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## Research Results and Perspectives of Theology

*Abstract:* In Slovenia we have, with regard to the place and role of theology in the transition period, emerged from the phase of opposition and obstruction into a period of normalization and of cooperation on an equal basis in all fields of science. Thus, Slovenian science as a whole is gradually being included into international streams and structures, in which theology has its appropriate place, the main benefits of theological and religious knowledge are becoming a crucial part of primary and higher education in Slovenia. Research work conducted to date in the framework of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Ljubljana and of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts is an appropriate basis for a critical judgement of work conducted by the programme and project groups and for a clear view into the future.

*Key words:* the Bible, translation, biblical proper names, penitential prayers, the Holy Trinity, Church history, literary criticism.

### *Povzetek:* **Rezultati raziskave in perspektive teologije**

V Sloveniji smo glede mesta in vloge teologije v naši družbi v obdobju tranzicije prešli iz faze nasprotovanja in zaviranja v obdobje normalizacije in enakopravnega sodelovanja na vseh področjih znanosti. Tako se polagoma celotna slovenska znanost vključuje v mednarodne tokove in strukture, v katerih ima teologija svoje ustrezno mesto, glavne dobrine teoloških in religioloških ved pa postajajo potreben del slovenskega osnovnega in visokošolskega izobraževanja. Dosedanje znanstveno raziskovalno delo v okviru Teološke fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani in Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti je primerna osnova za kritično presojo dela dosedanjih programskih skupin in projektov in za veder pogled v prihodnost.

*Gljučne besede:* Sveto pismo, prevod, svetopisemska lastna imena, spokorne molitve, Sveta Trojica, zgodovina Cerkve, literarna kritika.

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The Faculty of Theology is the only academic institution in Slovenia which researches theological subjects in a planned and long-term manner. Characteristic of this institution is the fact that it not only covers theology in the strict sense of the word, but also many other areas of the humanities: history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, pedagogy. The titles of previous projects and programmes, which were co-financed by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, clearly express the range of subjects and themes in the area of the humanities: Translation of the Bible; The Role of Slovenian Non-Scholastic Philosophy in European Movements; Compiling a Slovenian Lexicon of Rhetoric and Communication; The Comparative Value and Signi-

fificance of Religion; The Preparation of Components of Pedagogical-Religious Activities of the Catholic Church; The Preparation of New Textbooks for all Areas of Systematic Theology; The Catholic Church and Civil Society; The Actions of the Ljubljana Bishop Tomaž Hren; Reward, Punishment and Forgiveness; The Work of the Apostles – the History of the First Church; Democracy – School – Pedagogy: New Models in Compulsory Education; Human Rights and World Beliefs; The Church as an Agent of Moral Conscience and Slovenian Society; Literary Criticism regarding Prayers of Atonement and Sacrifice; The Church and the State in Slovenia from the mid-19th Century to World War II; Ethical and Religious Questions in Secondary Schools; Religion and Violence. From 1998 to summer 2003, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology co-financed two programme groups in the framework of the Faculty of Theology: Guilt and Reconciliation (Programme Leader Jože Krašovec); Ideal and Guiding Movements of the Past and Present (Programme Leader Janez Juhant). Two programmes groups: The History of Forms in Judeo-Christian Sources and Tradition (Programme Leader Jože Krašovec), The Ethical and Religious Foundations and Perspectives of Society and Religiology in the Context of Modern Education (Programme Leader Janez Juhant). The most recent project: The Role of the Theological Schools in the Slovenian History for the Building Up of the Slovenian High School System (the project Leader Bogdan Kolar).

## **1. Main Results of the Research Group from 2004-2008**

The synthetic overview of the results of the research programme is based on bibliographical information. In terms of the aimed-for goals it is provided according to five categories

### **1.1. The Results of the Research of the Forms of Biblical Proper Names**

In 2007 the responsible programme leader, Jože Krašovec, published the monograph study *Svetopisemska lastna imena/Biblical Proper Names* in Slovenian and in English at the publishing house SAZU and ZRC SAZU, thus laying the foundations for the completion of a dictionary of forms of biblical names in English and Slovenian. The research reveals the complex phonetic relation between Semitic, Greek and Latin forms of biblical proper names. Research over the past four years has shown that the sources used by Greek and Latin translators could not have been part of a unified tradition. The

study includes all variant forms of biblical names that have an undisputed geographical and historical stamp. The greatest problem in researching the form of biblical proper names is the extremely large number of variant readings of the same name, which appear in the same manuscript, in different Biblical books or even in the same book. On this point it is most important to uncover the comparative study of forms of Biblical proper names throughout history contained in the Hebrew Bible and in the Greek and Latin translations, the crucial fact that well-known names are practically without variations and that they usually retain the same form throughout the entire Bible, while the majority of infrequent names appear in a number of variant readings. This yields the conclusion that well-known names were part of a stable, living tradition and for this reason not a written rule in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin and other cultural circumstances. They became part of general and international cultural history.<sup>1</sup>

## **1. 2. The Results of the Research of Biblical Liturgical Penitential Prayers**

The research into the liturgical penitential prayers focused on literary criticism of the texts of this type in relation to their common theological origins in the Old Testament. The research by Terezija Snežna Večko dealt with the role of guilt, punishment and forgiveness in prayers of penitence. The author always respects the dynamic interpersonal working and co-dependence of three factors: the text with its literary characteristics, the capability of the interpreting spirit and emotions, epistemological considerations. The analysis of the text in its own structure and comparison with similar texts helps one to come to terms with the problematic spots, although perhaps to a far greater extent it also shows the opposite nature of this text with regard to other texts. It respects the difference between authors, periods, circumstances, socio-historical forms and generic or thematic demands, and the variety of literary forms. The research of the fundamental themes within a holistic panoramic interpretation including historical

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<sup>1</sup> In this light less known names represented a greater challenge for translators throughout history, for three main reasons: First, names that appear infrequently could not become part of a stable tradition – neither at the local, let alone the international dimension; second, Hebrew and Aramaic texts were not yet vocalized and the spoken original forms of the names were not supported by a living tradition, because only in rare circles were Hebrew and Aramaic spoken languages; third, the Greek and Latin alphabets were unsuitable for transliteration of Semitic signs – in fact, no non-Semitic alphabet is entirely suitable for the translation of Semitic names.

viewpoints leads to surprising conclusions regarding the relation between general and specific forms of expressing guilt, penitence and the plea for forgiveness.<sup>2</sup>

### **1. 3. The Results of the Research into the Sources and Tradition of the Holy Trinity**

The Theology of the Holy Trinity is a focused researching into the relation among the three Divine Persons and it crucially complements the overly formalistic research of the basis of our co-existence. Current science, especially sociology, anthropology and psychology, invests much effort and energy into uncovering and establishing such relations that will entrench interpersonal links and create a living community. These emphases show themselves especially in the field of study of communicology. Trinitarianism is not just the criterion of orthodoxy but represents a framework in which we can reflect on the nature of the individual, on the relation between humanity and the rest of creation, on the relation between us and God. This is thus a matter of the ontological material of interpersonal relations. Trinitarian thinking supplants all kinds of unitarian thinking which deny plurality at the expense of totalitarian unity, and represents a medicine against a pluralism which evaporates into indifference and eventually melts into nihilism. The fundamental characteristic of Trinitarianism is uncovering unity in the many and the many in the unified. This means that Trinitarianism is both the basis and the extension of all Christian theology and anthropology. Trinitarian anthropology reinstates the communal extent of society.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In the framework of a research into the forms of liturgical penitential prayers we have to realize that the extant texts follow biblical and liturgical forms based on long oral tradition but are modelled after customary liturgical forms of the Synagogue, using words and concepts not appearing frequently in the everyday speech and writing. There was a common genus of Jewish liturgical prayers. Individual prayers are not slavishly dependent upon ancient models but they appear to be a mosaic of established prayer forms. Close parallels are found in 1 Kgs 8:46-53; Ezra 9.6-15; Neh 9:6-37; Ps 79; Bar 1:15-3:8; Prayer of Azariah 1-22; Prayer of Manasseh. The common point of these texts is a standard reaction to the fall of Jerusalem and the Exile, accepting the prophetic claim that these events were the just judgment of Israel for its sins. Two contrasting themes dominate the prayers: Israel's sin and God's righteousness. Prayers of penitence were not thought to be the means by which people could reverse their fate; the only basis for asking God for change is to be found in God's own character: steadfast love, mercy, forgiveness, and fidelity.

<sup>3</sup> Trinitarian theology has stimulated creative reflection on the ontological status of relation. On the contemporary scene, rationality plays a primary role in the Trinitarian thought. The emphasis on the fundamental status of relation well positions Trinitarian theology to engage the contemporary movements of thought.

#### **1. 4. The Results of the Research into the History of the Church in the Slovenian and in the European Context**

The history of the Church in Slovenia in its anchored position in the broader European space and in the relation to the Bible is being capably researched by Mirjana Filipič, Miran Špelič, Metod Benedik, Bogdan Kolar and Matjaž Ambrožič. Research into the historiography of the Bible, carried out by Maksimilijan Matjaž, also belongs to this thematic context.<sup>4</sup> The work of church historians, who deal primarily with the working and meaning of the Catholic and Protestant Church in Slovenia, is something fundamental for our writing of history. The Church is an indestructible constant, which has decisively co-formed the world and Slovenian past or co-forms the everyday and our future. In Slovenia this is all the more valid for the past century, as virtually all events up to 1945 are indelibly linked with the workings of the Church. This very fact is one of the reasons why, among experts and the public, certain important historical issues are known superficially, uncritically and even a priori. It must once again be emphasised that the Catholic and Protestant Church have crucially co-formed central and western Europe, including Slovenia and the human, both in terms of belief and culture.

#### **1. 5. The Results of the Research of Slovenian and World Literature in Terms of the Relation between Form and Content**

In the framework of the programme, Irena Avsenik Nabergoj researched literary forms which express the fundamental themes and forms of the values of the world of ancient Israel and the earliest Christianity in Slovenian and world literature, especially in Ivan Cankar. The focus was on the relation between form and content. She conducted a thorough and comparatively and thematically directed analysis of the entirety of Cankar's literary opus and studied many scientific works from the area of methodology, literary criticism and

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<sup>4</sup> As Matjaž Ambrožič explains, the object of the historical examination of Church historians is in the first instance the Church as a redeeming institution in which Divine and human factors intertwine, as well as its contact with other faiths, cultures and civilizations. It is for this reason that the Bible is the Church's first criterion with regard to holiness and sinfulness. Church historians always encounter the problematic area of teaching the enculturation of Christian elements in specific nations or the reformation of national traditions into Christian ones. Time and humanity are not limited solely to the past and the present that are the usual interest of history, but also, because of the eschatological aspect, penetrate into the future, into eternity. In the Church and the world everything occurs under the viewpoint of what is to come, which according to the Christian view, as well as according to the view of other beliefs, occurs in the hereafter and not in this world.

related scholarship from the humanities in order to be able to dependably recognize the inner link with the thematic of sin, guilt, punishment and reconciliation in Ivan Cankar's works. This analysis of Cankar's literary opus uncovered the fact that his writing is deeply anchored in Old Greek, Christian and contemporary literary, and the philosophical and theological world of belief, motifs and values.<sup>5</sup> Over the past two years the author has researched the motifs and themes of longing and temptation/trial, which touch upon the fundamental existential extent of every man's existence and manifest themselves in myths, dreams, ballads, stories, folk tales and so on.<sup>6</sup>

## **2. Guidelines for the Development of Theology in the Next Years**

Previous project and programme research work only partially filled the gaps in the afore-mentioned areas. In the meantime, new tasks have become apparent. In deciding for new programmes and project groups we have to ponder all the more which themes are for Slovenia of primary and which of secondary importance. Slovenia's membership in the EU increased possibilities for including theologians in the international research sphere. In concord with the scientific research balance in developed countries we must establish a long-term research strategy in the relation to the assumptions of our life and the sources of European and Slovenian culture. In the first instance, this means that basic research is incomparably more im-

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<sup>5</sup> Cankar's unique literary style encompasses many symbolist elements, due to which the concept of sin, guilt, punishment and reconciliation are often not expressed literally, but nevertheless pervade Cankar's works as a main theme. The author draws attention to the appropriate relation between Cankar's originality and European influences. In the presentation of Cankar's works in the four parts of the monograph, she makes the important decision to follow the development of Cankar's experiencing of sin, guilt, punishment and forgiveness or reconciliation from the writer's first literary sketches up to his final book *Dream Visions*.

<sup>6</sup> The treatment of these themes includes biblical and other ancient Jewish literature. This comes in our cultural sphere as an innovation, even though the Bible as the book of universal values and universal literary forms has been the greatest source of inspiration for greatest artists, philosophers and theologians throughout two millennia. The Bible continues to interact with Western literature and to speak with a universal voice that responds to readings made with literary sensitivity and imagination with profound effects upon the secular culture. Cf. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, ed. *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (London: Collins, 1987); David Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature I-II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); John Barton, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); John B. Gabel, Charles B. Wheeler, and Anthony D. York. *The Bible as Literature: An Introduction* (New York / Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

portant than practical research. In the field of theology, we are in need of research which will be of ongoing importance and which represents mainly the use of a basis-research approach. The history of forms is the most universal aspect for researching the primary sources of the humanities in Europe. In the developed countries of Western Europe there is such a long tradition in the critical research of forms that it has stamped the direction of researching these sources throughout the world. In Slovenia, there has to date been only slight strictly scientific research in this area.<sup>7</sup>

Religious phenomena belong to the anthropological, sociological and culturological constants of humankind, which is why it is not possible to understand the human without understanding religious phenomena. Theological consideration of these phenomena is based, and needed, on the field of religious beliefs for several reasons. It is important for every faith to be aware of its own form and to judge it in the light of critical reason and the rationality of other faiths. This enables dialogical relations and allows for coexistence. In the awareness of its own form and the constant care for that form the identity of the individual faith is not endangered. Critical examination in dialogue uncovers the common core of all religions and the hidden potential of individual religions; in this way it is included into the broader societal movements. Proper solutions for humans and society will be found in the dialogue between cooperating researchers from theology, the humanities and the social sciences.<sup>8</sup>

The anticipated viewpoints of the programme research in the area of religious studies, religious pedagogy and Church law are: research (and application of research) of various spiritual forces of the nation

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<sup>7</sup> During the next years we would like to fill this gap in Slovenia as well in areas such as Bible studies, patrology, liturgy, spiritual and systematic theology. In the area of systematic theology the emphasis will be on researching sources of the theology of the Trinitarian God in the context of globalization and the postmodern. Forms of expressing the relation among the three divine persons and the analogous relation between God and people can foster dialogue with the modern world. Researchers will critically examine the Eastern and Western Trinitarian tradition in relation to intellectual movements in Slovenia from the perspective of both the general and specific nature of its articulated forms.

<sup>8</sup> In the Slovenian space, which is pluralistic in terms of ideas and faiths, the "Catholic culture" remains central, and theological-religious research is a valuable activity in understanding our own past and identity in contemporary intellectual movements. Inclusion in Europe also means inclusion in the world as a whole, which is essentially stamped by the three main branches of Christianity: the Catholic, the Protestant, and the Orthodox. Europe has always also been linked to Judaism, while today Islam and, in lesser numbers, Eastern faiths as well as new age religions also appear. The figure of a united Europe is to a great measure dependent on the dialogical activates of faiths which care for the spiritual, the symbolic, as well as the appropriate matrix.

and culture in the past on the basis of appropriate sources, communication in the present and a view of the future, ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue as an especially valued activity of the Faculty of Theology, especially in the relation Protestantism in Slovenia and to Orthodoxy and Islam in south-eastern Europe; the researching of modern verbal and non-verbal speech (aesthetic and artistic) as well as its spiritual message, including via the media; determining which educational models are to be selected and formed in Slovenia – that is Catholic and/or other government-approved educational institutions. Among religious sources there belong, among other things, the legal order of individual religions. In our case, research of internal relations between civil and Church law, the question of human rights and the influence of non-Christian legal systems, such as that of Islam are especially important.

Ethics is a very fundamental area of research in the field of theology. The modern scientific direction of general ethics and especially bioethics raises fundamental philosophical and theological questions. Only an interdisciplinary approach to handling ethical questions can satisfactorily find answers to the dilemmas which humanity is facing. Modern Christian ethics is entering an open dialogue with the advancements of modern science. It is to be hoped that also in the future Slovenia will have adequate interest for profound examining of the fundamental questions which concern ethics in multicultural and inter-religious dialogue and especially bioethics. The topicality of the so-called global ethos in searching for an ethical minimum without regard to various religious premises is a particular challenge for a Slovenia that is becoming increasingly pluralistic. All the more is there a need for future development of Christian ethics in the context of bringing European traditions closer together and establishing a new form of dialogue between them. Ethics cannot be developed without respect for Jewish and Greek religious premises, Roman law and the critical thought of new age thinking and spiritual movements. As co-creators we are, at the beginning of the third millennium, called upon to enter, with suitable scientific reflection, into the communication context of Europe and the world in terms of all fundamental questions that are concerns with ethics.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Searching for an ethical basis establishes certain primary tasks: the question of the identity of the human subject as an individual; our legal status with regard to the uncovering of the human genome; the question of new definitions of the concepts of humankind and nature; freedom and responsibility; the relationship to the environment and the question of living in solidarity with different cultures and religions in a common societal space. The studying of modern communication means as well as their influence on the conscience of the individual and the broader community will also be one of the primary fields of research in the near future.



Many thematic aspects which are in the main of a practical nature are open. These are thematic contents in fields which have not yet been the object of planned research. As a strategically important thematic content for the inclusion of Slovenia in European programmes there is interdisciplinary research in the field of culture studies (civil education and national education) and axiology (religious and ethical education) in the period of mandatory education in comparison among European countries. This is especially suitable for research projects. The research of initiation or surrogate rituals and symbols as well as their role in the society and culture of religious pluralism or critical relationship to tradition is also part of the project.

The nature of the thematic categories of the new programme groups on the one hand, and thematic contents of the newly proposed projects on the other, express a consideration with regard to the approximate percentage relationship of financing between the programmes and the projects. The fundamental research in the framework of the proposed programme groups must have national priority. The most suitable place for Young Researchers is in the framework of the programme groups that carry out fundamental research about the many-sided role of sources for our culture. Only responsible investing in fundamental research can guarantee the development of a reliable scientific corps and successful long-term development of our humanistic science.<sup>10</sup>

### **3. Quantitative and Qualitative Self-Evaluation Elements**

The Faculty of Theology of the University of Ljubljana according to its research and pedagogical workers is included in a wide framework of domestic and international scientific, cultural and pedagogical spheres. Researchers are keenly aware of the penetration into the international sphere, which is why we note the increase in papers of all scientific and expert categories at home and abroad. Some of our researchers have also been cited in the Web of Science. The beneficiaries of this knowledge are primarily students of the Faculty of Theology in various pedagogical programmes, various associations, the pastoral sphere in the Church, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Cooperation is partly contractual, and partly of our own initiative.<sup>11</sup> Many Faculty of Theology employees are members of editorial

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<sup>10</sup> On the surface, electronic editions of sources facilitate research, but in spite of this researchers must have print editions of sources at their disposal. Among other things, such research also entails visiting archival libraries in Europe.

<sup>11</sup> One of the members of the Faculty of Theology, Jože Krašovec, is a regular mem-

boards and council boards of domestic and foreign journals, and other periodical publications and series. Further inclusion in the university pedagogical process is very important. In the last two years all researchers and pedagogical workers have worked intensively in restructuring the pedagogical process according to Bologna principles. Research personnel are adequately prepared for the newest, scientific, societal and political challenges that cooperation with restructuring all levels, the regional and the global levels, entails.<sup>12</sup>

Since the beginning of mankind, its balanced human relation to the material and higher realities, and the culturally conditioned forms of religion that result from that reality, have most obviously marked the human. This is the reason for the traditional alliance between religion and art, science and art, philosophy and theology, state and religious institutions. All disciplines are scientific if research is carried out according to suitable methods and is verified in relation to global material and spiritual reality. All science must continually legitimize itself by weighing itself against theory and reality and by searching for suitable methods for new circumstances. This is why the interpretation of dogmas can also be scientific – since dogmas are not an esoteric taboo but statements of assertions which are based on particular historical experiences and rational reasons, and they are verified according to the principle of comparison or analogy and in alliance with the positive intention of human society in the relation to opposing positions, dogmas and models. Traditional statements with regard to challenges and demands of the new age according to contrastive measures are continually verified in relation to the global material and spiritual reality of the world.

The humanities and the social sciences cannot bypass specific cultural frames which determine a nation or a culture. Because of this they are simultaneously universal and partial in nature. The intertwining of the visible and invisible creation, reality and figures, the concrete and the abstract, the universal and the partial, the collective and the individual in the natural order has the consequence that every culture expresses this intertwining and that it is thus simultaneously uni-

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ber of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and currently also the President of the Scientific Research Council for the Humanities at the Research Agency of the Republic of Slovenia (ARRS); four are members of the European Academy of Science and Art (Anton Jamnik, Jože Krašovec, Stanko Ojnik, Slavko Alojzij Snoj).

<sup>12</sup> Financial sources are quite like those of other University of Ljubljana faculties: most of the institution's costs are covered by the main pedagogical programmes, partly on the basis of research programmes and projects, partly on the basis of contracts with various domestic and foreign partners. Part of the costs, especially for maintaining buildings, offices and the library, are covered by the Slovenian Bishops' Conference.

versal and partial, concrete and abstract, material and spiritual. Decisive is the fact that it is based on an organic link between material and spiritual creation, which according to its size and hidden dimensions far exceed the range of spatially and temporally conditioned models and metaphors.

#### **4. Fundamental and Practical Research in Theology**

The interweaving of the spiritual and the material, of the symbolic and the rational categories of the humanities and the social sciences is a natural criterion for judging the relation between fundamental and practical research in the humanities and the social sciences. The sequence of stages of working on the primary facts of the material and the spiritual world in human conscience and their embodiment in a given culture show that fundamental research must have precedence over practical research. Because the recognitions of science are not intended to be self-enclosed but are taken in by society with the profound need to enrich our existence, the border between fundamental and practical research often cannot be reliably determined. Because every society is composed of both natural and conventional laws and an unlimited palate of cultural categories, the results of primary research must be transferred and thus integrated into the given structures.

The thematic approach in researching historical documents often calls for more extensive comparative research into the cross-section of all of human history from the beginning to the present. And so in all the primary themes limitless possibilities for relevant research are opened. Many basic disciplines of primary theological research exist: philosophy, psychology, foundational theology of a comparative nature, comparative linguistic studies in the area of biblical and later Christian sources, archaeology, the history of dogmas, social sciences such as law and social studies of the Church, etc. Because theology was never isolated from general historical and social events, fundamental research entails organic extending into general historical and sociological movements. All the more broad is also the field of practical research. The global nature and topicality of theological premises in every age has as a consequence the necessity of applying these fundamental recognitions to a new place and time and thus the necessity to “translate” historical documents into a new structure.

In terms of the Bible this does not mean only translating texts but also an explanation of primary information and concepts. Translation is one of the most influential forms of literary criticism, for it both

interprets and recreates the text it addresses. The commented edition of the new translation of the Bible is a classic example of a practical area of Bible research. Such work is, in certain aspects, more demanding than mere primary Bible research, since in preparing a commented translation on the basis of original documents it is necessary to select the best variant and thus respect the original, old translations and seminal events in contemporary Bible studies, together with the typical controversies, justify decisions in the commentary, and, lastly, find a suitable expression or rendering in the target language.<sup>13</sup> Finding a suitable solution in the target language also means confronting all the problems and controversies of one's own language and culture in the broadest sense. Translating is thus a matter of three fundamental tasks: the process of laying bare the original meaning according to the principle of primary research; inventing suitable expressive forms in the target language; codification of the text and other expressive forms in a given culture. We can also evaluate "translating" and codification of many other old documents.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

Most contemporary scientists are more and more aware that the character of scientific procedures themselves places restrictions on the relevance of their results. Distinctive features of science lie not in the types of object and event to which the scientist has access but in the unscientific, metaphysical faith in the uniformity and intelligibility of nature, in the faith in laws we can uncover. Comparative religious sciences demonstrate that some religions are more concerned with the intelligibility of nature in general, some other more with the nature of human being. In "natural" religions people apprehend various aspects of the nature of the divine from the general features of this world. Characteristic of Judaism and Christianity is the primary concern with humans as persons in their relation to God, the Universe, the History and to themselves. The knowledge of nature, interpretation of historical events, and the perception of the mysteries of human nature operate together in any attempt to grasp the truth lying beyond the visible world, but to know a person is, of

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course, more difficult than to know a thing, because a person must disclose his or her will in order to be adequately known.

At this point we recognize the most important difference between cosmological or rationalistic and personalistic views of knowledge and science. In any cosmological direction knowledge and science are purely theoretical both in relation to the material and to the spiritual worlds, and it is left to human discretion whether or not the will derive rules for conduct from the reasons of insight in the human mind. According to the Jewish and Christian personalistic perception of the world, humans and God true knowledge is possible when general knowledge about the world is completed with a total vision of inner, spiritual realities which is mainly a matter of will. This knowledge is all-embracing and carries finality within it. Knowledge that is not coupled with a deep respect for the tendency in the human being going beyond the world of appearance and beyond the significant language is only fragmentary and can quickly become morally questionable.

The all-embracing (holistic) understanding of science and belief reflects the conscience that every striving for knowledge includes an attempt to know accurately the laws of the nature, to interpret properly past events and to consider especially the state of mind in humans being the most complex field of scientific research and of religious assessment. The search for the inner analogy and of outer experience enables us to see clearer how the principles are built in the very structure of the world and human being and how our mind and intuition cooperate in the process of perceiving material and spiritual laws.

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