI SCRIMA until he left the country.

4. Handwritten „Scrima”.

From the discussions with SCRIMA, the source noted that his most frequent residence is in Paris, being a professor at the University of Selehuar. In addition, he collaborates with several publications, participates in many ecumenical dialogues, and is a member of many theological associations. For about three months a year, he stays in a monastery in Lebanon which he founded and he publishes spiritual literature for it in Arabic. He is close to Patriarch ATHENAGORAS and the high Catholic circles in Rome, even the popes. From the discussions with him, as well as with other people, the source found that ANDREI SCRIMA is well known and appreciated by the high theological and ecclesiastical Catholic circles and even by some Protestants and Orthodox.

Talking to him about the country and his plans for the future, he said that he did not think much about returning to the country, that he felt better in the more refined atmosphere of France and that his main desire was to retire to the monastery in Lebanon in a life of contemplative loneliness.

He considers that our country and our church, praising too much what they achieve, do not prove too high a level of civilization and spirituality, that they still have much to do until they reach the level of France.

ANDREI SCRIMA was generally moderate in the discussions, he did not prove hostile to socialism, he showed great sympathy for today's students in France and Germany and he considered that de GAULLE had no understanding for this new spirit.

He did not launch attacks on the regime in our country, he only said that the Romanian Church should be more spiritual, and less cold and numb.

ANDREI SCRIMA expressed the opinion that our church should be less rigid than the Roman Catholic Church, that is, not to first ask for the elimination of the papal primacy and then accept the dialogue with it, because during the dialogue itself it could achieve much. He is against the Greek Catholicism, which tightens the relations between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church and knows that there are many conservative circles in the Roman Catholic Church as well, but in general Catholicism is no longer what it used to be.

SCRIMA was in Munich during this time, where he spoke with the American leaders of the "Free Europe" radio station and with its Romanian employees. There, he was accused of working against the union because it was persecuted. SCRIMA said that the union served the cause of the churches and it would be good if "Free Europe no longer supports it".

He also noticed a malaise in relation the "nationalist" atmosphere in Romania. SCRIMA is of the opinion that Romania will have to be more careful in this regard, as this can bring many dangers.

"I. Valeanu"

N. B.

The note was provided by the informant as a result of the assignments received on the occasion of his departure to the F. R. of Germany.

I had known in advance about ANDREI SCRIMA's intentions to travel to the FRG to meet with the informant.

ANDREI SCRIMA is known for his hostile position abroad, towards our country, having dubious preoccupations.

The informant was in close relations with ANDREI SCRIMA and on this basis, he can be used with him in the future, if the informative-operative needs require it.

I propose that the copy of this note be sent to and used by the Directorate-General for Internal Intelligence for operation.

The informant was given the task to maintain contact with ANDREI SCRIMA, through letters and other possibilities and we are thinking of using these relations for operational purposes.

Mr. illegible

Original

- Mr. Șerbănoiu I
- „Văleanu I.”
- casa „6 Martie”
- 14 iunie 1968⁵

131/SI/ - 22 iunie 1968

STRICT SECRET

exemplarul nr. 2

NOTA

Sursa vă informează că în timpul ce s-a aflat la Freiburg (RFG) a venit să-l viziteze și să-i audieze conferința pr. ANDREI SCRIMA din Paris. Anterior plecării sursei în RFG., GHIUȘ Benedict a spus sursei că dacă va merge la Paris va aduce cu el la conferința sursei pe SCRIMA, BOLDEANU, episcopul TEOFIL, însă GHIUȘ nu a mai plecat la Paris și ANDREI SCRIMA a venit singur, știind probabil de la patriarh despre plecarea sursei în RFG. ANDREI SCRIMA a stat la Freiburg vreo săptămână, timp în care s-au întâlnit de vreo 3-4 ori, la hotelul unde sursa a locuit și la PAUL MIRON, acasă. Sursa menționează că a fost în relații de oarecare prietenie cu ANDREI SCRIMA până la plecarea acestuia din țară.

Din discuțiile purtate cu SCRIMA, sursa a reținut că acesta are domiciliul cel mai frecvent la Paris, fiind profesor la universitatea din Selehuar. În afară de aceasta colaborează la mai multe publicații, ia parte la multe dialoguri ecumenice,

5. Manual, însemnarea „Scrima”.

face parte din multe asociații de teologi. Cam trei luni pe an stă la o mănăstire din Liban, pe care a întemeiat-o el și publică literatură spirituală pentru ea în limba arabă. E apropiat de patriarhul ATHENAGORAS și de înaltele cercuri catolice din Roma, chiar și de papi. Din discuțiile cu el, cât și cu alte persoane, sursa a constatat că ANDREI SCRIMA e bine cunoscut și apreciat de cercurile înalte teologice și bisericești catolice și chiar de unele protestante și ortodoxe.

Discutând cu el despre țară și despre planurile lui de viitor, acesta a arătat că nu se prea gândește să se întoarcă în țară, că se simte mai bine în atmosfera mai rafinată din Franța și are ca dorință principală să se retragă în mănăstirea din Liban, într-o viață de singurătate contemplativă.

Consideră că țara și biserica noastră prin laudele prea insistente pentru ceea ce realizează nu dovedesc un nivel prea înalt de civilizație și de spiritualitate, că au încă multe de făcut până vor ajunge la nivelul Franței.

ANDREI SCRIMA a fost în general ponderat în discuții, nu s-a dovedit ostil socialismului, s-a arătat cu mare simpatie pentru studențimea de azi din Franța și Germania și consideră că de GAULLE nu are înțelegere pentru acest spirit nou.

Față de regimul din țara noastră nu s-a lansat în atacuri, doar că Biserica Română să fie mai spirituală, mai puțin rece și amorțită.

ANDREI SCRIMA a manifestat părerea că biserica noastră ar trebui să fie mai puțin rigidă față de biserica romano-ca-

tolică, adică să nu ceară întâi renunțarea la primatul papal și apoi să accepte dialogul cu aceea, căci chiar în cursul dialogului ar putea obține multe. E contra uniației, care înăsprește relațiile între biserica ortodoxă și biserica romano-catolică și știe că și în biserica romano-catolică sunt multe cercuri conservatoare, dar în general catolicismul nu mai e ce-a fost în trecut.

SCRIMA a fost în acest timp la Munchen unde a vorbit cu conducătorii americani ai postului „Europa Liberă” și cu angajații lui români. Acolo a fost acuzat că lucrează contra uniației pentru că e persecutată. SCRIMA a arătat că uniația deservește cauza bisericilor și ar fi bine ca „Europa Liberă să nu o mai sprijinească”.

A mai observat acolo o indispoziție împotriva atmosferei „naționaliste” din România. SCRIMA este de părere că România va trebui să fie mai atentă în această privință, căci aceasta îi poate aduce multe pericole.

„I. Văleanu”

N. B.

Nota a fost furnizată de către informator ca urmare a sarcinilor primite cu ocazia plecării sale în R. F. a Germaniei.

Despre intențiile lui ANDREI SCRIMA, de a se deplasa în RFG, pentru a se întâlni cu informatorul, am avut cunoștință dinainte.

ANDREI SCRIMA este cunoscut cu poziție ostilă în exterior, la adresa țării noastre, având preocupări dubioase.

Informatorul a fost în relații apropiate cu ANDREI SCRIMA și pe aceasta bază, va putea fi folosit pe lângă acesta și în viitor, dacă necesitățile informativ-operative vor impune acest lucru.

Propun ca nota în copie să fie trimisă Direcției Generale de Informații interne spre exploatare.

Informatorul a primit sarcina să mențină contactul cu ANDREI SCRIMA, prin scrisori și alte posibilități și ne gândim să folosim aceste relații în scopuri operative.

Mr. ilizibil

A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, Dossier no. 2601, f. 18-20.

VI.

19.10.1967 the "Petroniu" source provides a characterisation of Andrei Scrima.

- 722 -

CLASSIFIED

unique copy

Oct. 19 1967

NOTE

ANDREI SCRIMA is currently the most interesting character among all Romanian emigrants from abroad. He studied medicine and philosophy in the country and became a monk in 1946. He was a librarian at the Patriarchate and a protégé of Patriarch JUSTINIAN. In 1956 he went to India to study Sanskrit and remained abroad. He is currently Archimandrite and Special Envoy of Patriarch ATENAGORAS (the Ecumenical Patriarch based in Constantinople) for ecumenical issues at the Holy See. *SCRIMA* became a French citizen and has his permanent residence in Paris at the Centre de Recherches Istina, based in Boulogne sur Seine, Boul d'AUTEUIL 25. He is an active supporter of Gallic politics and an admirer of General *DE GAULE*. In recent years, he has been actively involved in the Vatican's debates and work regarding the reforms of the Roman Catholic Church. He also played the most important role in bringing the two churches closer together: Orthodox and Catholic. It is even said that he is the hidden initiator of this action and the main factor in what has been carried

out so far in this field. *SCRIMA* speaks fluently and gives lectures and conferences in the following languages: French, English, German, Italian, Latin, Greek, in Belgium, France and Spain with the great prelates of the Catholic Church (cardinals, archbishops and bishops). He also has extensive and strong connection with writers, journalists, and cultural figures in France and the United States. He is due to go to America this fall to give lectures at Harvard University. Last year he was invited to the UNESCO to hold a conference on ecumenical issues. The paper was then published in a volume and *SCRIMA* also provided the source with a copy. Last year, he had a meeting in Geneva with Patriarch *JUSTINIAN*. Over the course of last year, *SCRIMA* was been passionate about the problems of Romanian politics, which he discussed at length with the source in Paris. The source saw him regularly, two or three times a week, during his stay in Paris. During these meetings, which *ION CUȘA*, often called by Scrima, attended, the source noticed and verified that *SCRIMA* was the inspiration for the current policy of the legionary group from Paris, which was separated from *HORIA SIMA*. The source believes that he is also the inspiration for the actions aimed at contacting the young Romanian writers who go to Paris, which this group practices. *SCRIMA ANDREI* is following with great interest the foreign policy actions taken by Romania and would like a contact with the Romanian authorities, but not directly, with party people, rather through the "category" that he considers interesting, of those who were against the communist regime during the so-called "Stalinist" period and who now agree with the country's political evolution. He

considers that the source is also part of this category and that is why he probably gives the source a lot of attention. But if with the source he agrees to discuss and gets along very well (as he himself states), he does not accept at all the discussion to which *ANANIA*, his former friend, now sent to the United States, invites him. This is mainly due to the fact that *ANANIA* is no longer approved by the patriarch and has been sent to America over his head.

- *SCRIMA* is willing to support abroad the actions of the Romanian language that suit him and especially those that are carried out along the lines of the current foreign policy of Romania, in agreement with the great national interests of the country and in agreement with the promotion abroad of the authentic Romanian cultural values.

He has a broader sense of understanding, which he tries to imprint on the whole group. Therefore, he finds himself in a kind of conflict with *VIRGIL IERUNCA*, whose attitude, which is refractory to any contact or recognition of Romanian positions, he deeply dislikes. First of all, *SCRIMA* would like a first step to be taken through the "PRODRAMOS" magazine, in the pages of which Romanian writers from both variants should meet, i.e. from the country and refugees, and this magazine should be available in Romania as well. *SCRIMA* has an extremely lively intelligence and is passionate about the great and unexpected political combinations of reconciliations - considered impossible (as was thought about the two branches of the churches). He has confessed to the source countless times that he regreted

that the source did not have a position that allowed him to deal with the source. He also complained to the source about the inadequate quality of the cultural staff of the Romanian embassy in Paris and of those who permanently represent Romania at the UNESCO.

“PETRONIU”

dactilo Papp E.

1 copy

Original

- 722 -

STRICT SECRET

exemplar unic

19 oct. 1967

NOTA

ANDREI SCRIMA este la ora actuală personajul cel mai interesant din toată emigrația română din străinătate. El a studiat în țară medicina și filosofia și a devenit călugăr în anul 1946. A fost bibliotecar la Patriarhie și protejat al Patriarhului JUSTINIAN. În 1956 a plecat în India pentru a face studii de sanscrită și a rămas în străinătate. Actualmente este arhimandrit și trimis special al Patriarhului ATENAGORAS (patriarh ecumenic cu sediul la Constantinopol) pentru problemele ecumenice pe lângă Sf. Scaun. *SCRIMA* a devenit cetățean francez și are domiciliul stabil la Paris „Centre de Recherches Istina”, cu sediul la Boulogne sur Seine, Boul d’*AUTEUIL* 25. El este un susținător activ al politicii gauliste și admirator al generalului DE GAULE. A avut o participare activă în dezbaterile și lucrările Vaticanului în anii din urmă, privitoare la reformele bisericii romano-catolice. De asemenea a avut rolul cel mai important în acțiunea de apropiere a celor două biserici: ortodoxă și catolică. Se spune chiar că el ar fi inițiatorul ocult al acestei acțiuni și factorul principal al celor împlinite până în prezent în acest domeniu. *SCRIMA* vorbește curent și ține prelegeri și conferințe în următoarele limbi: franceza, engleza, germana, italiana, latina, greaca, în Belgia, Franța

și Spania cu marii prelați ai bisericii catolice (cardinali, arhiepiscopi și episcopi). De asemenea, are foarte întinse și temeinice legături cu scriitorii, gazetarii și oamenii de cultură din Franța și Statele Unite. În toamna aceasta urmează să plece în America pentru a ține cursuri la Universitatea Harvard. În cursul anului trecut a fost invitat la UNESCO să țină o conferință în legătură cu problemele ecumenice. Lucrarea a apărut apoi în volum și *SCRIMA* a oferit și sursei un exemplar. În cursul anului trecut, el a avut o întrevedere la Geneva cu patriarhul JUSTINIAN. În ultimul an *SCRIMA* s-a pasionat de problemele politicii românești, pe care le-a discutat îndelung cu sursa la Paris. Sursa îl vedea regulat de două sau trei ori pe săptămână în cursul șederii sale la Paris. În cursul acestor întrevederi la care deseori asista și ION CUȘA, chemat de Scrima, sursa a observat și verificat că *SCRIMA* este inspiratorul actualei politici pe care o duce la Paris grupul legionar care este separat de HORIA SIMA. Sursa crede că tot el este inspiratorul acțiunilor de contact cu tinerii scriitori români veniți la Paris, pe care acest grup le practică. *SCRIMA ANDREI* urmărește cu mult interes acțiunile de politică externă duse de România și ar dori un contact cu autoritățile românești, dar nu direct, cu oameni de partid, ci prin intermediul „categoriei” pe care el o socotește interesantă, a celor care au fost împotriva regimului comunist în perioada așa zisă „stalinistă” și care acum sunt de acord cu evoluția politică a țării. Din această categorie el socotește că face parte și sursa și de aceea acordă probabil foarte multă atenție. Dar dacă cu sursa acceptă să discute și se înțelege chiar foarte bine (cum chiar el afirmă), în schimb nu acceptă deloc discuția la care îl provoacă ANANIA, fostul său prieten, trimis acum în Statele Unite. Acest fapt se datorește în

special împrejurării că ANANIA nu mai este agreat de patriarh și că a fost trimis în America peste capul acestuia.

- SCRIMA este dispus să sprijine în străinătate acțiunile românești care îi convin și în special cele care se desfășoară pe linia actualei politici externe a României, pe linia marilor interese naționale ale țării și pe linia promovării în străinătate a valorilor culturale românești autentice.

El are un spirit mai larg de înțelegere, pe care încearcă să-l imprime întregului grup. De aceea, se găsește în oarecare conflict cu VIRGIL IERUNCA, a cărui atitudine refractară la orice contact sau recunoaștere a pozițiilor românești îi displace profund. SCRIMA ar dori ca în primul rând un prim pas să fie prin revista „PRODROMOS” în paginile căreia să se întâlnească scriitori români de pe ambele variante, adică din țară și din refugiu și această revistă să poată avea circulație și în România. SCRIMA are o inteligență extrem de vie și este pasionat de marile și neașteptate combinații politice ale împăcărilor – socotite imposibile (așa cum s-a crezut și despre cele două ramuri ale bisericilor). El a mărturisit sursei de nenumărate ori că regretă că sursa nu are o poziție care să-i permită a trata cu ea. El se plânge de asemenea sursei de calitatea necorespunzătoare a personalului cultural al ambasadei române la Paris și de cel care reprezintă permanent România la UNESCO.

„PETRONIU”

dactilo Papp E.

1 ex

A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*,
Dossier no. 2601, f. 52-54.

VII.

12.06.1967. Bucharest. Note about the meeting of N. Nicolaescu, the rector of the Romanian Orthodox Theological Institute of Bucharest with Fr. Andre Scrima in Paris

21

NOTE

Arhim. ANDREI SCRIMA, whom the rector N. NICOLAESCU met in Paris on the occasion of his participation in the ecumenical meeting of the Christian Peace Conferences (May 19th-30th, 1927¹) and who lives with the Dominican Fr. C. UMONT and Fr. Greek Catholic GOIA from the Istina Center for Catholic Research and Publications in Paris, said that:

- The Romanian Patriarchate would make a great mistake in terms of tact and prestige if it accepted under its jurisdiction the so-called Orthodox Bishop *Jean of S. Denis (KOWALEWSKI)*, to whom everyone has renounced so far, because he is a completely compromised adventurer.
- Metropolitan JUSTIN MOISESCU is seen by the ecclesiastical circles in the West as a servile agent of the communist government and as a hierarch who starts drinking Whiskey at 9 o'clock in the morning, who has his clothes lined brightly with bright red and who makes everyone feel that he is not honest in what he says. A. SCRIMA admires, instead, the tactics of Metropolitan NICODIM, who managed to bring together and reconcile the three Russian church factions in the West.
- A. SCRIMA disapproves of the hostile attitude of Fr. V. BOLDEANU towards patriarch JUSTINIAN and the

1. Misspelled. In reality it was 1967.

- Romanian Patriarchy, as well as towards bishop TEOFIL IONESCU, saying about them that they serve the Romanian prestige in France. He also criticizes Fr. HEITZ from the F.R.G. who often visits Romania, saying that it is also compromised in moral and ecclesiastical terms.
- A. SCRIMA also criticizes V. ANANIA's attitude and activity in America, saying that he " expected something completely different from him". The Rector N. NICOLAESCU reminded him that in 1964, he warmly praised V. ANANIA when he was in prison and wondered why he was criticising him now. A. SCRIMA replied that he should not encourage the image of TRIFA, but to see only about those left in the bishopric of Detroit.
 - A. SCRIMA claims that, only due to the lack of objective and up-to-date information, the Romanian Patriarchate is not willing to begin a dialogue with the Vatican; he assures that Pope "Paul VI, has beautiful feelings towards the Romanian Orthodox Church and Patriarch JUSTINIAN" and wants Patriarch JUSTINIAN to establish in the future direct links with Pope PAUL VI, not through small and horizonless intermediaries, like before. A. SCRIMA also said that he missed going back to Romania, but it was not yet the time. He boasts that "he has remained on the main line, that he has never attacked the political and church leadership in Romania, and that his role is of a completely different level and order: to ensure permanent contact between Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul VI and to thus facilitating the restoration of the unity between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, for which C. DUMONT from Istina has been militating for a long time. I emphasise that, this time, A. SCRIMA spoke more respect-

fully than in 1964, in Rhodes, about the state leadership and the social order in Romania, adding that the new papal encyclical "Popularum progessio", which gave many Catholics something to think about, will pave the way for an agreement with the representatives of socialism and communism", although the fight against atheism remains inscribed for the future: forever, as major obligations of all Christians". He accuses Metropolitan JUSTIN MOISESCU and the Russian hierarchs of completely abdicating this missionary obligation.

A. SCRIMA was deeply interested in the health, occupation and activity of teachers *D. STĂNILOAE*, *T. M. POPESCU* and *Al. ELIAN*; in the nun *ACHILINA* from the Patriarchal Palace, in the vicar-bishop *ANTIM NICA*, saying that he considered them true servants of the Romanian Orthodoxy and sincere supporters of Patriarch JUSTINIAN. He says that he was not interested in any way in the Romanian Chapel in Paris, because "he kept away from such minor quarrels", as he sees the future of Christianity only in a union with Rome and under the aegis of the pope. When Rector *NICOLAESCU* reminded *V. CRISTEA* of his propaganda against the Romanian Orthodox Church, he claimed that this was a minor case, that it had no resonance among Catholics and that it could not be a pretext against the beginning of dialogue between the Romanian Orthodox Church and Vatican. A. Scrima also informed that an Orthodox monk from Lebanon wanted to come to Romania to learn church painting."

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Original

NOTA

Arhim. ANDREI SCRIMA, cu care rectorul N. NICOLA-ESCU s-a întâlnit la Paris cu prilejul participării la șed. com. ecumenice a Conf. creștine pentru pace (19-30 mai 1927) și care locuiește, cu dominicanul pr. C. DUMONT și pr. român greco-catolic GOIA de la Centrul de cercetări și publicații catolice Istina din Paris, a spus următoarele:

- Patriarhia română ar săvârși o mare greșală de tact și de prestigiu dacă ar accepta sub jurisdicția ei pe așa-zisul episcop ortodox *Jean de S. Denis (KOWALEWSKI)*, de care până acum toți s-au lepădat, căci este un aventurier cu totul compromis.
- Mitropolitul JUSTIN MOISESCU este privit de cercurile eclesiastice din Apus ca un agent servil al guvernului comunist și ca un ierarh care începe să bea Wisky de la ora 9 dimineața, care are hainele căptușite strident cu roșu aprins și care tuturor le face impresia că nu este sincer în ce spune. A. SCRIMA admiră, în schimb, tactica mitropolitului NICODIM, care a reușit să apropie și să împace cele trei facțiuni bisericești ruse din Apus.
- A. SCRIMA dezaprobă atitudinea dușmănoasă a pr. V. BOLDEANU față de patriarhul JUSTINIAN și patriarhia română, precum și pe episcopul TEOFIL IONESCU, spunând despre ei că deservește prestigiul numelui de român în Franța. Critică de asemenea, pe pr. HEITZ din R. F. G. care vizitează adesea România, spunând că este tot compromis sub raport moral și bisericesc.

- A. SCRIMA critică, de asemenea, atitudinea și activitatea lui V. ANANIA în America, spunând că „se aștepta la cu totul altceva din partea sa”. Rectorul N. NICOLAESCU i-a amintit că în 1964, elogia călduros pe V. ANANIA – când acesta se afla în închisoare și s-a mirat de ce îl critică acum. A. SCRIMA a răspuns că nu trebuia să facă apariție lui TRIFA, ci să vadă doar de cei rămași cu episcopia de la Detroit.
- A. SCRIMA susține că, numai datorită lipsei de informații obiective și la zi, Patriarhia română se opune începerii dialogului cu Vaticanul, asigură că Papa „Paul VI, nutrește frumoase sentimente față de Biserica ortodoxă română și față de Patriarhul JUSTINIAN” și vrea ca pe viitor Patriarhul JUSTINIAN să stabilească legături directe cu papa PAUL VI, nu prin intermediari mărunți și lipsiți de orizont, ca până acum. A. SCRIMA a mai spus că-i e dor să revină în România, dar încă nu-i momentul. El se laudă că „s-a menținut pe o linie principală, că n-a atacat niciodată conducerea politică și bisericească din România și că rolul său este cu totul de alt nivel și de alt ordin: să asigure contactul permanent între patriarhul Athenagora și Papa PAUL VI și să ușureze astfel calea refacerii unității dintre catolicism și ortodoxie, pentru care militează de multă vreme și C. DUMONT de la Istina. Subliniez că, de data aceasta, A. SCRIMA a vorbit mai respectuos decât în 1964, la Rhodos, despre conducerea de stat și orânduirea socială din România, adăugând că noua enciclă papală „Popularum progesio”, care a dat multora dintre catolici de gândit, va netezi drumul unei înțelegeri cu reprezentanții socialismului și comunis-

mului”, deși combaterea ateismului rămâne înscrisă și pe viitor: pentru totdeauna, întru obligațiile majore ale tuturor creștinilor”. Pe Mitropolitul JUSTIN MOISESCU și pe ierarhii ruși, el îi acuză că au abdicat complet de la această obligație misionară.

A. SCRIMA s-a interesat îndeaproape de sănătatea, încadrarea și activitatea profesorilor D. STĂNILOAE, T. M. POPESCU și Al. ELIAN: de călugărița ACHILINA de la Palatul patriarhal, de episcopul-vicar ANTIM NICA, spunând că-i consideră adevărați slujitori ai ortodoxiei românești și sprijinitori sinceri ai patriarhului JUSTINIAN. Despre Capela Română din Paris spune că nu l-a interesat sub nicio formă deoarece „el s-a ținut departe de asemenea certuri minore”, căci vede viitorul creștinismului numai într-o unire cu Roma și sub egida papei. Când rectorul NICOLAESCU i-a amintit de propaganda lui V. CRISTEA împotriva Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, a susținut că acesta este un caz minor, că n-are niciun răsunet între catolici și că nu poate constitui un pretext împotriva începerii dialogului între B. O. Română și Vatican. A. Scrima a mai informat că un călugăr ortodox din Liban vrea să vină în România să învețe pictura bisericească”.

27 VI 1967

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A. C. N. S. A. S., *Fond Andrei Scrima*, Dossier no. 2601, f. 52-54.

New Landmarks of the Social Doctrine in the Catholic Church?

Fratelli Tutti and Its Social Relevance for the Contemporary World

Introduction

Having a long and rich tradition in the field of social doctrine, which started with the 1891 *Rerum Novarum* encyclical letter,¹ the Catholic Church is marked by clear landmarks in this field² and definitely surpasses the Eastern Orthodox space³. It is still not as developed

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1. Pontifical Council for the Justice and Peace, *Compendio della Dottrina Sociale della Chiesa*, (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), 47-56.
 2. Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Russian Orthodox Church, Fondamenti della dottrina sociale, Edizioni Studio Domenicano, Bologna, 2011, 198 pp.” in *Oikonomia – Rivista di Etica e Scienze Sociali*, 19 (2020), no. 2: 33-35.
 3. Ioan Ică jr., Germano Marani, *Gândirea socială a Bisericii. Fundamente, documente, analize, perspective (The Social Teaching of the Church. Fundaments, documents, analyzes, perspectives)*, (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2002), 18; Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Eastern Orthodox Churches and Ecumenism according to the Holy

as the Protestant area, but it has had an important word to say in terms of social doctrine.

Consequently, each Pope published at least one relevant letter on this topic. Most likely aiming to remain in history as a leader with social impact and message, Pope Francis already published in 2015 *Laudato Si'*,⁴ where he presented some of the aspects that he considered relevant for the life of the Church in the contemporary social field. Influenced by his Eastern Orthodox counterpart, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew,⁵ he took into account the environment, showing its relevance and complexity and deepening elements like the ecology of daily life.

In 2020, with *Fratelli tutti*,⁶ he tackled again the social topic, suggesting it should be understood in light of

Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete (2016)," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 74 (2018), no. 4:1-3;

4. Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home*, (Vatican: Casa Editrice Vaticana, 2015).
5. Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Sociological Relevance of the Ecological Thought of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew," in *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 15 (2019), no. 5:19-25; Morariu, "Il Sinodo Pan-ortodosso di Creta (2016) e la dottrina sociale della Chiesa Ortodossa," 27; Iuliu-Marius Morariu, "Ecology – Main Concern for the Christian space of the 21st Century? Catholic and Orthodox Perspectives," in *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 19 (2020), no. 56:125.
6. Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, (Milano: Edizioni Biblioteca Francescana, 2020); https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_encyclica-fratelli-tutti.html, accessed 12. 08. 2021.

faith.⁷ Touching upon sensitive aspects like feminism and its impact on social friendship,⁸ the document offers new keys to the understanding of social life. For this reason, in what follows, we will try to analyse the document and see if it indeed puts forward new points of understanding social life, and the teaching and doctrine of the Catholic space.

Fratelli tutti – An Overview

Released on October 3rd 2020⁹ in Assisi, on the tomb of the Saint who inspired the Roman Pontiff,¹⁰ the letter has a clear purpose and aims to have a particular effect regarding social doctrine. As scholars show, with *Lumen fidei*, his first encyclical letter, Pope

7. Rafaella Petrini, „*Fratelli Tutti*. Highlights from a Feminine Perspective”, in *Oikonomia*, 20 (2021), no. 2: 2-6.

8. „Social friendship is rooted in a fraternity between man and women, but the later, in turn, are dependent on a more inclusive society, where both men and women are willing to work together to overcome the existing social inequalities. This can be realized thorough an increazing involvement on the part of women, in the family as well as in every social, political and institutional domain.” Petrini, „*Fratelli Tutti*. Highlights from a Feminine Perspective”, 4.

9. Petrini, „*Fratelli Tutti*. Highlights from a Feminine Perspective”, 2.

10. E. Fortunato, „Introduzione”, in Papa Francesco, *Fratelli tutti*. *Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, (Milano: Edizioni Biblioteca Francescana), 9.

Francis became known as the “pope of peace”¹¹. With this one, he continued his work in the field, trying to point to the actual dimension of the subject and to use his skills to develop it. Based on the outcomes of the Second Vatican Council, he re-brought into attention *Gaudium et spes*, which stipulates that the entire world is seen as a big human family, with God as the father of all.¹² Doubtlessly, this approach has important social consequences. If the previous letter signed by Francis was inspired, as we have already mentioned, by the Ecumenical patriarch Bartholomew,¹³ this one, as the pope himself mentioned, was inspired by the meeting he had with the Great Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb.¹⁴

Segmented in 8 chapters, the document deals with the idea of fraternity¹⁵ and tries to look at different forms of implementation: in the relationship with a foreigner¹⁶ and with the open world¹⁷. He also

11. Fortunato, „Introduzione”, 11.

12. P. Maranesi, „Postfazione,” in Papa Francesco, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, (Milano: Edizioni Biblioteca Francescana), 209.

13. Morariu, “Ecology – Main Concern for the Christian space of the 21st Century? Catholic and Orthodox Perspectives,» 124.

14. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 23.

15. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 27-54.

16. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 55-74.

17. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 75-100.

looks at how this term can be received with an open heart,¹⁸ and the relevance of politics to this topic.¹⁹ Dialogue and the social friendship,²⁰ the path of a new meeting²¹, and how the religions can contribute to building fraternity in the world²² are other topics that challenge Pope Francis to write and to turn his letter into a call. The entire document, inspired by Saint Francis, as the author mentions from the very beginning²³, ends with a prayer, which speaks about the primary purpose of a religious institution such as the Catholic Church.²⁴

Covid 19 and the New Challenges

An event with such a global impact like the pandemic crises that started in 2020 could not be ignored by a

18. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 101-116.

19. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 117-146.

20. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 147-162.

21. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 163-192.

22. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 193-206.

23. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 21.

24. Francis, *Fratelli tutti. Enciclica sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, 207-208.

document released by the most important authority of the Catholic space. Pope Francis therefore used it as a pretext to speak about the mirage of security that the world creates:

“As I was writing this letter, the Covid-19 pandemic unexpectedly erupted, exposing our false security. Aside from the different ways in which various countries responded to the crises, their inability to work together became quite evident. For all our hyper-connectivity, we witnessed a fragmentation that made it more difficult to resolve problems that affect us all. Anyone who thinks that the only lesson to be learned was the need to improve what we were already doing, or to refine existing systems and regulations, is denying reality.”

The fact that the pandemic has proved more than ever the need for fraternity and cooperation in a common effort to overcome a common threat is well-pointed in the document. At the same time, we must say that there were many other aspects of social life that were impacted by this crisis. They should at least be mentioned here, if not investigated in a long and complex evaluation of the situation that affects the entire world. Indeed, Pope Francis later revisited the topic and spoke about it.

The Need for Unity

The need for unity was a topic often approached in the Catholic space. In Orthodoxy the so-called “Green Patriarch” made efforts to encourage authorities worldwide to collaborate in view of achieving peace²⁵ and in the Protestant area, diplomats like Dag Hammarskjöld²⁶ even influenced practical global decisions using their position in institutions like the United Nations Organisation. On the other hand, in the Catholic space, almost every pope wrote about this aspect in their encyclical letters and in other documents, preaching peace and inviting politicians to make important decisions in this respect.

Pope Francis also brought into debate this subject, linking the idea of peace with that of unity. In his mind, peace brings unity and unity contributes to the accomplishment of peace. He therefore underlined that macro-organisms like the European Union were created with this purpose. Likewise, he insisted on the fact that nowadays, in the context of growing nationalism, there is a regression in terms of seeking unity

25. J. Chryssavgis (ed.), *On Earth as in Heaven. Ecological Vision and Initiatives of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).

26. Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Aspects of political theology in the spiritual autobiography of Dag Hammarskjöld,” in *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 74 (2018), no. 4: 1-5.

and a reinforcement of ancient conflicts. These once again challenge society, at a political, social, ethical, religious and economical level and revive topics of debate like extremism, exclusion or aggressivity.²⁷ The loss of historical consciousness, which brings about one's responsibility towards the future, together with the absence of plans for the future on everyone's side are seen by the Pope as causes of this entire crisis. The Pope's document also emphasises the fact that everything is nowadays related to the ecumenical field and this causes the loss of the mystical vocation and of the transcendent purpose. According to the Pope, this, together with other elements have led to the birth of a "throwaway" world. He also insisted on the selfish dimension of the contemporary society, saying that this is also linked with the decline of the human species. Another aspect mentioned is the disrespect for the human being and for life.²⁸

27. „Our own days, however, seem to be showing signs of a certain regression. Ancient conflicts thought long buried are breaking out anew, while instances of a myopic, extremist, resentful and aggressive nationalism are on the rise. In some countries, a concept of popular and national unity influenced by various ideologies is creating new forms of selfishness and a loss of the social sense under the guise of defending national interests.“ https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, para 11, accessed 11. 08. 2021.

28. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, para 10 accessed 21. 08. 2021.

This is without a doubt one of the most consistent parts of the letter. At the level of message, it draws attention upon serious and relevant problems and emphasises the main aspects that must be taken into account in order to improve the world.

Human Rights and the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church

Another important section of the document (paragraphs 22 to 36) is dedicated to human rights. The topic has often been approached in the history of the Catholic space. There are important moments that define its history, like the debate coordinated by Bartholomew de las Casas²⁹ in the context of the Amerindian society. Nowadays, there are new challenges. The migrant crisis, the situation of the third world, social inequalities and the economic realities, often misunderstood, open new sections in a complex problem.

Pope Francis seems to be aware of all these aspects and insists, from the beginning, from paragraph 22 of the letter, that human rights are not equal for all, because

29. L. A. Clayton, D. M. Lantigua (eds.), *Bartolomé de las Casas and the defence of Amerindian rights: a brief history with documents*, (Tuscaloosa: The university of Alabama Press, 2020).

of a complex conjuncture. He thus underlined the fact that, despite correlated efforts from the religious, political and social side to reduce it, contemporary slavery still exists under various forms. Human trafficking, kidnaping, as well as bullying are mentioned by him among the examples that must be taken into consideration³⁰.

The mistrust brought by the contemporary society, the social insecurity and the challenges caused by the migrant crisis, which was also emphasised by the social documents issued by other churches,³¹ add to the landscape offered by the Pope. At the same time, the Pope spoke about the way in which the war, the terrorist attacks and religious persecutions³² increased the fear among people and could lead to a global threat like a third world war.

He considers that a potential solution to all future crises would be to seek a common horizon. However, the approach seems somewhat too general and some secondary specifications would be beneficial for the understanding of the complex topic he opened. Most likely, a future letter dedicated only to this topic would

30. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, para 24 to 26, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

31. Morariu, „Sociological Relevance of the Ecological Thought of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew,“ 19-25.

32. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20151208_messaggio-xlix-giornata-mondiale-pace-2016.html, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

be useful and could contribute to a better, more responsible grasping of the relevance of human rights and peace and to the fight against different forms of “mafias”.³³

Globalisation

Meetings like the Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete from 2016 have also debated upon the evolution of society³⁴ and the way in which science and its evolution have impacted the entire world. Pope Francis does not avoid this aspect. He even confesses in paragraph 29 of the document that it was on the list of subjects about which he discussed with the imam and which inspired him in drafting the encyclical letter. Moreover, he insists on the fact that the idea of globalisation understood as a form of belonging to a common family called earth is no longer a suitable concept:

33. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, para 11, accessed 11. 08. 2021.

34. Iuliu-Marius Morariu „Eastern Orthodox Churches and Ecumenism according to the Holy Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete (2016),” in *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 74 (2018), no. 4: 1-5; Morariu, „The social thought of the Orthodox Church reflected in the documents of the Holy Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete (2016),” 1-6.

“In today’s world, the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading, and the dream of working together for justice and peace seems an outdated utopia.³⁵”

According to the Pontiff, the rediscovery of the concept would clearly contribute to the re-calibration of human realities and to the rediscovery of the feeling of common responsibility, which is among the main elements that can contribute to the improvement of the future.

The Pandemic

In the beginning of the document the Covid pandemic is tackled only briefly and rather superficially. However, later on, in a small special section (paragraphs 32 to 36), which is still insufficient to our mind, given the complexity of the problem, Pope Francis revisits the topic. The starting point is the speech about globalisation, the dwindling feeling of belonging to a big common family and the loss of responsibility that should be its main outcome. The economic crush that accompanied the pandemic and the how it hit

35. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, para 30, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

the very social character of the human being is also emphasised. Sadly, the Pope admits that:

“Today we can recognize that “we fed ourselves on dreams of splendour and grandeur, and ended up consuming distraction, insularity and solitude. We gorged ourselves on networking, and lost the taste of fraternity. We looked for quick and safe results, only to find ourselves overwhelmed by impatience and anxiety. Prisoners of a virtual reality, we lost the taste and flavour of the truly real”. The pain, uncertainty and fear, and the realization of our own limitations, brought on by the pandemic have only made it all the more urgent that we rethink our styles of life, our relationships, the organization of our societies and, above all, the meaning of our existence.”³⁶

The orientation towards two directions can constitute, as Francis says, a solution in the re-shifting of human social relationships. It is necessary to learn from the lessons of history, considered a teacher of life. Moreover, being a visionary himself, the Pope insists on the need for a visionary approach. He therefore shows that it is extremely important for humankind not to return to the same consumerism and egoistic self-preservation (paragraph 35), at the end the crisis. According to him, the message that God sends through this pandemic is the call to re-discover the love

36. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 33, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

for one's neighbour in loneliness and to find ways of walking together towards eternity. He considers this will reinforce the global vision of a family,³⁷ or, in case of misunderstandings, the situation will definitely be worse than the pandemic.

Communication and Hermeneutics

If one were asked to speak about the second half of the letter using two keywords, these would definitely be communication and security. They have previously been approached by other popes and are today used in the ecumenical discourse,³⁸ as they are important

37. „Unless we recover the shared passion to create a community of belonging and solidarity worthy of our time, our energy and our resources, the global illusion that misled us will collapse and leave many in the grip of anguish and emptiness. Nor should we naively refuse to recognize that “obsession with a consumerist lifestyle, above all when few people are capable of maintaining it, can only lead to violence and mutual destruction”. The notion of “every man for himself” will rapidly degenerate into a free-for-all that would prove worse than any pandemic.” (https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 36, accessed 21. 08. 2021).

38. J. Keum, *Together towards life. Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes – With a practical guide*, (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2013); Morariu, „The social thought of the Orthodox Church reflected in the documents of the Holy Pan-Orthodox Council of Crete (2016),” 1-5.

tools in the understanding of contemporary society and in the evaluation of its challenges and threats.

Pope Francis seems to be aware of their relevance and starts by mentioning that bad communication is one of the current problems of the world. He also insists on the fact that, in some cases, the economic reasons determine a certain discourse and influence the debate. Referring to migration, which at least before the pandemic was a very relevant topic and which is again topical in the context of the situation of Afghanistan,³⁹ the Pope insists on the fact that security at the borders is a story more than a reality. He thinks a solution to this problem that can contribute to the trustworthiness of the international political and diplomatic structures is necessary. We must say that this aspect is one of the few in the entire document that refer to an aspect that can be included in the area of political theology. Intended to be a theological paper written by a leader of a Christian Church, which nowadays has the biggest number of followers in the Christian World, and with a social impact, *Fratelli tutti* also contains political subjects, which has not been the case since the missile crisis.⁴⁰

39. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/08/16/middleeast/taliban-control-afghanistan-explained-intl-hnk/index.html>, accessed 21. 08. 2021)

40. K. Schelkens, „Vatican diplomacy after the Cuban Missile Crisis: New light on the release of Josyf Slipyj,” in *The Catholic Historical Review*, 97 (2011), no. 4: 679.

At the same time, the letter also has a complex psychological relevance. Bergoglio insists on the fact that certain political, social, cultural, and economic organisations work hard to destroy the self-esteem of people, knowing that this helps to dominate them. He therefore writes that:

“Destroying self-esteem is an easy way to dominate others. Behind these trends that tend to level our world, there flourish powerful interests that take advantage of such low self-esteem, while attempting, through the media and networks, to create a new culture in the service of the elite. This plays into the opportunism of financial speculators and raiders, and the poor always end up the losers. Then too, ignoring the culture of their people has led to the inability of many political leaders to devise an effective development plan that could be freely accepted and sustained over time.”⁴¹

The respect for the local culture and its heritage is not only something linked with the historical background of a place or country. According to him, it is something that goes deeper and helps people become richer by knowing the other. It also contributes to the development of economic, social, and cultural relationships. Being committed to the social doctrine of his church

41. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 52, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

and militating for the eradication of poverty, Pope Francis considers it is helpful to understand and integrate people from different social categories in the social mechanisms of the time, and not to destroy their self-esteem by giving them the feeling that they are not as good or efficient as others. He therefore pleads for no longer referring to a culture as being better than others. We should use other criteria instead, aiming at inclusion and enrichment, rather than exclusion, punishment, and social segregation.

The Role of Social Life in Reaching Eternal Life

The second part of the letter starts with the exegesis, on a social note, of the parable of the merciful Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37), a text which has been emphasised before on several occasions and which is seen as paradigmatic for areas like healthcare.⁴² Pope Francis insists on the fact that this passage of the New Testament should not be considered only a text with historical relevance. Instead, it should be also understood in

42. https://www.academia.edu/7771564/The_Good_Samaritan_A_Model_for_Health_Care_Workers, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

relation to the contemporary situation. He suggests the following:

“The previous chapter should not be read as a cool and detached description of today’s problems, for “the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts.” In the attempt to search for a ray of light in the midst of what we are experiencing, and before proposing a few lines of action, I now wish to devote a chapter to a parable told by Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. Although this Letter is addressed to all people of good will, regardless of their religious convictions, the parable is one that any of us can relate to and find challenging.”⁴³

Later on, the encyclical unfolds as an exegesis of the parable. The Pope invites the readers to carefully consider to which category of people from the Gospel they would like to identify themselves⁴⁴. He then ends the

43. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 56, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

44. „Which of these persons do you identify with? This question, blunt as it is, is direct and incisive. Which of these characters do you resemble? We need to acknowledge that we are constantly tempted to ignore others, especially the weak. Let us admit that, for all the progress we have made, we are still “illiterate” when it comes to accompanying, caring for and sup-

presentation of the episode by an exhortation, highlighting its social relevance at a macro-level:

“Each day offers us a new opportunity, a new possibility. We should not expect everything from those who govern us, for that would be childish. We have the space we need for co-responsibility in creating and putting into place new processes and changes. Let us take an active part in renewing and supporting our troubled societies. Today we have a great opportunity to express our innate sense of fraternity, to be Good Samaritans who bear the pain of other people’s troubles rather than fomenting greater hatred and resentment. Like the chance traveller in the parable, we need only have a pure and simple desire to be a people, a community, constant and tireless in the effort to include, integrate and lift up the fallen. We may often find ourselves succumbing to the mentality of the violent, the blindly ambitious, those who spread mistrust and lies. Others may continue to view politics or the economy as an arena for their own power plays. For our part, let us foster what is good and place ourselves at its service.”⁴⁵

porting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies. We have become accustomed to looking the other way, passing by, ignoring situations until they affect us directly.” https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 64, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

45. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 77, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

Moving Beyond Ourselves

The love for God and for our neighbour is seen as a solution to crises. Within the Trinity, it is the principle that brings into movement the Three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶ On the other hand, in the relationships among people, love is not only a theological virtue with a more or less abstract relevance, but also the engine that allows people to move. People are therefore encouraged to move towards others, being pushed by the love for their neighbour. They are encouraged to understand and forgive the other, and to living by and in the other, which is the fulfilment of life. Pope Francis also insists on the fact that knowing oneself is conditioned by the relationship with others. He is also aware of the fact that the committed love for one's neighbour and the desire to help can lead to negotiation and dialogue and this is the basis of reconciliation:

“When conflicts are not resolved but kept hidden or buried in the past, silence can lead to complicity in grave misdeeds and sins. Authentic reconciliation does not flee from conflict, but is achieved *in* conflict, resolving it through dialogue and open, honest and patient negotiation. Conflict between different

46. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Sfânta Treime sau la început a fost iubirea (Holy Trinity or in the beginning there was the love)*, (Bucharest: Press of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1993), 18.

groups ‘if it abstains from enmities and mutual hatred, gradually changes into an honest discussion of differences founded on a desire for justice.’”⁴⁷

Semantic aspects like the difference between popular and populist⁴⁸ are also brought into attention in the complex analysis of Pope Francis. The appeal to memory, seen not as a revenge tool, but rather as a form of understanding and responsibly assuming the past and as an instrument that contributes to the healing of wounds, is also present in the Pope’s letter.

Conclusions

The *Fratelli Tutti* encyclical letter, released in 2020 by Pope Francis, is a topical and important document,

47. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 244, accessed 21. 08. 2021.

48. „In recent years, the words “populism” and “populist” have invaded the communications media and everyday conversation. As a result, they have lost whatever value they might have had, and have become another source of polarization in an already divided society. Efforts are made to classify entire peoples, groups, societies and governments as “populist” or not. Nowadays it has become impossible for someone to express a view on any subject without being categorized one way or the other, either to be unfairly discredited or to be praised to the skies.” (https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html, paragraph 156, accessed 21. 08. 2021).

with a complex and rich social message, influenced by Francis of Assisi and his theology. By coming out from the borders of his denomination and facing problems that have a global impact, like the pandemic, the, conflicts, and terrorism, among others, it goes beyond some of the previous letter. Through certain solutions offered, it proves both its visionary and its practical relevance and it shows that, in the future, a dialogue between spiritualities and cultures is definitely possible. It remains to see how the solutions suggested by the Pontiff will be implemented and what the outcomes will be, in the context of the evolution of society.

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ISBN: 978-606-37-2442-8