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Maksimilijan Matjaž

Pavlovo preseganje judovstva in helenizma v razumevanju telesa in svobode. Transformacija védenja v Prvem pismu Korinčanom

Paul's Transcending of Judaism and Hellenism in the Understanding of Body and Freedom: The Transformation of Knowledge in the First Letter to the Corinthians

Izvleček: Pavlovo oznanilo evangelija je nekaj radikalno novega. Takšno trditev je mogoče zagovarjati na osnovi treh ključnih konceptov, ki jih je razvil v svojih pismih: soteriologija in teologija križa, odrešenje – novo življenje preko krsta v Svetem Duhu, koncept svobode v Kristusu – življenje v Njem. Pavlova teologija svobode in telesa ni le etično-normativna, temveč spoznavna in ontološka. Pavel spremeni sistem védenja, saj spoznanje Boga ni več utemeljeno v racionalni spekulaciji ali v postavi, temveč v udeležbi pri Kristusu. Vendar je Pavel kot apostol narodov, ki je širil evangelij, izhajal tudi iz judovstva, ki je vplivalo na njegov teološki pogled, in iz helenizma kot prevladujoče kulture tistega časa. Ta dvojna pogojenost ga je zaznamovala tako v njegovem mišljenju kot tudi ravnanju. Toda v Prvem pismu Korinčanom lahko odkrijemo Pavlovo distanco do judovsko-helenistične identitete in temeljne nastavke novih teoloških konceptov, ki jih je oblikoval na osnovi Kristusovega evangelija.

Ključne besede: sistem védenja (*Wissenssystem*), judovstvo, postava (*tóra*, *nomos*), helenizem, stoiki, epikurejci, svoboda, suženjstvo, telo, Duh, odrešenje, modrost

Abstract: *Paul's proclamation of the Gospel is radically new. This claim is supported by three key concepts developed in his letters: soteriology and the theology of the cross; salvation and new life through baptism in the Holy Spirit; and the concept of freedom in Christ – life in Him. Paul's theology of freedom and of the body is not only ethical and normative, but also epistemological and ontological. Paul transforms the system of knowledge, as the knowledge of God is no longer grounded in rational speculation or the Law, but in participation in Christ. Yet Paul, as the apostle to the nations who spread the Gospel, also drew from Judaism, which influenced his theological perspective, and from Hellenism, the dominant culture of his time. This dual conditioning shaped both his thinking and his actions. However, in the First Letter to the Corinthians, we can detect Paul's distance from the Jewish-Hellenistic identity and the foundational elements of the new theological concepts he shaped on the basis of Christ's Gospel.*

Keywords: *system of knowledge (*Wissenssystem*), Judaism, Law (*tóra, nomos*), Hellenism, Stoics, Epicureans, freedom, slavery, body, Spirit, salvation, wisdom*

Uvod

Dogodek pred Damaskom, kot ga opisujejo Apostolska dela (Apd 9,1-19; 22,6-16; 26,12-18), predstavlja prelomnico v življenju Pavla iz Tarza. Ob tem se postavljajo temeljna vprašanja: kakšen pomen je imel ta dogodek za njegovo identiteto? Kakšna sprememba je nastala v njegovem teološkem mišljenju? Kako se je soočil z znanstveno miselnostjo takratne družbe? Ali je ostal Jud, ki se je tudi po tem prelomnem dogodku navdihoval v postavi (*tóra*), ali pa se je njegova identiteta transformirala, ko je sprejel Kristusov evangelij? Skratka, kako ga je po eni strani v oznanjevanju evangelija pogojevala njegova verska dediščina in kako se je po drugi strani soočil s prevladujočo kulturo tistega časa, ki jo na splošno označujemo kot helenizem?[1]

Kot ena od možnih razlag se ponuja teza, da se je Pavel v svojem teološkem mišljenju in pri oznanjevanju prilagajal družbenemu okolju, kar poimenujemo *adaptibility*. Pavel je bil namreč Jud po rodu, Grk po kulturi in jeziku ter Rimljan po državljanstvu (Glad 2003, 25–35). Vendar je v zadnjem obdobju treba upoštevati tudi novo teorijo, ki se je oblikovala znotraj eksegetske šole *The New Perspective on Paul* in se imenuje *Paul within Judaism Perspective*. (Matjaž 2020, 53–57; Nanos 2017; Zetterholm 2015) Ne gre le za to, da ta eksegetska smer izpostavlja, kako Pavel izhaja iz farizejske struje judovstva in kako je bil vnet za očetna izročila (Gal 1,13-14; Flp 3,5-6; Apd 22,3; 23,6), ampak predvsem trdi, da je za razumevanje Pavlove osebnosti bistveno, da nikoli ni prenehal biti Jud in je vseskozi sledil postavi.[2]

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2 »'Paul within Judaism Perspective' je nadaljevanje teorije 'New Perspective', lahko pa bi jo označili tudi kot njeno radikalizacijo. Glavni predstavniki te raziskovalne smeri so Mark D. Nanos, *Reading Paul within Judaism*, 2017–2018, Magnus Zetterholm, ur. *Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle*, 2015, in Pamela Eisenbaum, *Paul Was Not a Christian*, 2009. Medtem ko zagovorniki 'New Perspective' na različne načine večinoma še naprej izhajajo iz predpostavke, da je Pavel samega sebe razumel kot kristjana, ki izhaja iz Izraela in je z njim povezan, je temeljna teza 'Paul within Judaism Perspective', da je Pavel ostal Jud, ki se ravna po tóri. Pavel je bil Jud in je to v polnem pomenu besede ostal tudi po Damasku. Podobo Pavla spreobrnjenca srečamo izrazito le v Apostolskih delih. Njegovi polemični zapisi o tóri so namenjeni izključno kristjanom, ki so prihajali iz drugih narodov, ne pa Judom. Predvsem se je zoperstavil tistim oznanjevalcem evangelija,

Tako tezi, da se je Pavel prilagodil verskim, kulturnim in družbenim tokovom (*adaptibility*), kot tudi tezi, da je vse življenje ostal zvest tóri (*Paul within Judaism*), Schnelle postavi nasproti novo tezo, v kateri trdi, da je Pavel ustvaril nov sistem védenja, ko zapiše: »Zgodnje krščanstvo je antičnemu svetu prineslo nov sistem védenja, kar velja predvsem za področje metafizike in etike. Gre za temeljna vprašanja o smislu življenja: kako misliti Boga? Kdo je človek, kdo sem jaz? Od kod prihajam in kam grem? Kako naj ravnam? Zgodnje krščanstvo prinaša novo védenje o Bogu in njegovem odrešilnem delovanju v Jezusu Kristusu.« (Schnelle 2020, 148–149)

Čeprav Pavel uporablja v svojih tekstih pojme, ki so bistveno zaznamovali grško filozofsko misel, npr. *telos*, *autarkes*, *agathon* (Engberg-Pedersen 2004, 270), in se po drugi strani vedno znova vrača k judovski teološki misli, kot je oblikovana in utemeljena v *tóri*, pa Schnelle postavi tezo, da je Pavel zasnoval nov miselni sistem, ki presega tako judovstvo kot helenizem, čeprav imajo njegovi bistveni koncepti – npr. pravičnost, svoboda, postava, vera – svoje korenine tako v judovstvu kot v helenizmu. (Schnelle 2020, 150–155)

Schnelle uvede izraz »Wissenssystem«, kar lahko opišemo kot sistem znanja oz. védenja. S tem je mišljen miselni okvir, znotraj katerega so urejene in sistematizirane vsebine znanja, ki določajo človeka v njegovi intelektualni usmeritvi. Ko primerjamo Pavlov sistem z judovskim, ki ga predstavlja postava (*nomos*), in helenističnim (epikurejci in stoiki), ni v ospredju vprašanje, kaj je pravilno in kaj napačno, ampak gre za vprašanje, v čem Pavlov miselni sistem prinaša alternativo drugima dvema. Četudi je Pavel po eni strani pogojen z judovsko teološko-pravno tradicijo in se po drugi strani v oznanjevanju evangelija sooča s helenistično mislijo, do obeh vzpostavi kritično distanco in oblikuje nov sistem, ki oba modela preseže, in v tem smislu lahko govorimo o transformaciji judovskega in helenističnega miselnega sistema in oblikovanju novega védenja.[3]

ki so hoteli pogane obrezati. V tem smislu je njegovo naklonjenost drugim narodom treba razumeti kot določeno obliko judovstva, in sicer v okviru pluralnosti judovstev, nikakor pa ne kot odvrnitev od judovstva.« (Schnelle 2020, 126–127)

3 O tem, kako se interpretativni modeli spreminjajo in kako različni zgodovinsko-teološki okviri oblikujejo načine razumevanja svetopisemskega besedila, gl. *Ravnikar-Zupanov pozabljeni prevod Pentatevha*, kjer je pokazano, da so prevodne in hermenevtične paradigme neločljivo povezane z nastajanjem novih teoloških konceptov (Skralovnik in Ditmajer 2023, 285–335).

V Prvem pismu Korinčanom imamo dva tematska sklopa, ki na najboljši način pomagata pojasniti transformacijo judovskega in helenističnega miselnega sveta v nov sistem védenja, ki ga je oblikoval Pavel. Po eni strani je to motiv teles (*sōma*), ki se pojavlja skozi celotno pismo. Po drugi strani je za človekovo bivanje bistveno vprašanje svobode in suženjstva, se pravi, kaj pomeni biti svoboden (*eleutheros*). (Martin 1995)

To razpravo bo usmerjala teza, da je bil Pavel v svojem mišljenju in delovanju pogojen z judovsko tradicijo ter da se je v oznanjevanju evangelija moral soočiti s helenističnimi miselnimi vzorci (epikurejci in stoicizem). Vendar je svojo identiteto oblikoval tako, da je obstoječa modela znanja presegel in ustvaril nov sistem védenja, kar je najbolj razvidno iz dveh tematskih sklopov omenjenega pisma: pojem svobode (*eleutheria*) in razumevanje telesa (*sōma*). Na podlagi konceptualne analize teh dveh pojmov bo postalo razvidno, v čem je Pavlov sistem védenja nekaj povsem novega.

1 Helenizem in judovstvo

1.1 Helenizem

Besedo helenizem je kot pojem v 19. stoletju skoval nemški zgodovinar Johann Gustav Droysen v svojem znamenitem delu *Geschichte des Hellenismus* in obsega obdobje od nastopa Aleksandra Velikega leta 336 pr. Kr. do leta 30 pr. Kr., ko je bil Egipt kot zadnja helenistična entiteta priključen rimskemu imperiju. Danes sicer klasični kronološki okvir helenizma ni edini, ki ga sodobna znanost uporablja pri njegovi definiciji. Številni raziskovalci razumejo helenizem ne toliko kot omejeno zgodovinsko epoho, temveč kot trajni kulturno-miselni proces, ki presega leto 30 pr. Kr.[4] Za naše razmišljanje je zanimivo predvsem vprašanje, kakšen je bil duhovni in miselni okvir helenizma, ki je zaznamoval socialno in kulturno

4 Tako npr. Erich Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (1998), poudarja, da je helenizem kot kulturni proces dejaven tudi po vključitvi Egipta v rimski imperij, torej še globoko v rimsko obdobje; Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (1973), razume helenizem ne kot natančno časovno zamejeno obdobje, temveč kot kulturno matrico, ki zaznamuje celotno judejsko zgodovino od Aleksandra Velikega naprej – s tem pa tudi judovsko okolje Pavlovega časa; Glen W. Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (1990), obravnava helenizem kot miselni, filozofski in izobraževalni okvir, katerega vpliv v retoriki, filozofiji in verskih praksah vztraja še v 4.–5. stoletju po Kr.

sfero Pavlovega časa. Pri tem je treba dodati, da je šlo za različne kulture in jezike, kar bi v sodobnem jeziku lahko poimenovali multikulturnost. Gledano z moderne sociološke perspektive, pa je bil helenizem »velik kulturni talilni lonec« (Kobel 2019, 39).

Za naše raziskovalno vprašanje je predvsem pomembno, da Apostolska dela omenjajo dve filozofski šoli, ob kateri je Pavel trčil pri svojem oznanjevanju. Tako beremo: »Tudi nekaj epikurejskih in stoiških filozofov je razpravljalo z njim.« (Apd 17,18) Oba izraza – *Epikoureioi kai Stoikoi philosohoi* – se pojavita le na tem mestu, vendar nam lahko služita kot argument, da sta bili v takratnem helenističnem miselnem svetu to prevladujoči filozofski smeri, s katerima se je soočal Pavel. Po drugi strani pa ne izvemo ničesar o imenih filozofov, zato je smiselno predstaviti le bistvene elemente epikurejstva in stoicizma. Na tej podlagi je mogoče njune idejne značilnosti primerjati s Pavlovim miselnim sistemom, ki se po eni strani nanje navezuje, po drugi pa jih presega.

Z izrazom *Epikoureioi kai Stoikoi* so mišljeni epikurejci. Gre za filozofsko šolo, ki je ime dobilo po Epikurju (341–270 pr. Kr.). Pri raziskovanju njegovih tekstov smo omejeni. »Njegovi spisi so se ohranili deloma s prepisi rokopisov in deloma s fragmenti na papirusu.« (Sharples 2000, 18) Zato je toliko bolj dragocen Diogen Laertski, ki je v svoje delo *Življenja in misli znamenitih filozofov* vključil tudi Epikurjevo *Pismo Herodotu* (Diog. Laert. 10.35–83) in *Pismo Menojkeju* (Diog. Laert. 10.122–135; slov. izd. 2015, 595.621). Če je prvo »nekakšen povzetek celotnega Epikurjevega sistema«, pa se drugo »ukvarja z etiko« (Sharples 2000, 18).

Pri tem ne smemo spregledati njegove filozofije religije, ki je ambivalentna: zanika možnost božje previdnosti, ne zanika pa obstoja bogov, ker da so »vidni z razumom« (Diog. Laert. 10.123; slov. prev. 2015, 627).[5] Nato navaja še druge glavne misli Epikurja:

> Smrt za nas ne pomeni nič; kar se namreč razpusti, nima čutne zaznave; kar pa nima čutne zaznave, za nas nima pomena. Meja

5 »Epikurejci v svojem sklepanju ne izključujejo obstoja bogov; še več, celo sprejemajo jih. Vendar pa ni mogoče trditi, da so, gledano sistematično, pomembni za človekov način življenja ali da so človeku v pomoč pri doseganju najvišjega cilja (τέλος).« (Dienstbeck 2015, 273)

> velikosti ugodja je odprava vsake bolečine. Kjer je namreč prisotno ugodje, ni, dokler je tam, ničesar, kar bi bolelo, žalostilo ali oboje. [...] Prijetno življenje ni mogoče, ne da bi živeli preudarno, dobro in pravično, niti ni mogoče živeti preudarno, dobro in pravično, ne da bi živeli tudi prijetno. (10.139–140; slov. prev. 2015, 627–628)
>
> *Ho thanatos ouden pros hēmas: to gar dialuthen anaisthētei: to d' anaisthētoun oudepros hēmas Horos tou megethous tōn hēdonōn hē pantos tou algountos hupexairesis. hopou d' an to hēdomenon enē, kath' hon an khronon ē, ouk esti to algoun ē to lupoumenon ēto sunamphoteron. [...] Ouk estin hēdeōs zēn aneu tou phronimōs kai kalōs kai dikaiōs, oude phronimōs kai kalōs kai dikaiōs aneu tou hēdeōs.* (10.139–140; angl. izd. 1950).

Njegova filozofska misel torej poudarja, da je mogoče izpolniti svoje življenje s pomočjo užitkov, kar pa je mogoče doseči tako, da so ti intenzivni. Užitek oz. ugodje (*hēdonē*) mora biti pod racionalnim nadzorom, kar omogoča vrlina, imenovana preudarnost (*phronēsis*), in človek, ki se ravna po tej kreposti, se imenuje preudaren (*phronimos*). Vse to naj bi človeka vodilo k duševnemu miru in osvobojenosti od (telesne) bolečine oz. trpljenja (*algeō*). V tem kontekstu lahko govorimo o duševnem miru (*ataraxia*) in človekovi samozadostnosti (*autarkeia*).

Tudi v besedni zvezi *Stoikōn philosophōn* prepoznamo filozofsko gibanje, imenovano stoicizem. Beseda »stoa« pomeni stebrišče in s tem izrazom so poimenovali šolo, katere ustanovitelj je Zenon iz Kitija (333–264 pr. Kr.). Privržence te šole pa so imenovali stoiki.

V središču njihove filozofske misli najdemo dva pojma: narava ali *physis* in razum ali *logos*. Pri tem je treba poudariti, da so *logos* pojmovali v najširšem pomenu besede: lahko je to sposobnost govora (jezik), logično mišljenje, princip naravnih pojavov in tudi božji razum (oz. razumnost), ki različna področja povezuje v celoto. (Böhling in Forschner 2007) V tem kontekstu je za raziskovalno vprašanje pomembno, kako so stoiki pojmovali svobodo in v kakšni obliki so imeli vpliv na Pavlov koncept svobodnega človeka, o čemer bo govor v tretjem poglavju.

1.2 Judovstvo in postava

Judovstvo se po svojem bistvu definira na podlagi postave (*tóra*). Zato tudi Pavlova oznaka samega sebe, da je *Ioudaios* (1 Kor 9,20), daje slutiti, da judovska dediščina ni mogla ostati brez vpliva na njegov teološki nauk. Pavlova refleksija judovstva in postave v odnosu do helenistične kulture in iskanje odgovora na vprašanja, kako je presegel nekdanjo versko identiteto, se osvobodil takratne kulture (helenizma) in oblikoval nov sistem, je najbolj strnjena v 1 Kor 9,19-23:

> Čeprav sem osvobojen vseh, sem vendar postal služabnik vseh, da bi jih čim več pridobil. Judom sem postal kakor Jud, da bi pridobil Jude; tistim, ki so pod postavo, kakor bi bil pod postavo, čeprav sam nisem pod postavo, da bi pridobil tiste, ki so pod postavo. Tistim, ki so brez postave, kakor bi bil sam brez postave, čeprav nisem brez Božje postave, ampak sem pod Kristusovo postavo, da bi pridobil tiste brez postave. Slabotnim sem postal slaboten, da bi pridobil slabotne. Vsem sem postal vse, da bi jih nekaj zagotovo rešil. Vse delam zaradi evangelija, da bi bil tudi sam deležen njegovih obljub. (Matjaž 2015, 104–106)

Raziskovalci Pavlovih besedil se razhajajo pri vprašanju, kako interpretirati vrstici 20 in 21, kjer Pavel opiše svoj odnos do judovstva, predvsem do *tóre*. Na splošno velja prepričanje, da Pavel v tej samorefleksiji nakazuje, da ga ni mogoče več označiti za Juda (*Ioudaios*), ki je zvest postavi. S takim pogledom se npr. ne strinja Rudolph, ki v svoji obsežni monografiji iz leta 2011, *A Jew to the Jews*, opozarja, da Pavlovo »postajanje Jud Judom« ne pomeni razveljavitve judovske identitete, temveč predstavlja prefinjeno in misijonsko pogojeno obliko judovske prilagodljivosti, ki je zasidrana v njegovi lastni judovski samorazumevnosti.[6]

6 Rudolph je mnenja, da tisti raziskovalci, ki v vrsticah 19-23 vidijo nedvoumen dokaz, da se je Pavel odpovedal zvestobi postavi, to presojajo preveč enostransko. Tako med temi interpreti odkrije tri vrste argumentov, s katerimi skušajo dokazati, da je Pavel prelomil s postavo. Sklop argumentov tistih raziskovalcev, ki utemeljujejo svojo tezo predvsem na nekaterih Pavlovih pismih in na Apostolskih delih, imenuje »medbesedilni« (*intertextual*). Drugi sklop se navezuje na 1 Kor 9,19-23 in poudarja Pavlovo svobodomiselnost glede uživanja malikom darovanega mesa, kar ni v skladu s postavo, in tak argument označi kot »kontekstualni« (*contextual*). Nato pa določi še tretji sklop argumentov in jih poimenuje »besedilni« (*textual*). Tako v interpretaciji 1 Kor 9,19-23 opozarjajo predvsem na Pavlov jezik, ko se močno osredotoča na besedo »nomos«. Na osnovi tega sklepajo, da Pavel ne upošteva judovskih navad in da se je oddaljil od tóre. (Rudolph 2011, 1–12)

Po drugi strani Kobel v tem kontekstu zagovarja tezo, da je Pavel bikulturna osebnost. »To zahteva sposobnost, da v različnih kontekstih prevzame različne vloge, da se vključi v kulturni kontekst okolja, kjer živi – ali z njegovimi besedami: da postane tak, kot so drugi. Prepričan je, da na podlagi svoje identitete kot Ἰουδαῖος in v svoji vlogi kot ἀπόστολος deluje v Kristusovem imenu in prispeva k uresničevanju Božjega načrta za njegovo ljudstvo. Njegova prilagodljivost do kulturnega okolja ne pomeni prekinitve z njegovim poreklom, niti popolne spremembe lastne identitete ali ogrožanja njegove integritete. Zato je smiselno Pavla [...] opisati kot bikulturno osebnost.« (2019, 177) Vendar v tej analizi ni mogoče zaznati ideje, da je Pavel ustvaril nov sistem znanja in s tem transformiral svojo bikulturnost v nekaj povsem novega, zato ostaja pri argumentu dveh kultur.

Kljub kontroverzam, ki jih sprožajo Pavlove refleksije, misli v 1 Kor 9,19-23 nakazujejo, da je Pavel iz korenin judovstva in helenizma, iz katerih izhaja, oblikoval nov sistem védenja, pri čemer je na novo definiral tudi svojo identiteto – tako v odnosu do judovstva kot tudi helenizma. Naš argument pri eksegetski analizi ne bo ne medbesedilni ne kontekstualni ne besedilni, ampak konceptualni in se izraža v pojmu *eleútheros*. Nahaja se na začetku omenjenega besedila, kjer Pavel trdi, da je »svoboden od vseh« (*eleútheros gar ōn ek pantōn,* 9,19), pri čemer pojasni, na kakšen način je svoboden: namreč tako, da je »vsem postal suženj« (*pasin emauton edoulōsa,* 9,19). V tej logiki je »Judom kot Jud« (*Ioudaiois hōs Ioudaios,* 9,20). Toda nato nadaljuje, da je kakor tisti, ki so »pod postavo« (*tois hypo nomon*, 9,20), in kakor tisti, ki so »brez postave« (*hypo nomon mē*, 9,20). Iz tega bi lahko sklepali, da je Pavel Jud, vendar kot Jud v razmerju do tistih, ki so pod postavo (v tem smislu upošteva *nomos*); po drugi strani sebe razume kot Jud, ko določa svoje razmerje do tistih, ki so brez postave, se pravi ljudje različnih narodnosti in kultur, ki so bili del helenistične družbe.

Izhodišče Pavlove misli je tako svoboda, ki je ključ za razumevanje njegove identitete. Kako je bil Pavel lahko Judom kot Jud in tistim, ki so brez postave, se pravi helenistom, kot helenist? Odgovor se glasi: ker je ustvaril nov sistem razumevanja realnosti, v katerega je bil vpet bodisi kot Jud ali kot helenist. Čeprav je izhajala iz obeh kulturnih oz. verskih sistemov, je oba presegel, in sicer na osnovi svobode. Zato je mogoče Pavla razumeti, da je bil hkrati Jud in helenist.

Takšna osebna identiteta je možna na osnovi svobode. Ker je bil svoboden, je lahko postal, kakor bi bil pod postavo, čeprav sam ni bil pod postavo. V tem kontekst se je Pavel osvobodil postave, se pravi, da ni bil več vezan na njene principe oz. zahteve. Po drugi strani je do tistih, ki so brez postave, pristopil tako, kakor bi bil sam brez postave, vendar je bil pod postavo, in sicer pod Kristusovo postavo. Tako Pavel po eni strani razveljavi *tóro*, kajti v odnosu do Judov nastopa kot tisti, ki je osvobojen postave, po drugi strani pa tistim, ki postave ne poznajo, prinaša Kristusovo postavo.

Njegovo misel lahko interpretiramo tako, da je Pavel Jud, vendar osvobojen judovstva, in sicer v tem smislu, da je Judom postal suženj. Prav tako je Pavel osvobojen helenizma, in sicer tako, da je helenistom postal suženj. V tem smislu je več kot človek z bikulturno identiteto. Njegova bikulturnost je dejansko že nova kultura – navezuje se na dva kulturno-teološka modela, pri čemer gre pri Pavlu za transformacijo obeh. V tem kontekstu se Pavlova osvobojenost od judovstva in helenizma lahko razume tudi v širšem družbeno-kulturnem smislu. Horsley namreč pokaže, da Pavlova svoboda od obeh okvirov pomeni kritično distanco do struktur moči in identitete, ki določajo antični svet (2000). Podobno Rowe opozarja, da Pavlova drža ni le bikulturna, temveč oblikuje novo kulturo, ki transformira obstoječe modele in ustvarja »preobrnjeni svet« (2009). Njegovo suženjstvo je v svoji pravi naravi svoboda in tako je presegel judovstvo in helenizem. V 1 Kor 7, 20-24 bo dialektika med suženjstvom in svobodo bolj natančno pojasnjena.

2 Pojmovanje svobode

Moderno razumevanje svobode se razlikuje od antičnega koncepta. Novodobna misleca, kot sta Rousseau in Kant, razumeta svobodo kot avtonomijo, se pravi, da se človek pokori zakonu, ki si ga sam postavi, in tako ostane svoboden (Kant 1968, IV 447). V antičnem času pa je bilo razumevanje svobode vezano na koncept suženjstva. Ko so v filozofskih debatah skušali določiti pojem svobode oz. odgovoriti na vprašanje, kdo je svoboden človek, so izhajali iz koncepta sužnosti oz. pojma suženj. Najbolj nazorno pojem svobode kot temeljne značilnosti človeka opredeli Aristotel, ki v *Metafiziki* (982b25–27, slov. prevod 1999) svobodnega človeka določi kot tistega, »ki biva zaradi samega sebe, in ne zaradi nekoga drugega«.[7] S tem Aristotel izpostavi razsežnost notranje avtonomije, ki predstavlja enega od osrednjih temeljev njegove etične in politične misli. Kajti kdor ni pripadal sebi, ampak nekomu drugemu, je bil suženj. Zato je bilo svobodo mogoče opredeliti in definirati le v razmerju do suženjstva, s katerim je mišljena temeljna oblika odvisnosti, ki vključuje ekonomsko, socialno in intelektualno dimenzijo. V tem kontekstu tudi Pavlovo razumevanje svobode izhaja iz antične delitve na svobodne in sužnje, kar integrira v svojo teološko misel. Hkrati pa preseže helenistično razumevanje svobode, in sicer tako, da preseže mejo med sužnjem in svobodnim.

2.1 Konfliktna svoboda

Po branju celotnega Prvega pisma Korinčanom si bralec lahko ustvari določeno predstavo, kaj konkretno je Pavel imel v mislih, ko je govoril o različnih skupinah. Zdi se, da so tisti, ki so se sklicevali na Pavla, imeli bolj svobodomiselne nazore. Ko so slišali za Pavlovo oznanilo o svobodi kristjanov (1 Kor 9,1; 9,19), o tem, da je vse dovoljeno (1 Kor 10,23), namreč niso razumeli, kaj pomeni biti Kristusov suženj (1 Kor 7,22), kaj pomeni ne iskati svojega (1 Kor 10,23), zato so si oznanilo razlagali po svoje. Judje so namreč Pavlu očitali, da oznanja krščanstvo brez Mojzesove postave, kar pomeni odpad. Ti t. i. libertinci med verniki so verjetno tudi druge prepričevali, naj si ne delajo skrbi zaradi javne nemorale (1 Kor 5,1-13), saj telo nima nobene duhovne vrednosti. Vendar je bil to le en vidik svobode, s katerim se je Pavel srečeval v Korintu. Veliko bolj kompleksno je bilo vprašanje, kako pristopiti k delitvi na svobodne in sužnje.

2.2 Svoboda in suženjstvo v helenizmu

Pavel se je moral v helenističnem okolju soočiti z vprašanjem suženjstva. V družbi je obstajala delitev na svobodne in sužnje. Takšno razlikovanje je imelo socialno-ekonomsko ozadje in oznanjevalec evangelija je moral preseči tudi takšno delitev. Vendar že pri stoikih najdemo kritike suženjskega sistema. To so skušali dokazati s trditvijo, »da je status sužnja ali

7 »Anthrōpos, phamen, eleutheros ho hautou heneka kai mē allou ōn.« (Aristoteles, *Met.* 982b25–27, angl. izdaja 1924)

svobodne osebe nepomemben za resnično svobodo, ki jo poseduje le modrec, ne glede na dejanske okoliščine; celo suženj je lahko vrl. Toda le modra oseba je lahko svobodna [...] in bo takšna tudi, če je suženj [...] Toda stoiki [...] zatrjujejo [...] da se vse, kar se zgodi v zunanjem svetu, kamor spada tudi zasužnjevanje nekaterih prej kot drugih, dogodi kot rezultat božje pre-vidnosti.« (Sharples 2000, 148–149)

Ko Diogen Laertski v sedmi knjigi govori o Zenonu (Diog. Laert., 7.121–122) in predstavi filozofski nauk stoicizma, bralec tudi izve, kako so stoiki pojmovali svobodo in suženjstvo:

> Samo modrec je svoboden, slabiči pa so sužnji; svoboda je namreč zmožnost samostojnega delovanja, sužnost pa je izguba le-te. Je pa še druga vrsta sužnosti, ki obstaja v podrejenosti, in tretja, ki obstaja tako v posedovanju sužnja kot v njegovi podrejenosti, čemur odgovarja despotizem, ki pa je tudi sam zlo. Modri možje pa niso le svobodni, ampak so tudi kralji. (Diog. Laert., 7.121–122, slov. prevod 2015, 435)

> *Monon t' eleutheron, tous de phaulous doulous: einai gar tēn eleutherian exousian autopragias, tēn de douleian sterēsin autopragias. einai de kai allēn douleian tēn en hupotaxei kai tritēn tēn en ktēsei te kai hupotaxei, hē antititheta hē despoteia, phaulē ousa kai hautē. ou monon d' eleutherous einai tous sophous, alla kai basileas.* (Diog. Laert., 7.121–122, angl. izdaja 1950)

Iz besedila lahko razberemo, da stoiki razlikujejo svobodnega človeka (*eleutheros*) od sužnja (*doulos*). Za prvega je značilno, da je moder (*sophos*), za drugega, da je slaboten (*phaulos*), kar je v tem kontekstu bolj smiselno prevajati kot nerazsoden. S tem je mišljeno nasprotje modrosti oz. védenju. Stoiki so sledili Aristotelovi misli, da sužnju za razliko od svobodnega primanjkuje modrosti oz. tiste racionalne sposobnosti, ki človeku omogoča predvideti oz. presojati življenjske dogodke, kar zaznamuje svobodnega in ga naredi modrega. Prav tako se srečamo z determinizmom stoikov, ki pogojuje človekovo svobodno voljo. »Za stoike je namreč vsako naše dejanje enako kot katerikoli vnaprej določeni drugi dogodek del univerzalnega vzročnega neksusa, ki je usoda, pre-vidnost ali Bog.«

(Sharples 2000, 93) S tem pa se odpre vprašanje človekove odgovornosti, predvsem kako presojati njegova slaba ravnanja.

2.3 Pavlovo razumevanje svobode

Raziskovalno vprašanje bomo konkretizirali prav na vprašanju svobode. Pavel svoj koncept svobode razvije tako, da se po eni strani distancira od postave, ki lahko v določenem smislu zasužnjuje, ko človeku razodeva njegovo nemoč (prim. Gal 3,23), vendar pa ima po drugi strani postava tudi pozitivno in pedagoško vlogo vzgojiteljice, ki vodi h Kristusu (Gal 3,24) in človeku razkrije njegovo nemoč in greh, čeprav ga ne zmore osvoboditi grešnosti (prim. Rim 3,20; 7,7). Kot večpomenski pojem postava doseže svoj smisel v Kristusu (Rim 10,4; Räisänen 1983; Celarc 2019). Prav zato Pavel postavo postavi v antitezo z delovanjem Duha, saj je svoboden tisti, ki se da voditi Duhu (Gal 5,18; prim. Gal 3,23; 5,18). Svoboden je torej tisti, ki se je osvobodil norm in predpisov postave. Po drugi strani v Kristusovi perspektivi preseže helenistično pojmovanje svobode (predvsem stoicizem), ki sta ga zaznamovala dva temeljna pogleda. Prvič, suženjstvo je bilo povsem sprejemljiv družbeni model, kjer je veljala delitev na svobodne in sužnje. Se pravi, da je bil svoboden tisti, ki je pripadal samemu sebi, suženj pa je bil tisti, ki je pripadal gospodarju. Pavel s svojim pojmovanjem preseže tak model, ker odpravi mejo med sužnjem in svobodnim. Drugič, Pavel preseže tudi stoični determinizem, ki je na suženjstvo gledal kot na nekaj, kar je vključeno v celoto kozmosa in ga določa božja previdnost.

V tem smislu se Pavlov koncept svobode, ki presega oba modela, kaže na dva načina. Po eni strani vključi oz. vnese vidik ljubezni, ki presega tako kozmološko kot tudi socialno-ekonomsko determiniranost: človek ne pripada niti sebi niti gospodarju – ampak Kristusu, in sicer po ljubezni, kar je izpostavljeno predvsem v Pismu Galačanom (Gal 5,1.13), na kar opozori tudi Schnelle (2020, 148). Po drugi strani je človek udeležen pri Kristusovem telesu, ki ga osvobaja suženjstva, ki mu ga nalaga družbeni sistem. Prav tako pa svoboden človek ne pripada več sebi – to je glavna lastnost svobode pri Aristotelu in tudi stoiki so bili podobnega mnenja. Po Pavlu pa človek pripada Bogu (1 Kor 6,19; 12,13). Opredelitev ljubezni kot »glavne lastnosti svobode« (Schnelle 2020, 148) tako potrebuje dopolnitev z vidikom ontološke pripadnosti Kristusu, ki je za Pavla prav tako bistven in določa svobodo ne le etično (kot delovanje v ljubezni), temveč tudi ontološko, kot pripadnost Gospodu, ki človeka po Duhu iztrga iz vsake druge oblike suženjstva (1 Kor 12,13).

Paradoks Pavlovega razumevanja svobode je v tem, da za svoje teoretično izhodišče vzame razmerje med svobodnim in sužnjem, kar je povsem identično s helenističnim miselnim svetom. Se pravi, da je temeljni aspekt antičnega filozofskega pojmovanja svobode zaznamoval tudi Pavlov koncept svobode v 1 Kor 7,20-24: »Vsak naj ostane v tistem stanu, v katerem je bil poklican. Si bil suženj, ko si bil poklican? Nič ne maraj za to. Če pa lahko postaneš svoboden, izkoristi priložnost. Suženj, ki je poklican v Gospodu, je namreč Gospodov osvobojenec, in prav tako je tisti, ki je poklican kot svobodnjak, Kristusov suženj. Za visoko ceno ste bili odkupljeni; ne postanite sužnji ljudem. Bratje, vsak naj ostane pred Bogom v tistem stanu, v katerem je bil poklican.«

Najprej se ustavimo ob vrstici 1 Kor 7,21, ki na bralca lahko deluje moteče, saj vzbuja vtis, kot da Pavel opravičuje suženjstvo: »Si bil suženj, ko si bil poklican? Nič ne maraj za to. Če pa lahko postaneš svoboden, izkoristi priložnost.« Harrill se sprašuje, kakšna misel se skriva za besedno zvezo »izkoristi priložnost« (*mallon chrēsai*): ali s tem hoče povedati, naj ostanejo sužnji? Ali pa je mišljeno ravno nasprotno, namreč, naj se osvobodijo? Tako bi v prvem primeru Pavel sporočal, naj ostanejo sužnji, kar bi jim končno onemogočilo osvoboditev. V drugem primeru pa bi to pomenilo, da Pavel sužnje poziva k svobodi, kar je ravno nasprotno od prvega. (Harrill 2003, 586)[8]

Naš interpretativni pristop temelji na tezi, da je Pavel presegel judovsko in helenistično pojmovanje tako suženjstva kot tudi svobode. Najprej je treba upoštevati, da postava ne more osvoboditi človeka; nasprotno,

8 Rešitev za to dilemo Harrill išče s pomočjo slovnice in sintakse, ki govorita v prid razlagi, naj suženj »vzame svobodo«. V stavku najdemo »dve pogojenosti, ki izražata različni situaciji. Prva pogojenost se glasi: 'Si bil suženj, ko si bil poklican?' Glede na tako stanje Pavel svetuje sužnju, naj nič ne mara za to. Druga pogojenost prinaša novo situacijo: 'Če pa lahko postaneš svoboden, izkoristi priložnost.' Glede na novo stanje tudi Pavel spremeni nasvet in predlaga, naj suženj 'vzame svobodo'. Za takšno obliko slovnične zgradbe – najprej opis enega stanja, nakar sledi navodilo, nato opis drugega stanja, nakar sledi novo navodilo: 'izkoristi priložnost' (*mallon chrésai*) – najdemo vzporednice pri številnih grških avtorjih. Ti namreč uporabljajo iste grške besede kot Pavel. Tako imamo opravka s shemo. Pavel v prvi premisi (bodi suženj) spodbuja k določenemu ravnanju (ne skrbi). V naknadni premisi (če lahko postaneš svoboden) poziva k drugačnemu ravnanju (zadeva njega, zato naj to vzame).« (Harrill 2003, 587)

celo zasužnjuje ga. Zato Pavel zapiše: »[Z]a visoko ceno ste bili odkupljeni; ne postanite sužnji ljudem.« (1 Kor 7,23) Motiv odkupljenja (*agorazō*) spominja na tržno menjavo, ko se lastništvo prenese s prodajalca na kupca. Kot da je Bog odkupil človeka, ki je bil suženj, da je lahko postal svoboden. Zato naj se v Bogu prerojen človek ne vrača k postavi – v tem primeru bi ljudje ponovno postali »sužnji ljudem« (*douloi anthrōpōn*).

V čem je Pavlovo pojmovanje svobode in suženjstva drugačno kot pri stoikih? Če Pavel trdi, da je vsem postal suženj (1 Kor 9,19), potem tega ne smemo interpretirati v smislu stoikov, ki so sužnja označili kot *phaulos*, se pravi kot nekoga, ki ni bil moder (*sophos*). Poudarjena je misel, da Pavel svojo svobodo zamenja za suženjstvo – z namenom pridobiti za Kristusov evangelij tako sužnje kot tudi svobodne. Tak status so namreč imeli na podlagi družbene determiniranosti ali ker so bili odvisni od postave, ki jih je zasužnjevala. Njegovo suženjstvo je treba razumeti v teološki perspektivi.

Pavel, ki pripada samemu sebi, postane odvisen od Judov in helenistov, da bi jih prepričal o svobodi, ki jo lahko najdejo šele v Kristusu. Se pravi, da gre za kristološko perspektivo: kakor je bil Kristus svoboden in je postal suženj, da odreši človeka, lahko nekaj podobnega rečemo za Pavla: tudi on je postal suženj, da bi lahko Judi in helenisti postali Kristusovi.

Pavlov odziv na antični suženjski sistem oz. njegov odgovor stoičnemu pojmovanju suženjstva je treba interpretirati v perspektivi njegovega dialektičnega mišljenja. Če sta bila v antičnem sistemu tako suženj kot svobodni determinirana – se pravi, da svojega družbenega statusa nista mogla spremeniti – pa Pavel takšno determiniranost preseže. Sebe najprej označi za svobodnega – mar nisem svoboden (1 Kor 9,1) – nato on, ki je svoboden, sebe označi za sužnja, kar je svojevrsten paradoks in to lahko razumemo tako, da čeprav ne more spremeniti družbenih norm oz. sistema, sebe razglasi za sužnja, da bi približal evangelij človeku, ki ga socialno okolje šteje za sužnja.

Na prvi pogled je mogoče med Pavlovim in stoičnim razumevanjem svobode in suženjstva potegniti vzporednice. Kajti stoiki so svobodnega (*eleutheros*) označili za modreca (*sophos*). Tudi Pavel izhaja iz modrosti (*sophia*), pri čemer se zaveda, da je »modrost tega sveta [...] pri Bogu norost« (1 Kor 3,19). Resnično modrost prepozna v Kristusu, »ki je za nas postal modrost od Boga« (1 Kor 1,30). Zato se Pavel obrača k sužnju, ki ga ne more osvoboditi na družbeni ravni, vendar lahko postane svoboden na eksistencialni ravni: ko je v Kristusu, se pravi, ko sprejme njegovo modrost, preseže svoj socialno-ekonomski status in postane svoboden.[9] Vendar takšno preseganje ne velja le za sužnje, ampak tudi za svobodne, ki morajo prav tako sprejeti Kristusa. »Tistim pa, ki so poklicani, Judom in Grkom, je Mesija, Božja moč in Božja modrost.« (1 Kor 1,24) V tem smislu lahko parafraziramo s Pavlom: poklicani so sužnji in svobodni, obojim pa je Mesija resnična modrost. Kajti božja modrost je tista, ki človeku – sužnju in svobodnemu – omogoči spoznanje o njegovem odrešenju, ne glede na njegovo socialno-ekonomsko ali intelektualno determiniranost. Tako Pavel nasproti človeški modrosti postavi Božjo norost, ki se je razodela v Kristusovem križu. »Kajti Božja norost je modrejša od ljudi in Božja slabotnost močnejša od ljudi.« (1 Kor 1,25; Matjaž 2019b, 930–933)

3 Koncept telesa

Ko govorimo o telesu (*sōma*), ne gre le za teološko kategorijo, ampak vključuje tudi človekovo biološko danost, ki ga pogojuje v njegovi eksistenci. V tem smislu telo predstavlja enega od bistvenih elementov človekove narave. Pavlove interprete to postavlja pred temeljne dileme in jih sooča z notranjimi nasprotji, ker Pavel v svojih besedilih, ki govorijo o naravi človeka, ni bil dovolj sistematičen in je bil v svojih trditvah tudi nedosleden (Aune 2004, 298). Kljub teoretičnim razhajanjem med Pavlovimi interpreti lahko tezo o transformaciji védenja apliciramo tudi na koncept telesa. V tem smislu korenine njegovega razumevanja telesa segajo v judovstvo. Upoštevati je treba tudi njegovo soočenje s helenistično kulturo. Se pravi, da je Pavel po eni strani pojmovno vezan na judovsko razumevanje telesa, kot ga razumeva postava, vendar ga presega oz. mu v Kristusovi perspektivi daje nov pomen. Hkrati polemizira z epikurejskimi pogledi na telo. Pri tem je pomemben tudi vidik svobode, ki zanje pomeni predvsem odsotnost bolečine in trpljenja, in v tem kontekstu ima svoje mesto tudi *ataraksija* kot ideal duševnega miru.

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9 Eksistencialna sprememba, o kateri govori besedilo, ima pri Pavlu pogosto tudi ontološke razsežnosti, saj kristjan vstopi v novo stanje biti: »Če je kdo v Kristusu, je nova stvaritev.« (2 Kor 5,17)

3.1 Telo v judovstvu in helenizmu

Helenistično pojmovanje telesa (*sōma*) je pri epikurejcih in stoikih hkrati podobno in različno. Tako Sharples ugotavlja, da jim je bilo skupno »prepričanje, da je realnost, v širšem smislu, istovetna s tem, kar je telesno ali snovno. Lahko bi torej rekli, da gre za materialno realnost [...] Toda razlage, ki jih dajeta [epikurejski in stoiški] sistem o naravi teles, so v določenih pogledih med sabo diametralno nasprotne.« (2000, 48) V ozadju se skriva vprašanje odnosa med materialno in duševno dimenzijo tega, kar imenujemo realnost. V tem kontekstu so stoiki in epikurejci »trdili, da le tisto, kar je telesno, zmore doseči neki učinek, tako da bo moralo biti vse, pri čemer je duša zraven, razumljeno kot snovno« (Sharples 2000, 49).

Na tej podlagi je razumljiv Epikurjev pogled, ko je zapisal:

> [T]isti, ki pravijo, da je duša breztelesna, kvasijo neumnosti. Če bi bila namreč takšna, ne bi bila zmožna ne delovati ne utrpevati, tako pa se duše vidno držita ti dve lastnosti. (Diog. Laert., 10.67, slov. prevod 2015, 604)
>
> *[H]ōste hoi legontes asōmaton einai tēn psukhēn mataizousin. outhen gar an edunato poiein oute paskhein, ei ēn toiautē: nun d' enargōs amphotera tauta dialambanetai peri tēn psukhēn ta sumptōmata.* (Diog. Laert., 10.67, angl. izdaja 1950)

Vprašanje telesa je za stoike in epikurejce metafizično vprašanje: kaj je realno oz. kaj biva? Toda če je za epikurejce resničnost vedno snovna, se pravi, da izpostavijo materialno realnost, pa so stoiki menili, da je vsaka stvar v univerzumu »povzročena z delovanjem aktivnega načela, Boga, na pasivno načelo, tj. materijo. [...] Obe načeli bosta morali biti telesni, če naj delujeta v prvem primeru in če naj trpita delovanje v drugem.« (Sharples 2000, 59) To je temeljna misel stoiškega panteizma. »Za stoike je Bog navzoč v celotnem univerzumu; celo več, ker vsakemu njegovemu delu podeljuje svoj ton, bi lahko v nekem smislu rekli, da je on univerzum. [...] In Bog nadzoruje celoten svet, podobno kot vaša duša nadzoruje vaše telo.« (62)

3.2 Pavlovo razumevanje telesa

Že Epikurejci so poudarjali, da mora idealno življenje, imenovali so ga prijetno življenje (*hēdeōs zēn*), biti tudi pravično (*dikaios*) (Diog. Laert., 10.138–139, slov. prevod 2015, 628). To je tudi eden od osrednjih Pavlovih pojmov, vendar Pavel dodaja, da človek postane pravičen z odrešenjem. Dalje, če se je antična filozofska misel delila ob vprašanju, ali je duša materialna ali nematerialna oz. ali mora ideja dobrega oz. pravičnega biti telesna, če hoče biti realna, pa Pavel to delitev preseže tako, da trdi, da je vprašanje realnosti in s tem tudi bivanja presežno, ker je človekovo »telo tempelj Svetega Duha«, ki je v človeku in ga ima od Boga (1 Kor 6,19). Da je telo (*sōma*) tempelj Svetega Duha, kaže na odmik tako od judovstva kot od helenizma.

Najprej moramo poudariti, da se motiv telesa (*sōma*) v Prvem pismu Korinčanom pojavlja v najrazličnejših pomenih. Tako je na začetku predstavljen križani Kristus kot tisto telo, ki je na paradoksalni način temelj, na katerem verniki gradijo svojo poklicanost, in povezuje vse v eno občestvo Cerkve. Vsak razdor med njimi je zato najmanj pohujšanje in norost, v resnici pa odpad od vira življenja (1 Kor 1–4). V nadaljevanju spregovori o skrunjenju telesa, ki se dogaja v različnih oblikah nečistosti in nemoralnosti (1 Kor 5–6). Človeško telo ni predmet brez posebne vrednosti, s katerim bi lahko počeli karkoli in pri tem ne bi zaznamovali celotnega človeka, tako njegove duševne kakor duhovne resničnosti. Po učlovečenju in odrešenju je telo postalo Božja materija, po kateri človeka povezuje z Bogom in Boga s človekom. Pavel tako oznanja za helenistično kulturo nezaslišano novost, da je resnično svetišče, v katerem doseže človek stik z Božjim, človeško telo, da je telo že človek, da je posvečeno z Božjo besedo in delom, s Kristusovim križem in vstajenjem. Telo že ima prvine novega življenja in zato si bo lahko ob smrti minljivega »nadelo neminljivost« (1 Kor 15,54). Zato je delitev na *sōma psychikon* in *sōma pneumatikon* sestavni del novega razumevanja, ko Pavel zapiše: »Seje se duševno telo, vstaja duhovno telo. Če obstaja duševno telo, obstaja tudi duhovno.« (1 Kor 15,44) Izrazoslovje spominja na stoike, ki so dušo (*pneuma*) razumevali kot nekaj fizičnega, kot aktivni princip, ki napolnjuje telo in izvira iz božjega ognja. Zato so že t. i. zemeljska telesa sveta, Božji templji, v katerem človek živi v Bogu (1 Kor 6,19-20). Tako Pavel človekov pogled usmerja v novo realnost, ki se oblikuje na temelju Kristusovega odrešenja in vstajenja. (Matjaž 2015, 159)

V telesu je mogoče živeti poročeno ali samsko. V vsakem stanu je odraz Božjega načrta za človeka. Najpomembnejše pri tem je, da živi zvesto svoji poklicanosti in raste v predanosti Gospodu (1 Kor 7). Dalje spregovori o potrebi telesa po hrani in konkretnih dobrinah (1 Kor 8–9). Nič, kar je ustvarjenega, ni greh in nečisto samo po sebi, ampak stvari onečašča človekov namen. Če bodo imeli pravo spoznanje, to je ljubezen, ki gradi (1 Kor 8,1), lahko uživajo vse in bodo ostali svobodni. Pavel še posebej opozori na možno zlorabo obredov in gostij, ki se lahko spremenijo v malikovanje (1 Kor 10–11). Vse je sicer dovoljeno, a ne koristi vse (1 Kor 10,23). Zavedati se morajo, da se v njihova telesa vtisne vse, kar počnejo: če jejo z Gospodove mize, postajajo Gospodovi, če z miz malikov, postajajo maliki (1 Kor 10,18-21). Človek jé in pije svojo sodbo (1 Kor 11,29). Zato je v tem kontekstu mogoče tudi ponazoriti, kako Pavel med seboj poveže greh (*hamartēma*) in telo (*sōma*), kar izenači s smrtjo. Nasproti pa postavi odrešenje (*apolýtrōsis*) telesa. Croasmun v tem kontekstu razlikuje med telesom greha in Kristusovim telesom. Ta delitev se navezuje tudi na razliko med dvema svetovoma, med katerima se mora odločiti človek: med svetom, v katerem živi svoje življenje v telesu, in svetom, ki je prišel med ljudi (1 Kor 10,11). »Če se odločimo za Kristusovo telo, se odločimo za svet, ki ima v sebi življenje in odrešenje.« (Croasmun 2014, 154)

Pavlovo oznanilo o telesu doseže svoj vrh s poročilom o tisti noči, ko se je Gospod izročil v telo, ki ga lahko človek jé in pije (1 Kor 11,23-27). Evharistična miza tako postane središče občestva, ki je tako trdno povezano med seboj, kakor so med seboj povezani in odvisni posamezni udje v človeškem telesu (1 Kor 12–14). Verniki postajajo otipljivo Kristusovo telo (1 Kor 12,27), obdarjeni z različnimi darovi milosti ali karizmami, ki jih Gospod po Duhu daje v službo drug drugemu, da se gradi nova skupnost – Cerkev. Na koncu spregovori še o koncu (*telos*), tj. o cilju in smislu človeškega telesa (1 Kor 15). Ker je Božji Sin živel v telesu in je v telesu umrl in vstal, bodo tudi človeška telesa rešena umrljivosti in bodo dobila podobo neumrljivega. Takrat se bo dokončno uresničila obljuba o novem – neminljivem življenju (1 Kor 15,54-55).

4 Medsebojna pogojenost svobode in telesa

4.1 Povezanost svobode in telesa v Pavlovi misli

Razmerje med svobodo (*eleutheria*) in telesom (*sōma*) v Pavlovem teološkem mišljenju tvori enega izmed najglobljih sklopov njegove antropologije. Svoboda se v njegovem razumevanju ne nanaša na avtonomno neodvisnost človeka, ampak na pripadnost Kristusu, ki človeka osvobaja od zakona in greha. To se ne dogaja v abstraktni, duhovni sferi, ampak v realni, telesni eksistenci. Pavel svobodo pojmuje kot dar, ki se konkretno uresničuje v človeškem telesu, zato telo ni več prostor suženjstva, temveč prostor svobode v Duhu. V tem smislu svoboda in telo nista dve ločeni razsežnosti, temveč medsebojno pogojeni vidiki odrešenega človeka.

Pavlovo razumevanje svobode presega tako judovsko kot helenistično pojmovanje. Judovstvo je človekovo svobodo opredeljevalo znotraj postave (*nomos*), ki je določala, kaj je dovoljeno in kaj prepovedano. Helenizem pa je svobodo razumel bodisi kot notranjo neodvisnost (stoiki) bodisi kot stanje brez bolečine (epikurejci). Pavel obe predstavi preoblikuje v novo razumevanje svobode, ki se ne meri po zunanjih merilih, temveč po notranji preobrazbi človeka v Kristusu. V tem kontekstu Schnelle izpostavlja novosti v Pavlovi teologiji, kar je posledično vodilo k spremembi sistema vrednot in zasnovalo alternativne poglede: »Bog in zamisel izvoljenosti sta mišljena kot nekaj univerzalnega, razlike [...] med bogatimi in revnimi, moškim in žensko, sužnji in svobodnimi so bile odpravljene. S tem se je bistveno spremenilo razmerje med uveljavljenimi kulturnimi vrednotami in novimi pogledi oz. nazori.« (2020, 149)

Telo ima v tem kontekstu osrednjo vlogo. V 1 Kor 6,19 Pavel zapiše: »Mar ne veste, da je vaše telo tempelj Svetega Duha, ki je v vas in ki ga imate od Boga? Ne pripadate sebi.« Grški izraz *naos* označuje svetišče, kar pomeni, da je človeško telo postalo prostor Božje navzočnosti. S tem se razveljavi helenistična delitev med duhovnim in telesnim. Judovsko pojmovanje človeka pa ne pozna dualizma med dušo in telesom. Izrazi, kot so *bāśār* (krhko telo), *gûf* (telesna struktura) in *nefesh* (živa oseba), opisujejo človeka kot celoto, ki je krhka, od Boga odvisna in k Njemu usmerjena. Kategorija ritualne nečistosti ne pomeni, da je telo samo po sebi nečisto, temveč označuje prehodno kultno stanje. (Green 2008) Zato Pavlova trditev, da je telo *naos*, tempelj Svetega Duha (1 Kor 6,19), ne razveljavlja judovske antropologije, temveč jo poglobi: človeško telo postane prostor Božje navzočnosti, kar obenem presega helenistično dihotomijo med duhovnim in telesnim (Papeška biblična komisija 2024, čl. 20–21). Telo postane svetišče Duha in s tem prostor, v katerem se uresničuje svoboda. Človek je svoboden, kolikor ne pripada sebi, temveč Bogu. Pavlova svoboda je torej relacijska: človek je svoboden, ko je v odnosu z Bogom, ne pa, ko deluje iz sebe.

Pavel to razumevanje konkretizira tudi v 1 Kor 9,27, kjer pravi: »Trdo ravnam s svojim telesom in ga usužnjujem, da ne bi bil sam zavržen, ko oznanjam drugim.« Telo je tu hkrati prostor discipline in prostor služenja. V antičnem svetu je »suženjstvo« (*douleia*) znano kot izraz popolne pripadnosti. Pavel to retoriko obrne: ko se človek »zasužnji« Kristusu, s tem preneha biti suženj drugih sil – postave, strasti, idolov, družbenih hierarhij. Pavlova svoboda ni negacija telesa, ampak zahteva telesno zvestobo, ki omogoča, da telo postane orodje evangelija.[10] V tem paradoksu – da svobodni postane suženj, da bi drugi postali svobodni – se uresničuje bistvo njegovega pojmovanja svobode. Paradoks je rešen, ko razumemo, da svoboda v Kristusu ni avtonomija, ampak zmožnost darovanja, torej svobodnega razpolaganja s seboj v ljubezni. To je opazna novost glede na stoike, za katere je svoboda odsotnost strasti; pri Pavlu je svoboda zmožnost ljubečega dejanja, tudi telesnega. Tako Schnelle zapiše: »Svoboda ni človekova individualna moč, ampak dar, ki ga daje Bog […] Pavel je bil prvi v judovski in grško-rimski intelektualni zgodovini, ki je svobodo in ljubezen med seboj programsko povezal.« (2020, 147) Ljubezen postane notranji zakon svobode in prevzame mesto postave.

V 1 Kor 12,13 se razmerje med svobodo in telesom uresniči v eklezioloških razsežnosti: »V enem Duhu smo bili namreč mi vsi krščeni v eno telo, naj bomo Judje ali Grki, sužnji ali svobodni, in vsi smo pili enega Duha.« S tem Pavel preseže vse družbene in verske delitve. Telo Kristusovo je prostor, kjer se svoboda udejanja kot skupnostna realnost. Gre za pnevmatološko razsežnost svobode, v kateri posameznikova svoboda ni ločena od telesa

10 To pojasnjuje James C. Baker (*Paul and Slavery*, 2013), ko pokaže, da Pavel preobrazi suženjstvo iz realnosti nadvlade v metaforo pripadnosti, ki daje dostojanstvo.

občestva. Tako Croasmun poudarja, da v tem Pavlovem razumevanju »udeležba v Kristusu pomeni prehod iz starega kozmičnega reda v novi kozmos« (2014, 152). Udeležba v Kristusovem telesu torej pomeni udeležbo v novi realnosti, kjer ni več razlike med sužnjem in svobodnim, med moškim in žensko, med Judom in Grkom.

4.2 Teološki pomen in razsežnost svobode v telesu

Medsebojna pogojenost svobode in telesa v Pavlovi misli pomeni prelom z obema sistemoma, ki sta določala njegovo okolje. Judovstvo je svobodo razumelo v okviru zvestobe postavi, helenizem pa v okviru človekove notranje samozadostnosti. Pavel obe predstavi preseže s tem, da svobodo poveže z ljubeznijo in jo uresniči v telesu, ki je Božje svetišče. V tej novi sintezi se razodeva nov sistem védenja, v katerem je svoboda opredeljena kot dar, in ne kot pravica, telo pa kot prostor Božje navzočnosti, in ne kot vir omejitve.

Pavlovo pojmovanje svobode se navezuje na judovsko tradicijo, vendar presega njene meje, ker jo na novo razume v Kristusu. V njem postava ne izgubi pomena, temveč se uresniči v ljubezni. Svoboda ni več nasprotje zakonu, ampak njegova dovršitev v Duhu. Ko Pavel v 1 Kor 9,19 zapiše, da je »vsem postal vse, da bi jih nekaj zagotovo rešil«, to nakazuje nov miselni sistem, ki presega kulturne in verske meje. Njegova svoboda je svoboda služenja in telesnega udejstvovanja. Telo, ki je bilo nekoč predmet zasužnjenosti, postane zdaj sredstvo odrešenja. V tej perspektivi se povežeta obe razsežnosti Pavlove teologije: svoboda kot dar Duha in telo kot prostor njegove prisotnosti.

Vse tri ključne besede – svoboda, telo in Duh – se tako zlivajo v enoten teološki horizont. Človek, ki je svoboden v Duhu, ne pripada več sebi, ampak Kristusu; njegovo telo je Božji tempelj, v katerem se izraža svoboda kot ljubezen. To je bistvo novega pogleda na človekovo bivanje, ki presega judovsko in helenistično shemo. V njem ni več prostora za dualizem med dušo in telesom, med postavo in milostjo, med svobodo in suženjstvom. Vse je zajeto v novo resničnost, ki se uresničuje v Kristusu in po Duhu.

Zaključek

Eksegetsko in teološko razmišljanje o Prvem pismu Korinčanom je pokazalo, da Pavlova misel presega tako judovski nomistični okvir kot helenistično filozofsko antropologijo. Njegova teologija se oblikuje na presečišču obeh svetov, vendar ne kot kompromis, ampak kot nova sinteza, ki jo Schnelle poimenuje *nov sistem védenja* (*ein neues Wissenssystem*). To védenje ni usmerjeno v tradicijo, ampak izhaja iz razodetja v Kristusu: »Pavlova misel se navdihuje pri Kristusu (1 Kor 3,11). To je zanj izhodišče, od koder razvija večplastno in inovativno teologijo, ki v svoji celovitosti [...] ni kompatibilna niti z judovstvom niti s helenizmom.« (Schnelle 2020, 150)

Pavlova inovacija se kaže v tem, da kategorije, kot sta svoboda in telo, preoblikuje iz znotrajverskih in filozofskih pojmov v eksistencialno in soteriološko razsežnost. V judovstvu je svoboda povezana s poslušnostjo postavi, v helenizmu s samozadostnostjo razuma; pri Pavlu pa postane izraz novega bivanjskega stanja človeka, ki živi »v Kristusu«. Telo, ki ga je judovska teologija razumela kot mesto omejitev in helenistična filozofija kot prehodno snov, postane po Pavlu prostor Božje navzočnosti – *naos tou Hagiou Pneumatos* (1 Kor 6,19). Človek, ki ne pripada več sebi, ampak Bogu, je resnično svoboden.

V tem kontekstu Pavlova svoboda ni abstraktna ideja, temveč realnost, ki se uresničuje v telesu in v občestvu. V 1 Kor 9,27 Pavel poudarja disciplino telesa, ki ni izraz suženjstva, temveč svobode, preoblikovane v ljubezen. Ljubezen postane notranji zakon, ki nadomešča postavo in določa delovanje svobodnega človeka. V 1 Kor 12,13 pa svoboda doseže svojo polnost v skupnosti, kjer so Judje in Grki, sužnji in svobodni združeni v enem telesu. S tem se ukinejo hierarhije, ki so določale antični svet, in nastane nova oblika človeške enakosti, ki je pnevmatološko utemeljena.

V primerjavi z grško miselnostjo, ki je svobodo pojmovala kot notranjo neodvisnost (*autarkeia*), Pavel svobodo razume kot dar, ki človeka zavezuje k ljubezni. V nasprotju z judovskim razumevanjem postave, ki je svobodo omejevalo z normo, Pavel postavo razume kot predhodno pedagogiko svobode, ki se dovrši v Kristusu. S tem Pavel ne zavrne ne judovske ne helenistične tradicije, temveč ju transformira. Njegova teologija svobode in telesa oblikuje novo spoznavno shemo, v kateri je človek opredeljen znotraj odnosa do Boga, ne pa več znotraj zakonov ali naravnih struktur. To védenje je hkrati teološko in antropološko: svoboda in telo nista več nasprotujoči si razsežnosti, ampak združena v Duhu. Človek je svoboden, kolikor pripada Kristusu, in njegovo telo postane orodje in znamenje tega pripadanja. V tem se uresniči Pavlov prehod »onkraj judovstva in helenizma« – prehod, ki ni le kulturni ali verski, ampak epistemološki. V Kristusu se oblikuje nov način mišljenja Boga, človeka in sveta. Bog ni več razumljen kot oddaljeni zakonodajalec, ampak kot tisti, ki se v Duhu podarja človeku; človek ni več bitje, razpeto med telo in dušo, ampak celota, ki živi iz Božje prisotnosti; svet pa ni več prostor delitve med svetim in profanim, ampak polje odrešenja, ki ga prežema Duh.

Pavlova teologija svobode in telesa zato ni le etično-normativna, temveč spoznavna in ontološka. S tem ko telo postane tempelj Svetega Duha, se spremeni celoten sistem védenja: spoznanje Boga ni več utemeljeno v racionalni spekulaciji ali v zakonu, temveč v udeležbi pri Kristusu. Takšno védenje presega razlikovanje med filozofijo in teologijo, med helenistično *sophia* in judovsko *tóra*, ter vstopa v novo razsežnost, v kateri se resnica razodeva v ljubezni.

V tem smislu Pavlova misel predstavlja eno najglobljih transformacij zahodne duhovne zgodovine. V njej se razblini nasprotje med razumom in vero, med duhom in telesom, med svobodo in zakonom.[11] Kar je bilo v obeh svetovih ločeno, je v Kristusu združeno. Tako se v Pavlovi teologiji svoboda in telo ne izključujeta, temveč ustvarjata nov red védenja, ki ga določa Duh: »Kajti Gospod je Duh, in kjer je Gospodov Duh, tam je svoboda.« (2 Kor 3,17) Pavel tako ne le nadaljuje hebrejsko holistično antropologijo, ampak jo kristološko poglobi. Človek je celota ne zgolj zato, ker tako pričuje hebrejska antropologija, temveč zato, ker je v Kristusu preobražena in odprta za delovanje Duha dosegla celovitost odrešenja (Rim 8). Pavlova integracija telesa, duha in svobode v 1 Kor 3,17 in 6,19 kaže, da telo

11 Da je Pavlova misel sposobna preseči tako judovski kakor helenistični dualistični vzorec, lahko dodatno potrdimo s temeljnim hebrejskim razumevanjem človeka kot celote. »In the Bible, a person is a unity. Body and soul or spirit are not opposite terms, but rather terms which supplement one another to describe aspects of the inseparable whole person.« (Skralovnik 2022, 187) Hebrejsko pojmovanje človeka kot nedeljive enote ustvarja antropološko ozadje, znotraj katerega postane Pavlova integracija telesa, duha in svobode (1 Kor 3,17) razumljiva. Prav ta holističnost omogoča Pavlovo preseganje tako judovske postave kot helenistične racionalnosti ter vzpostavlja »nov red védenja«, utemeljen v Duhu.

ni le objekt moralnega presojanja ali posvečenja, temveč prostor Božje navzočnosti, *naos* Svetega Duha. S tem Pavel presega tako helenistično dihotomijo, ki telesnost pogosto obravnava kot manjvredno, nečisto ali kot začasni ovoj duše, kakor tudi določene judovske interpretacije postave, ki lahko vodijo v fragmentarno razumevanje človeka, in vzpostavlja »nov red védenja«, utemeljen v Duhu, ali »kristološki model« človeka, kjer svoboda in ljubezen nista abstraktni duhovni kategoriji, temveč se udejanjata v telesu, ki je preobraženo z delovanjem Duha in pripadno Kristusu.

Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.
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Krajšavi

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Benediktova »reforma v kontinuiteti« in slovenska refleksija drugega vatikanskega koncila

Benedict's »Reform in Continuity« and the Slovenian Reflection of the Second Vatican Council

Izvleček: Hermenevtiko drugega vatikanskega koncila kot »reforme v kontinuiteti« je utemeljil papež Benedikt XVI. Omenjeni dogodek papež presoja v luči skladnosti s prejšnjimi koncili in doktrinarnim izročilom Katoliške cerkve. Prvi del tega članka je posvečen konceptualnim izhodiščem pisanja zgodovine drugega vatikanskega koncila na podlagi izpeljave Benediktove hermenevtike, zlasti s pomočjo koncilske pastoralne konstitucije *Gaudium et spes* in razprav izbranih sodobnih rimskih teologov, ki pretežno delijo papeževo stališče. Drugi del članka se posveča reprezentativnim primerom refleksije slovenskih katoliških voditeljev in mislecev o namenu in posledicah koncila. Tako pri obravnavi mednarodnega konteksta kakor tudi slovenske refleksije se v luči Benediktove hermenevtike odraža napetost med »plemenitimi« nameni in včasih »odklonskimi« posledicami, ki jih Katoliška cerkev po koncilu ni rešila. Dojemanje dediščine drugega vatikanskega koncila se torej kaže kot nedokončan proces, na katerega vplivajo notranja razhajanja in potreba po nadaljnjem dialogu v Katoliški cerkvi sami.

Ključne besede: drugi vatikanski koncil, Benedikt XVI., hermenevtika reforme v kontinuiteti, slovenska refleksija drugega vatikanskega koncila, dialog v Katoliški cerkvi

Abstract: *The hermeneutics of the Second Vatican Council as »reform in continuity« was established by Pope Benedict XVI. The Pope judges the mentioned event in the light of conformity with previous councils and the doctrinal tradition of the Catholic Church. The first part of this article is devoted to the conceptual starting points of writing the history of the Second Vatican Council based on the derivation of Benedict's hermeneutics, especially through the Council's pastoral constitution* Gaudium et spes *and discussions of selected contemporary Roman theologians who predominantly share the Pope's point of view. Meanwhile, the second part of the article is devoted to representative examples of the reflection of Slovenian Catholic leaders and thinkers on the purpose and consequences of the Council. Both in the consideration of the international context and the Slovenian reflection, the tension between »noble« intentions and sometimes »deviant« consequences can be reflected in the light of Benedict's hermeneutics, which the Catholic Church has not resolved after the Council. The reception of the heritage of the Second Vatican Council therefore appears to be an unfinished process, influenced by internal divisions and the need for further dialogue within the Catholic Church itself.*

Keywords: *Second Vatican Council, Benedict XVI, hermeneutics of reform in continuity, Slovenian reflection on the Second Vatican Council, dialogue within the Catholic Church*

Uvod

Članek si za konceptualno izhodišče jemlje teološko hermenevtiko drugega vatikanskega koncila (1962–1965), kakor jo je 22. decembra leta 2005 v *Nagovoru Rimski kuriji* predstavil papež Benedikt XVI. (služboval 2005–2013). Temo ustreznega razumevanja zadnjega koncila kot »reforme v kontinuiteti« si je izbral ravno za tradicionalni predbožični nagovor kardinalom in drugim sodelavcem kurije v prvem letu svojega papeževanja, ki je sovpadalo s štirideseto obletnico konca omenjenega dogodka. Tako je pokazal na vrednost koncilskih dokumentov in obenem nedorečenost njihovega izvajanja, ki zahteva uradno razlago, umeščeno v doktrinarno izročilo Katoliške cerkve.

Prvi del članka[1] je posvečen konceptualnim izhodiščem pisanja zgodovine drugega vatikanskega koncila[2] na podlagi izpeljave Benediktove hermenevtike, razpete med pojavi »kontinuitete« in »preloma«. Omenjena hermenevtika je izpeljana zlasti s pomočjo koncilske pastoralne konstitucije *Gaudium et spes* in razprav izbranih sodobnih rimskih teologov, ki pretežno delijo papeževo stališče in so zadevna dela objavili v prvih letih po *Nagovoru Rimski kuriji*.[3] Drugi del članka se medtem posveča reprezentativnim primerom refleksije slovenskih katoliških voditeljev in mislecev[4] o namenu in posledicah koncila, ki vključujejo zgodnje vred-

1 Prvi del članka prinaša povzeto in prečiščeno različico predhodnega avtorjevega besedila na sorodno temo (Malmenvall 2015). Tako avtor nadgrajuje svoja dosedanja spoznanja in temu članku daje ustrezno zgodovinsko-hermenevtično podlago.

2 Celovit pregled zgodovinskih okoliščin drugega vatikanskega koncila, vsebine njegovih dokumentov, izvajanja reform in vrednotenja njihovih posledic podaja zbornik Clifford and Faggioli 2023.

3 Izbor zajema naslednja imena: kardinal Agostino Marchetto (1940–), kanonski pravnik in diplomat, avtor monografije *Il Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II: Per una sua corretta ermeneutica* (2012); monsinjor Brunero Gherardini (1925–2017), univerzitetni profesor ekleziologije, avtor monografije *Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II: Un discorso da fare* (2009); Roberto De Mattei (1948–), univerzitetni profesor kulturne zgodovine, avtor monumentalne polemične študije *Il Concilio Vaticano II: Una storia mai scritta* (2010).

4 Izbor zajema naslednja imena: France Dolinar (1915–1983), zgodovinar, eden osrednjih cerkvenih intelektualcev slovenske politične emigracije, avtor polemičnega članka *Katolicizem v »procesu« izvotlitve* (1971/1990); Janez Juhant (1947–), filozof in dekan Teološke fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani (1994–1999), avtor članka *Pomen drugega vatikanskega cerkvenega zbora za Cerkev* (1995); metropolit Alojzij Šuštar (1920–2007), moralni teolog in glavni predstavnik slovenskega katolištva ob koncu

notenje posledic koncila na začetku sedemdesetih let 20. stoletja, pogled na izvedene reforme ob njegovi trideseti obletnici sredi devetdesetih let in razmislek o prihodnosti Cerkve na ozadju nadaljevanja dvoumne dediščine koncila skoraj šestdeset let po njegovem koncu.[5] Opaziti je mogoče, da se tudi skozi slovensko refleksijo koncila odraža napetost med »kontinuiteto« in »prelomom«.

Dve hermenevtiki drugega vatikanskega koncila

V zgodovini Katoliške cerkve se je doslej odvilo enaindvajset ekumenskih koncilov oziroma vesoljnih cerkvenih zborov. Zadnji izmed njih, imenovan drugi vatikanski, je med 11. oktobrom 1962 in 8. decembrom 1965 potekal v baziliki svetega Petra v Rimu. Sklical ga je papež Janez XXIII. (služboval 1958–1963), nadaljeval in sklenil pa njegov naslednik Pavel VI. (služboval 1963–1978). Posamezni koncili se v Katoliški cerkvi med ekumenske prištevajo takrat, ko se na njih pod vodstvom papeža ali njegovih odposlancev zberejo škofje iz vseh delov sveta, da bi odgovorili na vprašanja, ki so v določenem zgodovinskem obdobju pereča za Cerkev. Drugi vatikanski koncil je bil v razmerju do večine prejšnjih ekumenskih koncilov poseben. Ti so dotlej večinoma razglašali določene verske resnice, moralne nauke ali pravne določbe. Drugi vatikanski koncil glede vere in morale ni sprejel nobene odločitve, ki bi bila za pripadnike Cerkve dokončno zavezujoča. Njegov namen ni bilo zavrniti katere od herezij, temveč posvetiti pozornost zapleteni stvarnosti takratnega sveta in optimistično nagovoriti sekularno kulturo z »večnim« krščanskim sporočilom, posredovanim na prenovljen, širši javnosti razumljiv način. V tem pogledu se je za ključnega izkazal pojem *aggiornamento* (»posodobitev«), ki ga je v

20. stoletja, avtor članka *Drugi vatikanski vesoljni cerkveni zbor – prelomnica v Katoliški cerkvi* (1995); Cecilija Oblonšek (1982–), predavateljica liturgike in cerkvene glasbe na Teološki fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani, avtorica članka *Liturgična inkulturacija in vprašanje tradicije* (2021).

5 Pri izbranih osebnostih ne gre nujno za tiste, ki segajo v vrhove slovenske teološke misli svojega časa (kar je sicer mogoče trditi za Alojzija Šuštarja), ampak bolj za tiste, ki odslikavajo določene plasti Katoliške cerkve v slovenskem prostoru od sredine 20. do začetka 21. stoletja. Dolinar je v tem smislu glasnik konservativnega dela slovenske politične emigracije, Juhant dekan Teološke fakultete kot ustanove za izobraževanje bodočih duhovnikov, Šuštar nadškof in družbeno prepoznaven predstavnik Cerkve, Oblonškova pa pripadnica mlajše generacije teologov na začetku tretjega tisočletja. Poleg tega vse izbrane osebnosti, podobno kakor Benedikt XVI., prepoznavajo dobre in manj dobre vidike posledic drugega vatikanskega koncila, od koder se vsaj posredno sprašujejo o ustrezni interpretaciji koncila v razmerju do predhodnega izročila.

svojem nagovoru ob odprtju koncila uvedel papež Janez XXIII. Označeval je željo po ohranitvi cerkvenega nauka, a s pomočjo novih sredstev, po katerih naj bi podoba Kristusa in Cerkve postala privlačnejša za sodobnega človeka. Ker se je drugi vatikanski koncil razglasil za pastoralnega (ne dogmatičnega), je odprl razpravo o razmerju med »predkoncilsko« in »pokoncilsko« Cerkvijo. (De Mattei 2010, 5–6; Gherardini 2009, 15.34–36.41; Marchetto 2012, 323; *Koncilski odloki* 1980, 27–28; Malmenvall 2015)

Številne razprave o pomenu in posledicah drugega vatikanskega koncila je mogoče razporediti v dva poglavitna hermenevtična ključa – hermenevtiko, ki zagovarja kontinuiteto koncila z izročilom Cerkve, in hermenevtiko, ki zagovarja prelom z izročilom. Prvi hermenevtični ključ se je pojavil že pod papežem Pavlom VI., še jasneje pa ga je osvetlil Benedikt XVI. v svojem *Nagovoru Rimski kuriji* leta 2005. Benediktova hermenevtika »reforme v kontinuiteti« predstavlja teološko vodilo pri vrednotenju celote šestnajstih koncilskih dokumentov (štirih konstitucij, devetih odlokov in treh izjav), ki si po svoji doktrinarni veljavi in pravni moči niso enakovredni. Hermenevtika »reforme v kontinuiteti« koncilske dokumente razume kot izraz cerkvenega učiteljstva, zavezanega nadaljevanju in poglabljanju starejših doktrinarnih virov. Drugi hermenevtični ključ zadnjega ekumenskega koncila ne presoja zgolj teološko, temveč tudi in še bolj sekularno zgodovinsko. Svoj izostreni izraz je našel v t. i. bolonjski šoli pod vodstvom zgodovinarja Giuseppeja Alberiga (1926–2007), ki je s svojimi sodelavci izdal znamenito *Zgodovino drugega vatikanskega koncila* v petih zvezkih (1995–2001). Za privržence te šole drugi vatikanski koncil pomeni predvsem zgodovinski dogodek, ki kaže na prelom s preteklostjo. V tem pogledu bistva koncila ne odražajo njegovi dokumenti, temveč potek njegovih zasedanj in poročanje medijev, ki je oblikovalo mnenje tako katoliške kakor tudi širše javnosti. O prelomnem značaju koncila naj bi med drugim pričala odsotnost vnaprej določenega programa, zavrnitev formulacij, ki so jih predhodno oblikovale pripravljalne komisije, in javno dojemanje koncila kot začetka raznovrstnih sprememb v Cerkvi. (De Mattei 2010, 7–9; Marchetto 2012, 15.139.305.311.324–325; Malmenvall 2015)

Benediktova hermenevtika in kriza Cerkve

Razumevanje in izvajanje vsebine dokumentov drugega vatikanskega koncila Benedikt povezuje z odgovorom na vprašanje, zakaj je do izkrivljenega razumevanja in izvajanja zadnjega koncila sploh prišlo:

> Težave z dojemanjem so nastale zaradi dejstva dveh nasprotujočih si hermenevtik, ki sta se med seboj spopadli [...] Prva je povzročila zmedo, druga – sicer tiho, toda vse bolj opazno – pa je prinesla sadove. Na eni strani je [...] »hermenevtika diskontinuitete in preloma«, ki si ni po naključju pridobila naklonjenosti množičnih medijev in tudi dela sodobne teologije. Na drugi strani pa je »hermenevtika reforme«, hermenevtika prenove v kontinuiteti Cerkve kot enotnega subjekta, ki nam ga je podaril Gospod. (2005, 1024)

Po Benediktovi razlagi si hermenevtika preloma prizadeva za dosledno zavračanje »predkoncilske« Cerkve in slavljenje novosti zaradi novosti samih. Ob tem naj bi zagovarjala prepričanje, da koncilski dokumenti niso pristni izraz naprednosti t. i. duha koncila, saj naj bi bili posledica kompromisov med različnimi strujami koncilskih očetov – koncilski dokumenti naj bi tako pričali o nedokončanosti procesa, ki ga je spodbudil omenjeni »duh«. Bistvo hermenevtike preloma naj bi bilo sledenje domnevnemu »duhu koncila«, ki ga privrženci te usmeritve niso nikoli jasno opredelili. Miselnost hermenevtike preloma naj bi drugi vatikanski koncil in z njim celotno cerkveno hierarhijo izenačila z nekakšnim parlamentom oziroma predstavništvom vernikov, v imenu katerih naj bi po načelu večine glasovala o »času primernih« spremembah verskih resnic in moralnih naukov. (Benedikt XVI 2005, 1024–1025; Marchetto 2012, 26.142–143.311.320)

Eden izmed poudarkov eklezilologa Brunera Gherardinija, ki se navezuje na Benediktovo razmejitev med koncilskimi dokumenti in medijsko podobo koncila, je prepoznavanje znamenj kriznega stanja, v katerem naj bi se znašla Cerkev zaradi samovoljnega zavračanja izročila v imenu koncilskih reform (2009, 18–19.43.74.77–78.89–90.92). Krizi Cerkve se je neposredno posvetil tudi papež Benedikt XVI. v *Nagovoru rimski duhovščini* dne 14. februarja 2013. Opozoril je na dvojnost med »resničnim« koncilom ali »koncilom očetov«, ki se je opiral na katoliško vero, in »virtualnim« koncilom ali »koncilom medijev«, ki se je opiral na posodobljenje Cerkve po sekularnem vzoru. Še več, »virtualni« koncil naj bi povzročil opustošenje znotraj Cerkve same, ki naj bi se kazala zlasti v izpraznjenih semeniščih in samostanih, osiromašeni liturgiji, ponižani na raven družabnega srečanja, zmoti o nepotrebnosti hierarhične ureditve Cerkve, relativizaciji razodetih resnic in strogo zgodovinskem razlaganju Svetega pisma brez upoštevanja izročila. (Benedikt 2013, 238–239. 241–243)

Čeprav pomeni hermenevtika »reforme v kontinuiteti« verodostojno vodilo pri razjasnjevanju konteksta koncilskih dokumentov, ta še ne daje celovitega zgodovinskega odgovora na vprašanje, zakaj sta se po koncilu pojavili dve nasprotujoči si hermenevtiki. Razlog za obstoj nasprotja je morebiti vsebovan v določenem deležu dvoumnosti koncilskih dokumentov samih. Ko se je namreč pri pojasnjevanju kakega cerkvenega dokumenta treba zatekati k hermenevtiki, ki se nahaja zunaj dokumenta samega, se lahko izkaže, da je njegova lastna jasnost pomanjkljiva in tako odprta za zgodovinsko ali teološko kritiko. (De Mattei 2010, 14; Tanner 2013, 173; Malmenvall 2015) V tej luči se Brunero Gherardini ustavlja pri razlikovanju med pastoralnim in dogmatičnim značajem določenega ekumenskega koncila. Ker se je drugi vatikanski koncil razglasil za pastoralnega, svojim odločitvam ni podelil dokončnosti na doktrinarnem področju. Omenjeno dejstvo po drugi strani ne omogoča sklepa, da v koncilskih dokumentih ni doktrinarnih prvin. Koncil tako razpolaga z lastnimi opredelitvami, ki tvorijo del cerkvenega učiteljstva, vendar te niso nespremenljive in zato za katoliške vernike niso do konca zavezujoče. (Gherardini 2009, 23.48.50–51.58.64–65; De Mattei 2010, 14–16; *Koncilski odloki* 1980, 37–38)

Med kontinuiteto in prelomom

Pastoralna konstitucija o Cerkvi v sedanjem svetu *Gaudium et spes*, kot zadnji koncilski dokument sprejeta 8. decembra leta 1965, ne odpira zgolj pomembnih vprašanj o razmerju Cerkve do sveta, temveč tudi in še bolj temeljna vprašanja o razmerju med Bogom in človekom. Vsa ta vprašanja hkrati zadevajo ustrezno hermenevtiko koncila v luči (ne)skladnosti reforme s kontinuiteto, česar se v svojem *Nagovoru Rimski kuriji* loteva Benedikt XVI., ko med drugim komentira nagovor Pavla VI. ob sklepu koncila 7. decembra 1965. Pavel VI. v omenjenem nagovoru – z njim pa Benedikt XVI. v svojem nagovoru – zastopa stališče o koristnosti izostritve katoliške antropologije, ki jo je opravil zadnji ekumenski koncil. Šlo naj bi za odgovor na zgodovinsko nasprotje med Cerkvijo in družbo, izvirajoče iz francoske revolucije. Razlike med sekularnimi tokovi in Cerkvijo so se po mnenju Pavla VI. in Benedikta XVI. skozi 20. stoletje vendarle začele postopno manjšati, saj je moderna doba pristala na delno prevrednotenje svojih stališč. Vse bolj se je namreč uveljavljalo spoznanje, da je ameriška revolucija (za razliko od francoske) ponudila drugačen vzorec moderne države, naravoslovne znanosti pa so se vse bolj zavedale svojih omejitev in opuščale željo po absolutnem zaobjetju stvarnosti. Mejnik pri zbliževanju Cerkve in sveta je predstavljal čas po drugi svetovni vojni, ko so katoliški politiki s svojim delovanjem pokazali, da je mogoč obstoj takšne nekonfesionalne države, ki svoj smoter črpa iz krščanske etike. V istem obdobju je katoliški družbeni nauk postal tudi politično vodilo in se izkazal kot nekakšna sredina med liberalizmom in marksizmom. (Benedikt XVI 2005, 1026–1028; Malmenvall 2015)

Drugi vatikanski koncil naj bi ob upoštevanju zgodovinske dinamike odnosov med Cerkvijo in družbo odgovoril na tri osrednja vprašanja: o razmerju med vero in znanostjo, o razmerju med Cerkvijo in državo v luči verske svobode ter o razmerju med katoliško vero in drugimi religijami, s katerimi je bila Cerkev znotraj modernih pluralističnih družb dolžna sobivati. Po mnenju Pavla VI. in Benedikta XVI. so se v odgovorih na ta vprašanja – ne le v *Gaudium et spes*, temveč tudi v istočasno sprejeti izjavi o verski svobodi *Dignitatis humanae* – pojavile določene prvine, ki kažejo na možnost preloma z izročilom, a le v posameznih primerih, ne v načelnih izhodiščih. Po Benediktu prav takšna združitev kontinuitete in preloma kaže na značaj pristne reforme. Pri tem naj bi se napetost med kontinuiteto in prelomom vselej presojala na podlagi razlikovanja med odločitvami, ki so za Cerkev bistvene, in odločitvami, ki so lahko podvržene spremembam (2005, 1027–1030). Benedikt izjavlja naslednje:

> Če je denimo verska svoboda razumljena kot izraz nezmožnosti človeka, da najde resnico, in se zato spremeni v kanonizacijo relativizma, je takšna verska svoboda [...] oropana svojega pravega smisla. [...] Nekaj povsem drugega pa je razumevanje verske svobode kot nujnosti, izhajajoče iz človeškega sobivanja, torej kot notranje posledice resnice, ki ne more biti vsiljena od zunaj, temveč jo mora človek prevzeti za svojo zgolj skozi proces prepričevanja. Drugi

> vatikanski koncil je s priznanjem […] enega izmed bistvenih načel moderne države obudil najglobljo dediščino Cerkve. […] Mučenci prve Cerkve so […] tako umrli tudi za […] svobodo izpovedovanja lastne vere – za izpovedovanje, ki ga ne more vsiliti nobena država. […] Misijonarska Cerkev, ki poskuša svoje sporočilo oznanjevati vsem ljudstvom, se mora zavzemati za versko svobodo. (1029)

Ob zavedanju obstoja nasprotujočih si hermenevtik zadnjega ekumenskega koncila in zmede na različnih področjih v pokoncilskem katolištvu kanonski pravnik Agostino Marchetto predlaga uveljavitev takšnega razumevanja koncila, ki v njem prepoznava nekakšno »ikono« Cerkve same, podobo nečesa značilno katoliškega – to je zgodovinski razvoj, ki je v občestvu s preteklostjo. Po Marchettu je brez nauka, opirajočega se na izročilo, pristna pastorala nemogoča, saj naj bi bilo bistvo pastorale v iskanju časovno spremenljivih načinov za učinkovito posredovanje vsebin nauka. Pastoralno držo, ki jo je v zasnovo koncila vtkal Janez XXIII., Marchetto opredeljuje kot »zdravilo usmiljenja«. Šlo naj bi za naslavljanje zmot takratnega sveta brez neposrednih obsodb, pač pa s pozitivno naravnanim sporočilom o krščanski resnici, da bi tako lahko človeštvo lažje spoznalo svoje dostojanstvo pred Bogom. (Marchetto 2012, 318–319.323–325; Malmenvall 2015) Podobno razmišlja ekleziolog Brunero Gherardini, po katerem bo interpretacija drugega vatikanskega koncila resnično celovita šele takrat, ko bo koncil podvrgla upoštevanju celotnega izročila Cerkve od apostolskih začetkov do nedavne preteklosti. Temu naj bi se pridruževalo priznavanje dejstva, da zadnji ekumenski koncil ni v ničemer pomembnejši od drugih dvajsetih. (Gherardini 2009, 14–19.88)

V svoji zavzetosti za evangelizacijo in družbeno pravičnost so koncilski očetje s stališča poznejšega zgodovinopisnega vrednotenja njihovega dela morda odprli preveč tem v prekratkem času in tako izdali preveč dokumentov. Temu razpoloženju se je pridružila uporaba novega jezikovnega sloga, ki je zamenjala jasnost in razčlenjenost sholastičnega načina izražanja. (Gherardini 2009, 61–62.117; Tanner 2013, 173; *Koncilski odloki* 1980, 38–39) Zaradi teh dejavnikov so se v koncilske dokumente prikradle nejasnosti, ki so spodbudile poznejše neusklajeno razumevanje koncila, kar je povzročilo razprave tudi o njegovi hermenevtiki. Do vsega tega morda ne bi prišlo, če bi bilo koncilskih dokumentov manj, njihova vsebina pa sporočena natančneje. Iz omenjenega je mogoče sklepati, da je poglavitna pomanjkljivost zadnjega ekumenskega koncila nezadostnost razumevanja njegovih dokumentov iz njih samih oziroma nujnost poseganja po starejših doktrinarnih virih. (Malmenvall 2015)

Kot zgodovinsko opazna in z izročilom skladna novost drugega vatikanskega koncila se kaže zavest o poklicanosti vseh vernih k svetosti, čemur se posveča zlasti dogmatična konstitucija o Cerkvi *Lumen gentium*, sprejeta 21. novembra leta 1964. Omenjena zavest svetosti ne izenačuje z načinom življenja, ki bi bil ločen od sveta in dosegljiv peščici duhovno posebej nadarjenih posameznikov, temveč v svetosti prepoznava pravico in dolžnost vseh članov Cerkve. Bistvo svetosti se tako kaže kot posnemanje Kristusa in zedinjenje z njim, ki svoj vrhunec dosega v mučeništvu, tj. neomajnem pričevanju vere pred ljudmi. (*Koncilski odloki* 1980, 66.174–180; Malmenvall 2015) Podobno se o poklicanosti vseh k svetosti izreka kardinal Marc Ouellet (1944), nekdanji prefekt Kongregacije za škofe (2010–2023). Trdi namreč, da je povezanost krsta in svetosti temeljna ideja koncila. Po njegovem mnenju je umeščena v nadaljevanje izročila Cerkve, ki pa naj bi bila skozi zgodovino večkrat površno izenačena z redovniškim življenjem. Od tod Ouellet izpeljuje misel o povezanosti krsta in svetosti kot »izrednem zagonu«, ki je izšel iz drugega vatikanskega koncila v obliki številnih laiških gibanj. Ta naj bi uspešno pričevala o skladnosti zakramentalnega življenja Cerkve z raznolikim delovanjem laikov v vsakdanjih okoliščinah. (2013, 42.122.132–136)

Dolinarjeva kritika Cerkve po koncilu

Cerkveni zgodovinar France Dolinar, ki je večino življenja prebival v Rimu in tako »od blizu« spremljal dogajanje med drugim vatikanskim koncilom in po njem, v članku *Katolicizem v »procesu« izvotlitve* razčlenjuje predvsem izvor in izrazne oblike t. i. nove teologije (fr. *nouvelle theologie*). Dojema jo kot gonilno silo miselnih sprememb v Katoliški cerkvi sredi 20. stoletja, še bolj pa kot skupek nazorov, nasprotnih tomistično-sholastični filozofiji ter povzdigujočih pomen zgodovinskih okoliščin in subjektivne izkušnje – tako v življenju Cerkve kakor tudi posameznega vernika. Slovenski zgodovinar izjavlja: »Teologija v Cerkvi omahuje, ker se je ločila od Tomaževe filozofije bitja, ki ji more dajati najbolj trdno oporo in jo obvarovati pred vplivi miselnosti, katera daje prednost nastajanju, prigodnosti, imanenci. Toda prenekateri se tem vplivom vdajajo, ker jim je novo vrednota že zgolj kot novo.« (1990, 74) Pomenljivo je, da se izrecno ne ustavlja pri razmeroma praktičnem vprašanju liturgičnih sprememb, saj ga zanimajo pretežno filozofsko-doktrinarna vprašanja. Najostrejšo kritiko namenja »antropološkemu obratu« v katoliški teologiji, kjer za najbolj »nevarnega« misleca označuje nemškega jezuitskega univerzitetnega profesorja Karla Rahnerja (1904–1984), medtem ko med državami, kjer se v Cerkvi dogaja »prava revolucija«, izpostavlja Nizozemsko. (61–72)

Dolinar se komaj šest let po njegovem koncu o posledicah koncila izreka negativno. Tu se sklicuje na številne izjave papeža Pavla VI., s katerimi je med koncilom in po njem opozarjal pred uveljavljanjem »zaskrbljujočih novosti«, ki jih koncilski dokumenti niso predvideli (81–87). Povzema tudi oceno francoskega oratorijanskega teologa Louisa Bouyerja (1913–2004), sprva enega osrednjih oblikovalcev *nouvelle theologie*, podane v monografiji *Razkroj katolištva* (*La décomposition du catholicisme*, 1968). Po Bouyerju naj bi bilo to, »kar gledamo pred seboj«, manj podobno prenovi kakor »pospešenemu razpadanju katolištva«. Od tod naj bi izhajalo, da bo »treba v eni generaciji računati z izginotjem« katoliške vere v zahodnem svetu. (42) Glavni razlog za pretrese v Cerkvi in upadanje vere v družbi slovenski avtor prepoznava v dveh dejavnikih, povezanih s koncilom. Prvič, zaradi velikega števila in raznovrstnosti obravnavanih tem koncilski dokumenti sami ne premorejo natančne pojasnitve vseh argumentov, kar pomeni, da odpirajo možnost za neusklajeno razumevanje in izvajanje reform. Drugič, medijsko prikazovanje koncila in cerkvenih razmer je v katoliških in sekularnih okoljih segalo onkraj vsebine koncilskih dokumentov in želelo očrniti izročilo Cerkve. Pri tej točki se Dolinar močno približuje kasnejši razlagi Benedikta XVI. »Tako imenovanim progresistom se je posrečilo zasesti strateške položaje v […] publicistiki. Tako je javno mnenje moglo obvladati krivo tolmačenje koncila. ‘Božje ljudstvo’ je dobilo vtis, da se je vse predrugačilo, da je vse postavljeno pod vprašaj, da je vse dano na prosto.« (42–43)

France Dolinar ne zavrača koncila samega po sebi, temveč si na podlagi njegovih dokumentov in izjav Pavla VI. prizadeva za takšno prenovo Cerkve, ki bi spoštovala »avtentičnost« in »celoto« katoliškega nauka. V sklepu svojega članka ponovno povzema omenjenega papeža in priznava, da je koncil prinesel tudi dobre sadove, na primer spoznavanje cerkvenih očetov in večjo prisotnost Svetega pisma pri liturgiji in osebnem branju vernikov. Toda po njegovi oceni so v »tej uri« pomembnejše negativne plati pokoncilskega razvoja – zaobjema jih z izrazom »kopičenje negotovosti, ki zadevajo vero v bistvenem«. Tu ima Dolinar v mislih zlasti razvodenitev oznanjanja božje narave Jezusa Kristusa in skrivnosti evharistije oziroma resnične navzočnosti, razvrednotenje molitve in zakramentov ter opuščanje govora o nerazvezljivosti zakona in spoštovanju življenja od spočetja do naravne smrti. (93)

Pozitiven pogled na »sadove prenove«

Bistveno bolj optimistično od Franceta Dolinarja se ob trideseti obletnici konca drugega vatikanskega koncila izreka katoliški filozof Janez Juhant, avtor članka *Pomen drugega vatikanskega cerkvenega zbora za Cerkev*. V njem izpostavlja, da je bil koncil za slovenske škofe priložnost za srečevanje s škofi iz drugih držav, kar je Cerkvi na ozemlju Slovenije omogočilo postopno odpiranje idejam in dogajanju po svetu. Prav tako so ravno na začetku šestdesetih let 20. stoletja slovenske socialistične oblasti peščici slovenskih teologov oziroma duhovnikov prvič dovolile oditi na študij v tujino. Kljub novostim, prihajajočim iz zahodnoevropskih okolij, Cerkve v Sloveniji ekumensko gibanje ni presenetilo, saj je bilo med Slovenci že v predhodnih desetletjih veliko posameznikov, ki so si prizadevali za zbliževanje med kristjani v slovenskem in jugoslovanskem okviru. Med njimi se je po znanstveni pronicljivosti in mednarodni prepoznavnosti že pred drugo svetovno vojno najbolj uveljavil Franc Grivec (1878–1963),[6] profesor na ljubljanski Teološki fakulteti. (1995, 995) Juhant ocenjuje, da drugi vatikanski koncil Cerkve v Sloveniji ni pretresel. »Medtem ko so drugje doživljali ostre polemike [...] pa tudi [...] odhajanja ljudi iz Cerkve in duhovništva, se v Sloveniji tudi zaradi komunističnega pritiska ni razvila takšna vehementnost.« (996–997) Obenem pa Slovenija ni ostala na robu dogajanja, kakor je to veljalo za nekatera druga socialistična okolja, zlasti države pod sovjetskim vplivom. To naj bi bila tudi razlika med katoliško skupnostjo v Sloveniji in na sosednjem Hrvaškem. Juhant ugotavlja, da so slovenski verniki spoznali mednarodne koncilske tokove in skupaj

6 Prikaz Grivčevega proučevanja in vrednotenja ruskega pravoslavja ponuja članek: Malmenvall 2022.

s svojimi cerkvenimi voditelji »dokaj uravnoteženo« uvajali novosti po koncilu. Glavno vprašanje za slovensko katoliško skupnost naj bi bilo, kako kljub »porinjenosti na rob družbenega dogajanja« opolnomočiti laike, ki so zaradi političnih pritiskov le počasi sprejemali obveznosti v Cerkvi, saj bi jim to lahko škodovalo pri njihovi poklicni oziroma civilni dejavnosti. (997)

Istega jubilejnega leta ljubljanski nadškof metropolit Alojzij Šuštar v članku *Drugi vatikanski vesoljni cerkveni zbor – prelomnica v Katoliški cerkvi* izraža stališče, da je vsak koncil za Cerkev izreden dogodek in ga je mogoče dojemati kot neke vrste prelomnico. Pomen drugega vatikanskega koncila zgoščeno podaja v naslednjih besedah: »Cerkev se je med pripravo na koncil in med koncilom zelo razgibala. Prišlo je do lepega sodelovanja med škofi in teologi, do pomembnih ekumenskih stikov in do velikega odmeva v svetovni javnosti.« (1995, 1023) Takšno opredelitev optimistično nadaljuje z mislijo, da je koncil kot dogajanje in kot celota dokumentov poglobil cerkveno in teološko življenje, četudi naj bi v nekaterih državah od koncila »pričakovali preveč«, kar naj bi ponekod povzročilo »napačne razlage koncilskih dokumentov« in sklicevanje na koncil za opravičevanje različnih zlorab. (1023.1025) Šuštar poudarja, da je konstitucija o liturgiji *Sacrosanctum concilium*, kot prvi koncilski dokument sprejeta 4. decembra 1963, prinesla »pravo revolucijo«. V liturgično življenje je namreč vnesla rabo ljudskih jezikov in določila novo obliko mašne daritve. Pisec dodaja, da »ponekod ne duhovniki ne verniki niso bili dovolj pripravljeni na tako temeljito spremembo«, zaradi česar je prihajalo do zahtev po vrnitvi »stare« oziroma »tridentinske« oblike mašnega obreda. Podobno naj bi večjo prekinitev s preteklostjo predstavljala koncilska izjava *Digninatis humanae*, ki se zavzema za »naravno pravico« do verske svobode in svobode vesti v vsaki družbeni ureditvi. (1023–1024) S to ugotovitvijo se Alojzij Šuštar približuje kasnejšemu pojasnilu omenjenih Benedikta XVI. in Agostina Marchetta, po katerih izjava o verski svobodi ne nasprotuje temeljnemu katoliškemu načelu o svobodni odločitvi za resnico, medtem ko spreminja zgodovinski odnos Cerkve do versko-moralne vloge posvetnih oblasti.

Šuštar v nadaljevanju dokazuje, da so bili »sadovi koncila« v Cerkvi na območju Slovenije »zelo vidni« in da Slovenija koncila »nikjer ni zaobšla«. Pri tem izpostavlja vidik »sodelovanja vernikov pri maši«, ki naj bi se zaradi slovenskega jezika, poenostavitve mašnega obreda in župnijskih pevskih zborov, ki so marsikje delovali že pred koncilom, uresničeval hitro in gladko. (1025.1028) Drug viden sad koncila naj bi bilo »novo sodelovanje laikov« v župnijskih pastoralnih svetih, kjer laiki prevzemajo »svojo odgovornost v Cerkvi«. Župnijski pastoralni sveti naj bi delovali na podlagi demokratičnih volitev in raznolike zastopanosti moških in žensk, starejših in mlajših ter prebivalcev različnih krajev posamezne župnije. (1025–1026) Od tod Šuštar opozarja, da je tudi v Sloveniji – tako na notranjem cerkvenem kakor tudi širšem javnem področju – vendarle treba še naprej pojasnjevati, da Cerkve ne sestavljajo zgolj škofje in duhovniki, temveč vsi, ki so po krstu oziroma svobodni odločitvi postali »njeni udje«. To pomeni, da ima vsak v Cerkvi svoje poslanstvo, vsi skupaj pa naj bi bili »soodgovorni drug do drugega«. Klic k odgovornosti Šuštarja navdaja z mislijo, da koncil »ni nikjer popolnoma uresničen«, niti na ravni vesoljne Cerkve niti v Cerkvi v Sloveniji. (1027) Še več, pojem »duh koncila« si ljubljanski nadškof metropolit razlaga kot »nenehno dogajanje«, skozi katero se uresničujejo koncilski sklepi, pri čemer naj bi bilo nujno osebno zanimanje in zavzetost za koncil (1028). S tem se Šuštar ne giblje znotraj dvojnosti med »dobrimi« koncilskimi dokumenti in »težavnim« duhom koncila, kar je na primer naslavljal Benedikt XVI., obenem pa koncilskega duha ne prikazuje kot procesa, ki bi koncilske dokumente presegal ali skrbel za uveljavljanje »revolucionarnih« stališč, nasprotnih cerkvenemu učiteljstvu. Podobno kakor pri Juhantu je Šuštarjev pogled na koncil in pokoncilsko dogajanje pozitiven in optimistično usmerjen v prihodnost.[7]

Liturgično vprašanje in prihodnost Cerkve

Razmisleku o prihodnosti Cerkve na ozadju nadaljevanja dvoumne dediščine koncila skoraj šestdeset let po njegovem koncu se posveča cerkvena glasbenica Cecilija Oblonšek v članku *Liturgična inkulturacija in vprašanje tradicije*. Izhodišče navedenega besedila je motuproprij papeža

7 Šuštarjev optimizem je smiselno vzporejati s še večjo naklonjenostjo do pokoncilskih sprememb, ki jih je zlasti v svojih monografijah *Pokoncilski katoliški etos* (1967) in *Katolicizem v poglobitvenem procesu* (1971) zagovarjal Karel Vladimir Truhlar (1912–1977), slovenski jezuit, profesor duhovne teologije na Papeški univerzi Gregoriana v Rimu. Podobno kakor Šuštar tudi Truhlar med ključnimi dosežki koncila izpostavlja razširitev ljudskega jezika v bogoslužju in odgovornost laikov za življenje Cerkve (1967, 144–146, 184–185). Omenjeni avtor, ki ga običajno prištevajo k »liberalni« struji pokoncilskega katolištva, se je med slovenskimi teologi doslej najbolj sistematično ukvarjal z vprašanji koncila in njegovega »duha«. Truhlarjevo delo je pregledno osvetljeno v zborniku: Platovnjak 2012.

Frančiška (služboval: 2013–) *Traditionis custodes* iz leta 2021. Frančišek je s tem dokumentom – za razliko od štirinajst let prej izdanega in bolj velikodušnega motupropija Benedikta XVI. *Summorum pontificum* – otežil dostop do starejše oblike rimskega obreda (lat. *usus antiquior*), poljudno imenovanega »tradicionalna latinska« ali »tridentinska« maša. Na tak način je vzbudil pomisleke med različnimi plastmi katoliških vernikov. Avtorica pri obravnavi odzivov na papežev dokument podaja splošno pripombo, podobno pojasnilom Benedikta XVI., da pojma »zvestoba koncilu« ni ustrezno enačiti z besedno zvezo »zvestoba duhu koncila«. Slednja je dolga desetletja opravičevala »mnoge stranpoti« in »samosvoje razlage« sicer pravovernih koncilskih dokumentov, ki so bile kasneje obsojene, o čemer med drugim pričujejo dokumenti Kongregacije za bogoslužje in disciplino zakramentov z opozorili pred »zlorabami bogoslužja«. Prav zaradi »stranpoti« in »samosvojih razlag« so v Cerkvi – tudi na ozemlju Slovenije – nastali krogi, ki slabe razmere po koncilu pripisujejo zlasti kvarnemu vplivu liturgične reforme in svoje delovanje utemeljujejo na starejši obliki rimskega obreda. Bistvo uresničevanja dokumentov drugega vatikanskega koncila se tako kaže v dognanju ustreznega načina ohranjanja zvestobe izročilu Cerkve v okoliščinah sodobne sekularne kulture. (102–103.105.115)

Avtorica predlaga, da je na začetku 21. stoletja, v času liturgičnih in pastoralnih razhajanj v katoliških skupnostih na Zahodu in drugod, smotrno ponovno odkriti pojem *ars celebrandi*, tj. »umetnost« ali »spoštljivost« obhajanja. V sodobnih okoliščinah naj bi pojem narekoval držo zvestega upoštevanja liturgičnih norm, besedil in rubrik, kakor jih uradno predpisujejo pokoncilski cerkveni dokumenti in obredne knjige, da bi te zasijale v svojem duhovnem bogastvu ter vernemu ljudstvu dajale možnost spoštljivega in vsakomur primernega sodelovanja pri bogoslužju, tj. udeležbe v »dialogu Očeta in Sina v Svetem Duhu« (111–112). Cecilija Oblonšek se navezuje na *Duha liturgije* (*Der Geist der Liturgie*, 2000), eno od temeljnih del kardinala Josepha Ratzingerja (1927–2022), poznejšega papeža Benedikta XVI. Ob tem izjavlja: »Kar potrebujemo, je nova liturgična vzgoja, posebno tudi vzgoja duhovnikov. Jasno mora spet postati, da liturgična znanost tu ni zato, da bi proizvajala vedno nove modele. […] Tu je zato […] da usposobi človeka za misterij.« (123) Svoje razmišljanje nadaljuje z bojaznijo, da lahko vzporedni liturgični razvoj, ki pomeni večanje obiskovanja maš po starejši obliki rimskega obreda med mlajšimi generacijami vernikov in obenem pogosto površno izvajanje nove oblike obreda po župnijah, privede Cerkev do razkola. Od tod se kaže potreba po okrepitvi teoloških razprav in iskrenejšega spoštovanja do drugače mislečih sogovornikov, kar izhaja iz dejstva, da »smo vsi bratje v Kristusu«. Avtorica opozarja, da pri tem ne gre le za strpnost med verniki, navezanimi na starejšo ali novo obliko mašnega obreda, temveč tudi zanimanje za lepoto obeh oblik rimske liturgije. (124–125) Za razliko od Janeza Juhanta in Alojzija Šuštarja, ki sta o koncilu in njegovih posledicah pisala sredi devetdesetih let 20. stoletja, Cecilija Oblonšek veliko jasneje izpostavlja obstoj notranjih razlik v Cerkvi, ki jih je povzročilo nedorečeno izvajanje koncilskih dokumentov. Po njeni oceni koncil ne vodi nujno v »svetlo prihodnost«, temveč ostaja zahtevna dediščina, iz katere izhajajo sedanje in bodoče generacije katolikov, katerih naloga naj bi bila ponovno odkritje liturgične zavesti in vzpostavitev sprave v Cerkvi.

Zaključek

Vsi avtorji, pritegnjeni v to besedilo, začenši z Benediktom XVI., osvetljujejo ali vsaj omenjajo določeno nerazrešeno napetost v Cerkvi sami, kar je ena od posledic uresničevanja drugega vatikanskega koncila. Pišejo namreč o dvojnosti med koncilom kot »plemenito« zamišljeno reformo v kontinuiteti z doktrinarnim izročilom na eni strani in pogosto »odklonsko« prakso na drugi. Ta naj bi vnašala »zmedo« v življenje vernikov in pomenila prelom s preteklostjo pod geslom sekularnega »duha koncila«. Pokoncilske stvarnosti se najbolj kritično loteva France Dolinar, najbolj optimistično pa se o tem izrekata Janez Juhant in Alojzij Šuštar, ki v bližnji prihodnosti pričakujeta nadaljnje uresničevanje koncilskih sklepov oziroma uspešno izvajanje reform v dobro Cerkve na slovenskem ozemlju in po svetu. Še več, sprejemanje koncila in nedavni razvoj v Cerkvi v Sloveniji prikazujeta malodane idilično, saj »odklonske« pojave prepoznavata zgolj v dogajanju v tujini. Posebno temo, ki izhaja iz koncila in se z večjo ostrino pojavlja od začetka 21. stoletja, predstavlja razmerje med starejšo in novo obliko rimskega obreda, čemur se najbolj posveča Cecilija Oblonšek. Avtorica ugotavlja, da se liturgično vprašanje, vtkano v jedro koncila z njegovim prvim dokumentom *Sacrosanctum concilium*, dotika tudi drugih področij cerkvenega življenja in krepitve t. i. tradicionalističnega gibanja, porojenega predvsem zaradi liturgičnih zlorab oziroma šibke liturgične zavesti v pokoncilskem obdobju.[8]

Na podlagi analiziranih stališč izbranih avtorjev je priložnost za ublažitev razhajajočih se interpretacij drugega vatikanskega koncila smotrno iskati v iskrenem dialogu med predstavniki različnih tokov v Cerkvi. To poraja gojenje nekakšnega »notranjekatoliškega ekumenizma«, naravnanega k priznanju raznolikih izrazov misli in molitve ob določitvi temeljnih skupnih izhodišč. Eno od priložnosti za tak pristop dajeta vse večja časovna oddaljenost od koncila in posledično vse manjša čustvena obremenjenost s takratnimi osebnostmi in dejanji. Primere postopnega prečiščevanja in dopolnjevanja neredko razburjajočih sklepov vesoljnih cerkvenih zborov potrjuje zgodovina krščanstva med 4. in 6. stoletjem. V tistem obdobju so se na vrsti koncilov (nikejski, nikejsko-konstantinopelski, efeški …)[9] postopoma razjasnjevale verske resnice o Sveti Trojici in Kristusovi osebi. Od tod je mogoče sklepati, da drugi vatikanski koncil v zgodovini Katoliške cerkve ne predstavlja dogodka, ki bi moral reči zadnjo besedo o obhajanju, oznanjevanju in uresničevanju katoliške vere v sodobnem svetu.

Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.
No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.

8 Pregled zgodovine t. i. tradicionalističnega gibanja v zahodni Evropi in severni Ameriki ponuja monografija: Porfiri 2024.

9 Pregled zgodovine koncilov v Katoliški cerkvi podaja monografija: Bucci in Piatti 2014.

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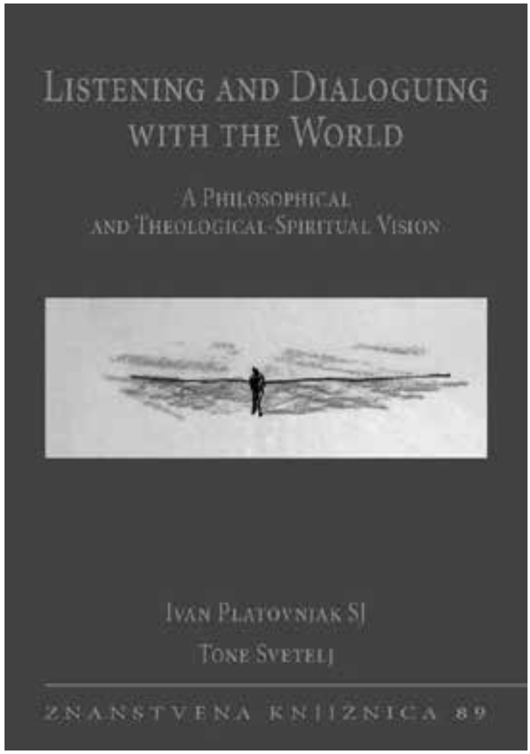

Znanstvena knjižnica 89

Ivan Platovnjak in Tone Svetelj

LISTENING AND DIALOGUING WITH THE WORLD:
A PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL-SPIRITUAL VISION

»Ta knjiga ponuja svež pristop k teologiji, ki jo vidi kot racionalno disciplino, sposobno brati pomen sveta in ki je nujna za dosego izpolnjenosti. Erudicija avtorjev daje bralcu občutek, da hodi skozi moderne čase ob spremstvu dveh odličnih vodičev. Razlagata zapleteno resničnost, vendar ne mislita namesto bralca.«

prof. dr. Piotr Roszak, recenzent zbornika

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Renato Podbersič

Rabin Abraham (Sofer) Schreiber – med Sočo in Kvarnerjem

Rabbi Abraham (Sofer) Schreiber – between the Soča/Isonzo river and the Kvarner Gulf

Izvleček: Prispevek na podlagi arhivskih virov in literature osvetljuje delovanje priznanega rabina in profesorja Abrahama Adolfa Schreiberja (1897, Eger–1982, Jeruzalem), sicer pripadnika ortodoksnega judovstva, po rodu iz stare madžarske ortodoksne rabinske družine Sofer-Schreiber. Pripadniki te družine so potomci rabina Mosesa (Chatama) Soferja-Schreiberja (1762, Frankfurt na Majni–1839, Bratislava), ki so ga imenovali tudi Chatam Sofer, vplivnega judovskega učenjaka v veliki in pomembni judovski skupnosti v Bratislavi na tedanjem Ogrskem.

Abraham Schreiber je bil odlično izobražen, dober in plodovit pisec, prav v Gorici se je začel posvečati pripravi kritičnih izdaj del srednjeveških talmudistov, specializiral se je predvsem za visokosrednjeveškega rabina Menahema Meirija. Rabin Schreiber je bil zadnji rabin v Gorici, iz mesta je leta 1936 odšel v Opatijo, kjer je skrbel za ortodoksne vernike skupaj s sosednjo Reko (Rijeka, Fiume). Ob sprejemu protijudovske zakonodaje v fašistični Italiji se je leta 1939 z družino izselil v Palestino. Med letoma 1948 in 1966 je predaval na Judovskem teološkem seminarju v New Yorku (Jewish Theological Seminary).

Ključne besede: ortodoksni rabin, rabinska družina Sofer-Schreiber, madžarsko judovstvo, judovska skupnost v Gorici, judovska skupnost v Opatiji

Abstract: *Based on archival sources and literature, the article deals with the life and activities of the renowned Rabbi and Professor Abraham Adolfo Schreiber (1897, Eger–1982, Jerusalem), a member of Orthodox Judaism, descended from the old Hungarian Orthodox rabbinical Sofer-Schreiber family. Members of this family are descendants of Rabbi Moses (Chatam) Sofer-Schreiber (1762, Frankfurt am Main–1839, Pressburg/Pozsony/Bratislava), also called Chatam Sofer, an influential Jewish scholar in the large and important Jewish community in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, then in Hungary.*

Abraham Schreiber was an excellently educated, good and prolific writer, and it was in Gorizia that he began to devote himself to the preparation of critical editions of the works of medieval Talmudists, specializing primarily in the High Medieval rabbi Menachem Meiri. Rabbi Schreiber was the last rabbi in Gorizia; in 1936 he left the city for Opatija, where he took care of the Orthodox faithful, together with neighbouring Rijeka (Fiume, Reka). When *anti-Jewish legislation was passed in fascist Italy, he and his family emigrated to Palestine in 1939. Between 1948 and 1966, he lectured at a Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.*

Keywords: *Orthodox rabbi, rabbinical family Sofer-Schreiber, Hungarian Jewry, Jewish community in Gorizia, Jewish community in Abbazia*

Uvod

Rabin je usposobljen judovski duhovni voditelj, ki pozna judovsko pravo, tradicijo in zgodovino.[1] Odgovoren je za vodenje verskih obredov, poučevanje ter svetovanje in vodenje posameznikov in družin. Rabini igrajo pomembno vlogo tudi v judovskem življenju, saj vodijo poroke, pogrebe in druge pomembne življenjske dogodke. Od rabinov se pričakuje, da imajo poglobljeno razumevanje judovskega prava in tradicije ter da jih znajo razlagati in uporabljati v sodobnem življenju. Poleg tega morajo biti sposobni učinkovito komunicirati z verniki in jim nuditi duhovno vodstvo in podporo. Rabini so sestavni del judovske skupnosti in igrajo pomembno vlogo pri ohranjanju in promociji judovske kulture in vrednot. Spoštovani so zaradi svojega znanja, modrosti in predanosti svoji veri in svojim skupnostim. V judovstvu so se ortodoksni Judje pogosto zdeli izstopajoči zaradi domnevne privrženosti *halaki*, strogim razlagam judovskega prava. V primerjavi s svojimi bolj liberalnimi kolegi so zagovarjali odločno predanost nespremenljivi tradiciji (Heilman 1982, 23).

Abraham Schreiber, pomemben ortodoksni rabin iz ugledne rabinske družine Sofer-Schreiber, je dobro desetletje zaznamoval tudi judovsko življenje med Sočo in Kvarnerskim zalivom, saj je osem let služboval v Gorici (1928–1936) in zatem tri leta v Opatiji in na Reki (1936–1939).

Rodbina Sofer-Schreiber

Sofer, hebrejsko *zapisovalec* oz. *pisar*, nem. *Schreiber*, je ime ugledne madžarske ortodoksne rabinske družine Sofer-Schreiber in hkrati sinonim za madžarsko ortodoksno rabinsko aristokracijo, ki šteje na stotine članov,

1 Študija je nastala v okviru raziskovalnega programa *Kršitve človekovih pravic in temeljnih svoboščin na slovenskem ozemlju v 20. stoletju* (P6-0380), ki ga sofinancira Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije (ARIS).

iz njenih vrst pa izhaja veliko vplivnih talmudistov in avtorjev responzov.[2] Pripadniki rabinske družine Sofer-Schreiber so torej potomci rabina Mosesa (Chatama) Soferja–Schreiberja (1762, Frankfurt na Majni–1839, Bratislava), ki so ga imenovali tudi Chatam Sofer, vplivnega judovskega učenjaka v veliki in pomembni judovski skupnosti v Bratislavi, tedaj Pozsonyu oz. Pressburgu na Ogrskem. Številni njegovi potomci so služili kot rabini, vodje ješiv in voditelji skupnosti v deželah habsburške monarhije v Srednji in Vzhodni Evropi. Rabin Chatam Sofer je bil učitelj tisočim in velik nasprotnik reformnega gibanja v judovstvu, ki je privabljalo številne Jude po monarhiji in tudi drugod. Kot rabin Bratislave oz. tedanjega Pozsonya ali Pressburga se je zavzemal za močno skupnostno življenje, prvovrstno izobraževanje in brezkompromisno nasprotovanje reformam in radikalnim spremembam. Kljub nasprotovanju spremembam molitvenega reda in tradicionalnega oblačenja je rabin Sofer menil, da se lahko človek tudi splošno izobražuje, če to sledi študiju Tore. Njegova glavna skrb je bila, da bi splošna izobrazba, če je ne bi spremljala ustrezna judovska zavest, služila kot pot do asimilacije, zato je bil do tega pogosto zadržan (Sofer-Schreiber 1957; Heilman 1982, 38–41; Shraga Samet 2007, 741–743; Ferziger 2008).

Prav rabin Moses je v začetku 19. stoletja v Bratislavi ustanovil znamenito bratislavsko ješivo (*Pressburg Yeshivah*), ki je kmalu postala najbolj vpliven tovrstni judovski kolegij v Srednji Evropi. Rabin Abraham Samuel Benjamin Wolf (1815, Bratislava–1871, Bratislava), njegov najstarejši sin, je po očetovi smrti leta 1839 nasledil vodenje omenjene ješive (hebr. *rosh yeshivah*) v Bratislavi. V dvaintridesetih letih, kolikor je zasedal to odgovorno mesto, je nadaljeval očetovo duhovno in pedagoško prakso. Spadal je med aktivne organizatorje madžarskih ortodoksnih Judov in sodeloval pri pripravah na judovski kongres v Budimpešti, ki je potekal leta 1869 (Sofer-Schreiber 1957; Lowenstein 2005, 8506–8507; Silber 2008).

Njegov mlajši brat, rabin Simeon Sofer (1820, Bratislava–1883, Krakov), je bil leta 1848 imenovan za rabina v Mattersdorfu na zahodu tedanje Ogrske, danes na Gradiščanskem v Avstriji, leta 1861 pa je postal rabin

2 *Responsa* – latinsko, sg., *responsum*; hebr. *she'elot u-teshuvot* ali *shutim*; »vprašanja in odgovori«. Pravna literatura o vprašanjih, zastavljenih pravnim odločevalcem (*poskim*), na katera so nato odgovorili.

v Krakovu, kjer je ostal do svoje smrti. Ustanovil je *Mahzike Hadas*, ortodoksno judovsko organizacijo v Galiciji, vzdrževal je stike s tamkajšnjimi hasidskimi rabini. Od leta 1878 je bil državnozborski poslanec na Dunaju. Znamenite so njegove knjige o halaki in homiletiki. Rabin Simchah Bunem Sofer (1842, Bratislava–1906, Bratislava), sin in naslednik Abrahama Wolfa, je še naprej vzdrževal veliko bratislavsko ješivo, organiziral ortodoksno judovstvo in poudarjal razlike med njim in drugimi segmenti madžarskega judovstva. V ta namen je okrepil odnose s hasidskimi rabini na Madžarskem. Rabin Simeon (1850, Eger–1944, Auschwitz), mlajši sin Abrahama Wolfa, je leta 1881 ustanovil znano ješivo v Egru (nem. Erlau) na Madžarskem, kjer je bil rabin, in tam poučeval do nacistične aretacije, ko so ga odpeljali v uničevalno taborišče Auschwitz, kjer je bil umorjen takoj po prihodu. Podpiral je judovsko naseljevanje in obdelovanje zemlje v Palestini (Eretz Israel) (Sofer-Schreiber 1957; Ferziger 2008).

Rabin Solomon Sofer (1853, Bratislava–1930, Berehove), najmlajši sin Abrahama Wolfa, je bil ugleden pridigar in pisatelj. Je avtor knjige *Hut ha-Meshullash* (1887), ki vključuje biografije znanih članov družine. Do svoje smrti je bil rabin v mestu Berehove (madž. Beregszász) v Podkarpatski Ukrajini. Rabin Akiva Sofer (1878, Bratislava–1959, Jeruzalem), sin Simchaha Soferja, je nasledil očeta kot rabin in pri vodenju ješive v Bratislavi. Leta 1940 se je naselil v Mandatni Palestini, v Jeruzalemu je ponovno ustanovil bratislavsko ješivo in jo vodil do svoje smrti. Pisal je o Tori in responzih (Sofer-Schreiber 1957; Ferziger 2008).

Abraham Schreiber: kratek življenjepis

Rabin Abraham (Avraham) Adolfo Sofer-Schreiber, sin rabina Simeona Soferja in Malke Eszter Sofer, roj. Spitzer (1859, Dunaj–1931, Eger), se je rodil 9. oktobra 1897 v Egru na Ogrskem. Med letoma 1914 in 1918 je obiskoval rabinski ortodoksni kolegij (nem. *Erste Öffentliche Landes rabbinats Hochschule in Pressburg*) v Bratislavi in pridobil izobrazbo za glavnega rabina (hebr. *Rav morenu harav*). Predstojniki so mu s tem zaupali »njegovo sposobnost vodenja judovske skupnosti, odločanja o vseh verskih zadevah in priznavanje njegovih raziskav in objav Tore« (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 8, fasc. 21, 26. 2. 1933). Po študiju je najprej eno leto učil judovski verouk v srednjih šolah v domačem mestu, zatem pa je štiri leta deloval v ortodoksni skupnosti na Dunaju pod vodstvom glavnega rabina Zwija Hirscha Pereza Chajesa.[3] Leta 1921 se je poročil s Saro Sofer iz mesta Siret (madž. Szeretvásár, nem. Sereth), pravnukinjo krakovskega rabina Simeona Soferja, v današnji romunski Bukovini, imela sta pet otrok (Rezi Raizel, Benjamin Shmuel, Miriam, Salomon, Ruth). Leta 1924 se je z družino preselil na Krf,[4] kjer je zasedel mesto glavnega rabina v tamkajšnji judovski skupnosti. Sredi marca 1928 je prišel v Gorico, kjer je ostal do julija 1936. Avgusta 1936 se je z družino preselil na Reko, v ulico Via Francesco Petrarca 12 (danes Ulica Viktora Cara Emina), kjer je duhovno skrbel za ortodoksne vernike ob Kvarnerju (Opatija in Reka). Nikoli se ni vpisal v fašistično stranko (Rigano 2005, 153).[5] Toda leta 1938 je začela tudi fašistična Italija sprejemati protijudovsko zakonodajo in zaostrovati takšno politiko, še posebej proti Judom brez italijanskega državljanstva. Zato se je celotna družina Schreiber decembra 1939 odločila za izselitev, iz tržaškega pristanišča so z potniško ladjo Galileo Galilei emigrirali v Mandatno Palestino, naselili so se v Jeruzalemu. Od leta 1948 do 1966 je bil rabin Schreiber profesor na Judovskem teološkem seminarju (*The Jewish Theological Seminary*) v New Yorku. Veljal je za plodovitega rabinskega misleca, avtorja okrog tridesetih knjig, njegova glavna dejavnost je bila priprava del rabina Menahema ben Solomona Meirija iz Perpignana in drugih vodilnih pozno- in visokosrednjeveških rabinskih učenjakov (hebr. *Rishonim*) za objavo. Njegovo strastno znanstveno delo je bilo

3 Rabin Zwi Hirsch Perez Chajes je bil rojen leta 1876 v kraju Brody v Galiciji. Judovstvo je študiral na Dunaju, veljal je za gorečega sionista. Poučeval je na rabinskem kolegiju v Firencah, med letoma 1912 in 1918 je bil rabin v Trstu, potem pa se je preselil na Dunaj in tam umrl leta 1927. O njem: Baron 2007.

4 Ob koncu 15. stoletja je živelo na Krfu toliko Judov, da so jih Benečani, ki so takrat nadzorovali ta strateško zelo pomemben otok, dali zapreti v gete. Izgon Judov iz Španije pa je sefardske kolonije pripeljal do tega, da so se naselile na Krfu in na šestih drugih Jonskih otokih. Po dunajskem kongresu so bili Krf in drugi Jonski otoki pod britansko zaščito, usoda 4000 tamkajšnjih Judov se je hitro poslabšala zaradi vrste diskriminatornih ukrepov, vključno z zatiranjem njihove volilne pravice. Priključitev teh otokov Grčiji leta 1864 je pomenila vrnitev k državljanski enakopravnosti za Jude, a tudi ponavljajoče se izbruhe antisemitizma. Leta 1891 je po obtožbah o ritualnih zločinih izbruhnil pogrom. Sledil je eksodus judovskih družin, vključno z družino Alberta Cohena, enega najpomembnejših sefardskih pisateljev 20. stoletja. Na predvečer druge svetovne vojne je judovska skupnost na Krfu štela le 2000 članov. Leta 1944 so bili večinoma deportirani v nemška taborišča. Danes je na Krfu le še približno šestdeset Judov, od nekdanjih štirih sinagog starega krfskega geta je drugo svetovno vojno preživela le Scuola Greca (grški tempelj) iz 17. stoletja. Več o tem: Marcu in Kerem 2007.

5 Velja poudariti, da je bilo sredi tridesetih let v fašistično stranko vpisanih sedem od več kot petdeset rabinov, ki so delovali v Kraljevini Italiji, vključno s kolonijami v Afriki. Med vpisanimi je bil tudi Eugenio Pio Zolli, rojen kot Israel Anton Zoller (1881, Brody–1956, Rim), rabin v Trstu in Rimu (Rigano 2005, 152–153).

uradno priznano s podelitvijo prestižne Izraelske nagrade (*Israel Prize*), prejel jo je leta 1981 za svoje delovanje na področju rabinske literature. Rabin Schreiber je umrl 10. aprila 1982 v Jeruzalemu (Artom 1982, 18; Piattelli 2017; Cedarmas 1999, 78–84; Manheimer 2004, 125).

Rabin Schreiber v Gorici

Dokumentirana judovska prisotnost v mestu ob Soči sega v drugo polovico 13. stoletja, največ, dobrih tristo, jih je tu živelo sredi 19. stoletja. Goriška judovska skupnost ni izstopala po številnosti, ampak zaradi vpliva v vsakdanjem, predvsem gospodarskem življenju krajev ob Soči. V mestu pa je delovalo tudi nekaj znamenitih judovskih izobražencev, med slednjimi velja izpostaviti tudi rabine, ki so delovali predvsem na verskem področju.[6]

Zaradi novih politično-upravnih razmer po prvi svetovni vojni se je goriška judovska skupnost tesneje povezala z drugimi judovskimi skupnostmi v Kraljevini Italiji. Leta 1926 je v Gorici živelo okrog 220 Judov, med katerimi pa je bilo samo 35 takšnih, ki so tudi finančno prispevali k delovanju

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6 Poseben pečat so goriškim intelektualcem dajali rabini, ki so delovali v tukajšnji judovski skupnosti. Vsaj nekateri so s svojim znanjem močno presegali sicer dokaj skromno judovsko okolje. Tako je Gorico v 18. stoletju obeležilo več pripadnikov judovske družine Gentilli (hebr. *Hefez*), ki so se izkazali v talmudskih študijah. Iz družine Gentilli izvira tudi več goriških rabinov, med njimi Jacob Hai ben Manasseh Gentilli (umrl 1749) in Uzriel (ali Azriel) Gentilli. Slednji se je ukvarjal tudi s kabalo. Meshullam Zalman ben Abraham Berak, po rodu iz Gorice, je deloval v znani judovski tiskarni Josepha Athiasa v Amsterdamu, kjer so tiskali tudi kabalistično literaturo. Poleg omenjenih rabinov zaseda posebno mesto Gershon ben Mosè Gentilli.
Prvo polovico 19. stoletja je med goriškimi rabini najbolj zaznamoval Izak (Isacco) Samuele Reggio (1784–1855), v svojih delih se je vedno znova podpisoval kot »Goričan«. Družina je izvirala iz mesta Reggio Calabria. V Gorico se je preselil že Izakov oče, Abram Abraham Vita Ben Azriel Reggio (1755–1841), ki je prišel v Gorico leta 1783 kot učitelj v novoustanovljeno judovsko versko šolo, ješivo. Njegov mentor je bil goriški rabin Mose Gentili (Hefez), ki ga je Abram nasledil, Izak pa je nasledil očeta leta 1846. Rabin Reggio je veliko prevajal ter pisal znanstvene in zgodovinske razprave o judovstvu, hkrati se je posvečal tudi kabali. Veliko si je dopisoval z judovskimi izobraženci po Evropi, pri tem je večinoma uporabljal hebrejščino. Rabin Izak Samuel Reggio je bil član Akademije za orientalske študije v Leipzigu in Halleju, prijel se ga je tudi vzdevek italijanski Moses Mendelssohn. Oče Abram in sin Izak Reggio sta bila pomembna predstavnika gibanja Haskala oziroma judovskega razsvetljenstva.
Ob koncu 19. stoletja se je v Gorici uveljavil Giacomo Bolaffio (1857–1937), zadnji domači rabin, vzgojen v Gorici. Službo rabina je opravljal od leta 1894. Prizadeval si je za poživitev judovske vere v obdobju nagle sekularizacije in za ustrezen verski pouk judovske mladine v Gorici. Tudi po svoji preselitvi na mesto glavnega rabina v Torinu julija 1903 je G. Bolaffio ohranil tesne stike z domačim krajem. Goriško judovsko skupnost pred prvo svetovno vojno je zaznamoval rabin Della Pergola (1877–1923), ki je študiral na rabinskem kolegiju v Firencah, kjer je bil učenec poljskega rabina Samuela Hirscha Marguliesa. Več o tem: Cedarmas 1999; Grusovin 2007; Podbersič 2017.

judovske skupnosti. Šlo je za domače pripadnike skupnosti, kajti po prvi svetovni vojni priseljeni Judje so v glavnem živeli v slabih finančnih razmerah in za skupnost večinoma niso prispevali. Letne dajatve za judovsko skupnost so se zvišale na okrog tristo do štiristo lir, medtem ko je rabin prejemal 16.000 lir plače, kar je vključevalo tudi njegovo namestitev. Goriški Judje so svojo lojalnost do italijanske države in po oktobru 1922 podporo vladajočemu fašističnemu režimu dokazovali tudi s članstvom v fašistični stranki *Partito Nazionale Fascista* (Cedarmas1999, 58).

Po obdobju negotovosti med prvo svetovno vojno in ob spremembi državnopravne pripadnosti je jeseni 1925 vodstvu goriške judovske skupnosti uspelo pripeljati novega rabina. To je postal ortodoksni rabin Isidor Kahan (1887, Tiszabercel–1961, Seattle), rojen na Ogrskem. Izobraževal se je v rabinskem kolegiju v Berlinu in je veljal za priznanega poznavalca Talmuda. Govoril je nemško, hebrejsko, madžarsko, kmalu pa se je naučil tudi italijansko. V Gorici je ostal le do pomladi 1928. Vodstvo goriške judovske skupnosti ga je cenilo, ker naj bi bil resen in kulturen človek z boljšim znanjem od številnih italijanskih rabinov (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 12, fasc. 44). Iz Gorice je rabin Kahan odšel na Rodos, tedaj pod italijansko upravo, kjer je delo nadaljeval v didaktičnem vodstvu tamkajšnjega rabinskega kolegija.

V Gorico je sredi marca 1928 prišel novi rabin Abraham Adolfo Schreiber, sicer madžarski državljan in pripadnik ortodoksnega judovstva. Ponujena mu je bila letna plača v višini 25.000 lir, toda brez stanovanjskega dodatka. Pred prihodom v Gorico je deloval v skupnosti na otoku Krfu. Bil je odlično izobražen, dober pisec, prav v Gorici se je začel posvečati pripravi kritičnih izdaj del srednjeveških talmudistov, proučevalcev Talmuda. Med delovanjem v Gorici je med drugim prepisal in natisnil rokopise komentarjev Talmuda rabina Menahema Meirija, ki jih je našel v Palatinski knjižnici v Parmi (Cedarmas 1999, 81).

Družina Schreiber se je med bivanjem v Gorici večkrat selila, najprej so živeli v nekdanjem getu (Via Ascoli), zatem so se preselili v bližnjo Semeniško ulico (Via Seminario), na koncu pa so prebivali v nekdanji Gosposki ulici (Via Carducci), torej vedno v bližini sinagoge in nekdanjega geta (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 17, fasc. 71).

Okrog rabina Schreiberja so se zbirali judovski učenci, nekateri med njimi so se prav zaradi njega priselili v Gorico, da so lahko sledili njegovemu poučevanju. K razmahu ješive v Gorici so prispevali predvsem priseljeni Judje iz Poljske. Za kratek čas je Gorica spet pridobila žar judovskih študij, tako značilen za prvo polovico 19. stoletja in domača rabina, očeta Abrama in sina Isacca iz družine Reggio (Morpurgo 1986, 200; Cedarmas 1999, 82–85).

Hvale na račun judovske skupnosti v Gorici je pogosto izrekal tudi rabin Schreiber, ki je posebej poudaril napredek v obdobju, ko so nekatere druge judovske skupnosti po Italiji počasi ugašale. V Gorici pa so se istočasno pripravljali na odprtje nove šole za poučevanje Tore (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 12, fasc. 44, Gorizia).

Rabin Schreiber je v Italiji užival veliko in zasluženo spoštovanje, tako zelo, da so ga aprila 1931 priporočili za morebitnega profesorja na Rabinskem kolegiju v Firencah. Sicer se je že ob začetku 20. stoletja v Firencah začelo organizirati judovsko kulturno gibanje *Pro Cultura*, ki so ga podpirali študenti na tamkajšnjem uveljavljenem rabinskem kolegiju pod vodstvom rabina Samuela Hirscha Marguliesa.[7] Gibanje si je prizadevalo za zaščito judovske duhovne in kulturne dediščine ter dvig delovanja v posameznih judovskih skupnostih. Pogosto so bile organizirane različne konference na temo judovske zgodovine, s čimer se je ohranjala tradicija. Višek delovanja je to gibanje, predvsem po zaslugi rabina Schreiberja, doseglo ob začetku tridesetih let (Cedarmas 1999, 72). Odmev zasledimo tudi v Gorici, kjer so ob sinagogi na začetku septembra 1932 odprli obnovljen in povečan nekdanji prostor judovske šole in ga poimenovali po priljubljenem goriškem rabinu Abramu V. Reggiu (1755, Ferrara–1841, Gorica). Kmalu je ta prostor postal središče kulturnega delovanja Judov v Gorici (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, 30. avgust 1932).

To obdobje so zaznamovali tudi stalni prihodi in odhodi judovskih družin iz srednje in vzhodne Evrope. Gorica je bila pogosto le prehodna točka,

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7 Samuel Hirsch Margulies (1858, Berežani–1922, Firence), ortodoksni rabin, doma z ozemlja na zahodu današnje Ukrajine. Prav Margulies je odločilno prispeval k razvoju italijanskega sionizma, v nasprotju s tedaj uveljavljenim mnenjem ortodoksnih evropskih rabinov, ki so sionizmu nasprotovali. O njem: Cassuto in Rocca 2007.

s katere jih je večina odpotovala dalje, v Palestino, ZDA ali Švico. Čeprav so predvsem pripadniki mlajše generacije ponujali svetlo sliko goriške judovske skupnosti, je bila realnost vendarle bolj žalostna. Skupnost se je namreč vztrajno manjšala. Attilio Donato Moise Morpurgo (1878, Gorica–1965, Trst), od leta 1933 predsednik goriške judovske skupnosti, je ohranil dobre odnose z rabinom Schreiberjem. Bil je zadnji izvoljeni predsednik judovske skupnosti v Gorici pred drugo svetovno vojno (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 16, fasc. 68). Tako je oktobra 1936 z obžalovanjem sporočal v Rim, da mora dr. Abraham Schreiber zapustiti Gorico, kar se bo zgodilo zaradi »zelo žalostnega ekonomskega stanja goriške skupnosti. Italija bo tako izgubila najbolj učenega in nadarjenega učitelja, seveda ne zaradi svoje krivde« (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 32E, fasc. 20, mapa 3211). Tako je zadnji rabin, ki je bil nastavljen v Gorici za potrebe krajevne judovske skupnosti, zapustil mesto. Poslej Gorica ni več imela lastnega rabina! Rabin Schreiber se je z družino preselil na Reko, kjer je skrbel za tamkajšnjo ortodoksno judovsko skupnost, prav tako je oskrboval tudi Jude v Opatiji (Cedarmas 1999, 72).

Po odhodu rabina Schreiberja sta skrb za verske dejavnosti v Gorici prevzela kantorja (hebr. *hazan*) Giacomo/Jacob Koschitzky in Giuseppe/Josef Küstlinger. Oba sta prihajala iz Poljske, sicer pa sta v skupnosti aktivno delovala že pred rabinovim odhodom, tudi pri verskem poučevanju. Slednji je opravljal tudi dolžnosti obrednega klavca živali (hebr. *shohet*). Priseljeni judovski družini Koschitzky in Mayer sta leta 1934 ponovno zagnali pripravo *mazzoth*, tj. nekvašen kruh za pasho, s katero so oskrbovali skupnost v Gorici in jo pošiljali tudi v druge kraje. Oba kantorja sta kot tuja državljana morala zapustiti Gorico po sprejetju protijudovske zakonodaje v letih 1938 in 1939 (Morpurgo 1986, 203; Cedarmas 1999, 70, 86; Podbersič 2017, 248–249). Poslej so se vedno znova pojavljale težave v zvezi z judovskim poukom v Gorici. Že omenjeni predsednik Morpurgo je spomladi 1938 pisal na Zvezo judovskih skupnosti Italije (ita. *Unione delle comunità ebraiche Italiane*) v Rimu in prosil za pomoč pri iskanju primernega mladega učitelja, ki bi judovske učence v Gorici poučeval verski pouk, za kar so bili pripravljeni plačati od 600 do 700 lir na mesec (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 32F, fasc, 23, Gorizia).

Težavno združevanje z Judi v Vidmu

Odvetnik Mario Donati, predsednik goriške judovske skupnosti po prvi svetovni vojni in do leta 1931, je svoji skupnosti želel priključiti tudi Jude iz preostalega dela Furlanije (*Provincia del Friuli*), s katero je bila med letoma 1923 in 1927 združena tudi Goriška (*Provincia di Gorizia*). Šlo je predvsem za Jude v Vidmu in kraju San Daniele del Friuli, ki bi tako poživili goriško skupnost in hkrati s svojimi finančnimi prispevki izboljšali slabo ekonomsko stanje v Gorici. Judje v mestu ob Soči so namreč morali vzdrževati lastnega rabina, hkrati pa zadostiti »vsem obrednim in kulturnim potrebam judovskega življenja« (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 12, fasc. 44, 11. 4. 1932).

Vendar do združitve ni prišlo kmalu, saj je bilo treba premagati birokratske in pravne ovire, ki so jo zavirale in jih je postavljala predvsem videmska prefektura. Poleg tega so Judje iz Vidma, kjer je živel tudi ugledni senator dr. Elio Morpurgo (1858, Videm–1944, n. p.), nasprotovali denarnim prispevkom za judovske obrede v Gorici. Zato je v Gorici ostal v veljavi statut, ki je pokrival samo ozemlje nekdanje Goriške pod avstrijsko oblastjo. Občasno so sicer iz Gorice pritiskali na Zvezo judovskih občin v Rimu, naj intervenira pri ustreznem ministrstvu, največkrat so omenjali ministrstvo za notranje zadeve, da bi tako dosegli združitev goriške in videmske judovske skupnosti. Po drugi strani so se v Vidmu sklenili odločno zoperstaviti goriškim željam po združitvi. Želeli so namreč ohraniti lastno organiziranost, zato so januarja 1929 v Vidmu sklicali sestanek, ki so se ga udeležili vodilni možje devetih judovskih družin. Želeli so ustanoviti judovsko skupnost Videm-San Daniele del Friuli s sedežem v Vidmu. Predsednik novoustanovljene judovske skupnosti je tako postal Raffaele Gentilli (1876, San Daniele del Friuli–1952, San Daniele del Friuli), trgovec in posojilodajalec, doma iz kraja San Daniele. Septembra 1929 je nova skupnost v Vidmu štela okrog 70 članov, med katerimi jih je 16 prostovoljno plačevalo prispevke za skupnost. Za častnega rabina v Vidmu je bil imenovan rabin Israel Anton Zoller iz Trsta, ker rabin Schreiber »ni dobil pravnega priznanja s strani vlade«. V goriški skupnosti so se na ta način počutili neupravičeno zapostavljene in odločitev je povzročila nekaj nezadovoljstva, kajti še pred prvo svetovno vojno in avstrijsko-italijansko državno mejo so goriški rabini skrbeli za Jude v Vidmu (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 12, fasc. 44, 12. 11. 1930).

Začasno pomoč goriškim Judom je ponudila tudi judovska skupnost iz Verone, toda to ni moglo rešiti vseh (finančnih) težav. Nasprotovanje Judov iz Vidma goriški judovski skupnosti pod vodstvom rabina Schreiberja je izviralo tudi iz dejstva, da je omenjeni rabin spadal med ortodoksne Jude, kar jih je motilo. Zato so izražali željo, da bi se raje združili z judovsko skupnostjo v Trstu. Do združitve med Judi v Gorici in Vidmu je potem le prišlo s kraljevim dekretom 24. septembra 1931, čemur so se do zadnjega upirali zlasti vplivni Judje v Vidmu. Pri tem so pritiskali na Zvezo judovskih skupnosti Italije v Rimu in se sklicevali na svojo staro tradicijo. Podpredsednik judovske skupnosti v Gorici je bil med letoma 1931 in 1938 prav Rafaele Gentilli, nekdaj predsednik v Vidmu. V obdobju po združitvi je v Vidmu živelo okrog petnajst judovskih družin. Med tremi največjimi finančnimi podporniki za skupnost je bil dr. Elio Morpurgo, ki je letno prispeval sto lir (Cedarmas 1999, 59–60; Podbersič 2017, 242–245).

Donatijevo obdobje na čelu skupnosti v Gorici se je počasi bližalo koncu, ovirali sta ga bolezen in nezmožnost reševanja težav. Iz Rima je prišel predlog, naj upravljanje skupnosti v Gorici prevzame državni upravnik dr. Carlo Morpurgo (1890, Trst–1944, Auschwitz) iz Trsta. Predlog je bil potrjen 20. marca 1932. Vodstvo v Rimu je preprosto želelo uvesti red v delovanje skupnosti v Gorici. Upravnik dr. Morpurgo se je sicer zavedal, da v Gorici deluje cenjeni rabin Schreiber, ki ga je opisal kot »človeka velikega srca in odlične pripravljenosti ter vrhunskega talmudista«, toda hkrati se je pritoževal, da je rabin preveč izobražen in mu ljudstvo ne more slediti (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 12, fasc. 44, 11. 4. 1932).

Naloga novoimenovanega upravnika (ita. *commissario*) je bila izboljšati delovanje judovske skupnosti v Gorici in vzpostaviti stabilno finančno stanje. Tako je bil Morpurgo že aprila 1932 prisiljen zaprositi vodstvo Zveze judovskih skupnosti Italije, da goriški skupnosti razumno zmanjšajo prispevek. V skupnosti so namreč razpolagali z letnimi prihodki v višini 37.000 lir. Od tega je goriški rabin prejel 23.000 lir. Z ostankom je morala goriška judovska skupnost pokriti vse judovske verske in kulturne dejavnosti. Zaradi slabih finančnih razmer je želel upravnik Morpurgo tudi zmanjšati prihodke rabina Schreiberja (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 12, fasc. 44, Gorizia).

Rabin Schreiber ob Kvarnerskem zalivu

Glede pravne ureditve položaja judov (in tudi drugih nekatoličanov) v Kraljevini Italiji se je zakonodaja sprejemala ob zakonu z dne 24. junija 1929 in z izvedbenim odlokom, izdanim 28. februarja 1930. Šlo je za t. i. Falcov zakon (ita. *La legge Falco*),[8] ki je ukinjal manjše judovske skupnosti po Italiji in jih zakonsko priključil večjim skupnostim z nalogo skrbi za judovsko zgodovinsko in kulturno dediščino. Tako je v skladu z novo fašistično zakonodajo v Kraljevini Italiji država poslej priznavala obstoj zgolj 25 judovskih skupnosti. Hkrati je kraljevi dekret št. 1731, sprejet jeseni 1930, vzpostavil enotno predstavniško združenje posameznih italijanskih judovskih skupnosti. Ustvaril je Zvezo italijanskih judovskih skupnosti, v katero so se morale vključiti vse krajevne judovske skupnosti. Na čelo omenjene zveze je bil postavljen glavni rabin v Rimu. V Italiji je delovalo 54 rabinov, od tega 14 tujih, med njimi tudi rabin Schreiber, ki so ga oblasti prištevale med Madžare (Rigano 2005, 155). Med letoma 1933 in 1937 se je sicer število italijanskih rabinov zmanjšalo za petino, število rabinov, rojenih v tujini, pa se je v istem obdobju zmanjšalo za skoraj trideset odstotkov. Število rabinov, rojenih v tujini brez italijanskega državljanstva, se je zmanjšalo za več kot šestdeset odstotkov, medtem ko se je število rabinov, rojenih v tujini z italijanskim državljanstvom, povečalo za skoraj petnajst odstotkov (Rigano 2005, 159).

Tik pred začetkom sprejemanja protijudovske zakonodaje leta 1938 so organizirane judovske skupnosti obstajale v naslednjih italijanskih mestih: Alessandria, Ancona, Benetke (Venezia), Bologna, Casale Monferrato, Ferrara, Firence (Firenze), Reka (Fiume), Genova, Gorica (Gorizia), Livorno, Mantova, Merano, Milano, Modena, Neapelj (Napoli), Opatija (Abbazia), Padova, Parma, Pisa, Rim (Roma), Torino, Trst (Trieste), Vercelli in Verona. Poleg judovskih skupnosti na Apeninskem polotoku so obstajale še štiri zunaj matične Italije: Adis Abeba (Etiopija), Bengazi in Tripolis (Libija), Rodos (Rodi, Dodekanez). Kriza judovstva se je poznala tudi pri zasedenosti posameznih mest z rabini, saj od skupno petindvajsetih mest kar štiri niso imela svojega rabina (Gorica, Merano, Opatija in Reka).

8 Zakon je poimenovan po univerzitetnem profesorju Mariu Falcu (1884–1943), priznanem pravniku judovskega rodu iz Torina, ki je vodil pogajanja s fašističnimi oblastmi o zakonski ureditvi judovskega združevanja v Italiji.

Zanimivo je, da je bila največja kriza v tovrstnem smislu ravno v Julijski krajini (AUCEI, FAUCI dal 1934, busta 32F, fasc. 22, mapa Circolari).

Po popisu prebivalstva z dne 22. avgusta 1938 je judovsko prebivalstvo na območju Kvarnerja štelo nekaj več kot 1400 ljudi, živečih na Reki, v Opatiji in Lovranu. Skupnost so v glavnem sestavljali potomci priseljencev iz avstro-ogrske monarhije, predvsem madžarskih Judov, ter Judov iz dežel Srednje in Vzhodne Evrope. Uspešno socialno in ekonomsko integracijo Judov je olajšalo priznanje državljanskih in političnih pravic v avstro-ogrski monarhiji leta 1867. To se je nadaljevalo pod italijansko oblastjo po prvi svetovni vojni, vse do uvedbe fašističnih protijudovskih zakonov leta 1938. Na Reki in v Opatiji, ki sta bili vključeni v novoustanovljeno italijansko upravno regijo Kvarner (Provincia del Carnaro), so se od začetka dosledno izvajali vsi fašistični protijudovski ukrepi (Morgani 1979, 57–65).

Zgodovino judovske skupnosti ob Kvarnerju je prvi fragmentarno rekonstruiral Bernard Nathan,[9] dolgoletni in zadnji predsednik Judovske skupnosti Opatija (*Comunità israelitica di Abbazia*), v nemško pisanem poročilu z naslovom *Die Geschichte der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde von Opatija*, ki ga je konec februarja 1964 predložil Zvezi judovskih skupnosti Jugoslavije in ga danes hrani Jevrejski istorijski muzej v Beogradu (Morgani 1979, 118–122; Simper 2009, 7–10).

Avstrijska delniška družba Südbahn-Gesellschaft je leta 1892 ustanovila klimatsko zdravilišče Opatija (Abbazia) in kmalu so se tam naselile prve judovske družine in posamezniki (Galles, Kadisch, Nathan, Szigeti). Prišli so poslovneži, urarji in zdravniki, da bi si ob Kvarnerskem zalivu ustvarili svojo prihodnost. V naslednjih letih se je število Judov povečevalo skladno z večanjem pretoka tujcev in razvojem zdravilišča. Dolga leta ni bilo nobenih srečanj, saj niso ustanovili nobenega judovskega združenja. Sosednje mesto Reka je imelo judovsko skupnost, vendar niso mogli sprejemati judovskih članov iz Opatije, saj je bila Reka takrat pod madžarsko upravo, Opatija pa v okviru dežele Istre, torej pod Avstrijo. Pravno gledano,

9 Bernard Nathan, sin Josipa in Josipine Hoffmann, rojen v Pecsu na Madžarskem, 15. novembra 1881, od leta 1892 je živel v Opatiji, po poklicu trgovec. Bil je lastnik podjetja in trgovine z oblačili in obutvijo v Opatiji, občinski svetovalec ter eden od ustanoviteljev Judovske skupnosti Opatija. Pokopan je bil leta 1968 na judovskem pokopališču v Opatiji (Bon 2004, 47–48; Simper 2015, 487–488).

so torej Judje iz Opatije spadali pod jurisdikcijo tržaške judovske občine, je pa državno namestništvo v Trstu že leta 1911 potrdilo ustanovitev Društva za promocijo izraelske verske skupnosti v Opatiji (nem. *Verein zur Förderung einer israelitischen Kultusgemeinde in Abbazia*). Postopki za upravno osamosvojitev so sicer stekli že junija 1914, toda zaradi prve svetovne vojne so Judje v Opatiji svojo versko občino (*Comunità israelitica di Abbazia*) uradno ustanovili šele februarja 1923. Za prvega predsednika je bil izbran opatijski lekarnar Mihael Abraham Sternbach, za podpredsednika pa trgovec Bernard Nathan. Po Sternbachovi izselitvi na rodno Poljsko leta 1924 je prav Nathan prevzel vodilno vlogo v Opatiji, ki jo je opravljal do aretacije in fašistične internacije v juniju 1940 (Dukić 2006, 101–106; Morgani 1979, 117–123; Simper 2015, 499–501). Leta 1930 je bilo v Judovsko skupnost v Opatiji včlanjenih okrog 170 Judov, ki so imeli stalno bivališče v občini Opatija-Volosko. K njim smemo prišteti tudi številne judovske turiste, ki so sem prihajali na počitnice, predvsem zaradi mile klime, zdravilišč in turistične razvitosti območja (Bon 2004, 47). Toda znotraj te skupnosti je v začetku tridesetih let pogosto prihajalo do napetosti, predvsem zaradi večnih sporov med ortodoksnimi in reformiranimi Judi (AUCEI, FAUCI al 1933, busta 11, fasc. 35, Abbazia, 17. 1. 1933).

Reška judovska skupnost,[10] ustanovljena leta 1781, formalno in pravno razdeljena na dve občini – večinsko, t. i. reformirano ali neološko Judovsko občino Reka (*La Comunita israelitica di Fiume*) in številčno manjšo v okviru Ortodoksne judovske skupnosti na Reki (*L'Unione israelitica ortodossa di Fiume; L'Unione degli ebrei ortodossi di Fiume*) – je bila po novi fašistični zakonodaji o organizaciji judovskih občin po letu 1932 uradno združena v večinski Judovski skupnosti na Reki (*Comunita isrelitica di Fiume*). Na podlagi sporazuma med vladnim komisarjem omenjene reške judovske skupnosti in predstavniki nekdanje ortodoksne skupnosti aprila 1932 je bilo dogovorjeno preoblikovanje ortodoksne skupnosti v posebno sekcijo »Adath Ortodossa shel Kehal Israel« Judovske skupnosti

10 Judje na Reki (Fiume) se omenjajo od sredine 15. stoletja, v glavnem je šlo za trgovce iz Pesara in Ancone, ki so morda občasno stanovali na območju, ki se je imenovalo Ziecha (Zudecca, Giudecca). Sem so prihajali iz različnih dežel; iz Avstrije, Italije in Trsta. Reka je spadala v ogrsko polovico monarhije, zato so se v drugi polovici 19. stoletja sem priselili številni madžarski Judje. Govorili so italijansko, madžarsko in nemško. Število Judov na Reki se je po letu 1933 zmanjšalo in začelo se je izseljevanje, večinoma v ZDA, Anglijo in Palestino. Leta 1938 je živelo na Reki, vključno s pokrajino, 1783 Judov, predsednik občine je bil Erminio Klein, rabin pa Giuseppe Fran. Več o tem: Bon 2004; Morgani 1979; Simper 2018.

Reka, kar je znatno zmanjšalo njeno organizacijsko avtonomijo (Bon 2004, 47–50). Toda postavilo se je vprašanje verske oskrbe ortodoksnih vernikov ob Kvarnerju. Medtem je osrednje vodstvo judovskih skupnosti v Rimu predlagalo judovski občini na Reki ustrezen način rešitve rabinskega vprašanja. Ortodoksna skupnost, ki si je zgradila lastno, sicer manjšo sinagogo, je bila po zakonu podrejena celotni judovski skupnosti. Želela je imeti svojega rabina, a ker je skupnost že imela svojega glavnega rabina, je lahko prišel v poštev le rabin II. stopnje. V dogovoru z vodstvom skupnosti so vprašanje rešili na naslednji način: rabin judovske skupnosti v Gorici, Abraham Schreiber, je želel zamenjati mesto, saj je tamkajšnja skupnost usihala. Tako so imenovali rabina Schreiberja za glavnega rabina (*Rabbino Capo*) v Opatiji, ki je sicer imela lastnega rabina Alexandra Sterna,[11] vendar so z njim pogosto prihajali v spore, očitali so mu finančne malverzacije in precejšnjo trmoglavost, zato so ga v začetku leta 1936 odpustili. Hkrati je rabin Schreiber opravljal tudi funkcijo rabina ortodoksne skupnosti na Reki, ki se je zbirala v manjši ortodoksni sinagogi, zgrajeni leta 1930.[12] Od reške skupnosti je prejemal 2/3 plače, v Opatiji pa so mu plačevali 1/3, kar je bilo zanje finančno ugodno. Rabin Schreiber je vsako soboto vodil obredje v Opatiji, ob velikih praznikih pa izmenično v Opatiji in na Reki (Bon 2005, 47–51; Rigano 2005, 141, 160; Falk 2012, 144; Simper 2015, 514–515).

Bernard Nathan je posebej poudaril, da je bil rabin Schreiber priznan talmudski učenjak, potomec rabinske družine Sofar, in je bil v Italiji zelo spoštovan. Govoril je italijansko, nemško, madžarsko in seveda sodobno hebrejščino. Zavedal pa se je relativne majhnosti in finančnih omejitev tamkajšnje judovske skupnosti:

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11 Alexander (Alessandro) Stern, rojen leta 1888 na Ogrskem, madžarski državljan, od marca 1928 do januarja 1936 rabin v Opatiji (Piattelli 2017). Zanimivo, da je bil prav Stern kandidat za mesto rabina v Gorici sredi leta 1925, vendar je to zavrnil, menda zaradi premajhne plače, ponujali so mu namreč tisoč lir na mesec (Cedarmas 1999, 76).

12 Omenjena sinagoga na Reki se je nahajala na tedanji ulici Via Galvani, danes je to Ulica Ivana Filipovića. Preživela je holokavst, saj je nacisti niso uničili, ker so jo uporabljali za skladišče streliva. Po vojni so nove jugoslovanske oblasti omenjeno sinagogo nacionalizirale, leta 1996 so jo obnovili in vrnili Judovski skupnosti na Reki, ki jo danes uporablja za svoje potrebe. Nacisti pa so januarja 1944 uničili veliko sinagogo na Reki, postavljeno leta 1903 po načrtih znanega madžarskega arhitekta Lipóta Baumhorna, ki jo je sicer uporabljala neološka judovska skupnost (Bon 2004, 35–42).

> Na ta način smo dosegli, da smo imeli za vodjo verske skupnosti vrednega rabina, česar prej ni bilo. Ker se je rabin Schreiber zavedal finančnega stanja, ni hotel sprejeti nobenega dodatnega dohodka. Na lastne stroške je potoval po Italiji, da bi zbiral denar za svojo skupnost. Z njim in prav tako zelo zaslužnim tajnikom Szegöm sem imel resnično podporo, zato sem z upanjem gledal v prihodnost skupnosti. (Simper 2015, 516)

Po odhodu rabina Schreiberja jeseni 1939 je tudi Opatija ostala brez lastnega rabina, na Reki pa je za ortodoksne vernike poslej skrbel rabin David Wachsberger, toda le do svoje internacije julija 1940. Številni tamkajšnji Judje so se sicer poskušali izseliti ali pobegniti v tujino. Tisti, ki jim to ni uspelo, so postali žrtve najprej fašističnega izključevanja in internacije ter zatem nacističnega preganjanja po septembru 1943.

V rimski centrali je maja 1946 nastal dokument, ki opisuje žalostno stanje italijanskega judovstva. Med izpraznjenimi mesti rabinov sta tudi Opatija in Reka, tedaj sicer že zasedeni z jugoslovansko upravo in v pričakovanju italijansko-jugoslovanske državne razmejitve na pariški mirovni konferenci. V omenjenem dokumentu najdemo tudi zapis o rabinu Schreiberju, ki »bi se moral vrniti« (ita. *dovrebbe tornare*) v Opatijo (AUCEI, FAUCI dal 1934, busta 32G, fasc. 1944–46, varie, 9. 5. 1946).

Epilog

Majhno število Judov, ki so po drugi svetovni vojni ostali na mejnem območju nekdanje Julijske krajine, danes na območju Hrvaške, Italije in Slovenije, je eden glavnih razlogov, da so bili, predvsem v slovenskem in hrvaškem zgodovinopisju, potisnjeni na rob zgodovinskega spomina in pozneje iz njega počasi skoraj povsem izrinjeni. Hkrati je treba priznati, da so tudi Judje in njihovi izobraženci, predvsem rabini, pomembno zaznamovali pokrajine med Sočo in Kvarnerskim zalivom. Delovanje rabina Abrahama Schreiberja v Gorici in v Opatiji ter na Reki je v dvajsetih in tridesetih letih 20. stoletja močno preseglo sicer številčno šibkost tamkajšnjega judovskega prebivalstva in hkrati poneslo njegov glas po svetu.

|

»Podatki, na katerih temelji ta članek, so bili zagotovljeni s strani [tretje osebe] na podlagi licence/dovoljenja. Podatki bodo na zahtevo posredovani avtorju članka z dovoljenjem [tretje osebe].«

Abraham (Sofer) Schreiber

(vir_makabijada.com)

Kratica

AUCEI L'Archivio Storico dell' Unione delle Comunita ebraiche Italina, Roma/Rim

Reference

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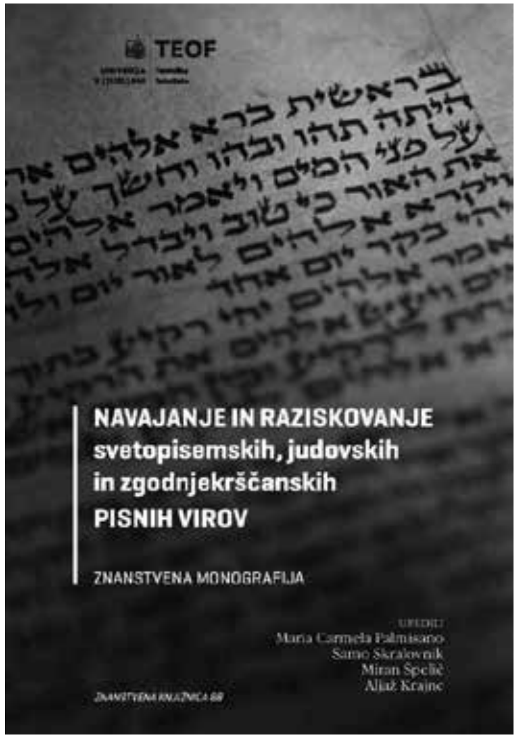

Znanstvena knjižnica 88

Maria Carmela Palmisano, Samo Skralovnik, Miran Špelič in Aljaž Krajnc (ur.)

Navajanje in raziskovanje svetopisemskih, judovskih in zgodnjekrščanskih pisnih virov

»Monografija prinaša resnično obsežno in temeljito raziskavo, ki pomeni novo raven v predstavitvi teh virov in njihovih zakonitosti slovenskim bralcem ter bo generacijam prihodnjih študentov močno olajšala prve korake pri delu z njimi. Zasnovana je na interdisciplinarnem pristopu, skupina avtorjev, ki se ponaša s širokim strokovnim zaledjem, ponuja izčrpen pregled različnih teorij in vidikov, hkrati pa z jasnim slogom pisanja omogoča razumevanje tudi začetnikom.«

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Piotr Kopiec

Ecumenical Lessons of History: the Polish Example

Ekumenske izkušnje iz zgodovine: poljski primer

Abstract: From its outset, the ecumenical movement struggled with a problem of memories, particularly concerning collective memories of nations. The first ecumenical gatherings had to bridge the wounds of remembrance of people who belonged to different and often hostile nations. Nevertheless, this early experience had helped elaborate teaching that later became a theological 'vaccine' for the following decades of ecumenical strivings. Ecumenism needs this vaccine, since existential and spiritual clashes of fidelity to Jesus's call to unity and loyalty to national identity still happen. The article aims to showcase the work of two Polish ecumenists who advocated for Christian unity and, at the same time, for reconciliation between Poland and its neighbours during the communist epoch. An extensive outline of the ecumenical theory on nationalism, nation, relationships between nations and the Church, and reconciliation among nations precedes the presentation.

Keywords: ecumenism, history, remembrance, reconciliation

Izvleček: *Od svojega začetka se je ekumensko gibanje soočalo s problemom spominov, zlasti kolektivnih spominov narodov. Prva ekumenska srečanja so morala premostiti spominske rane ljudi, ki so pripadali različnim in pogosto sovražnim narodom. Kljub temu je ta zgodnja izkušnja pomagala oblikovati nauk, ki je pozneje postal teološko »cepivo« za naslednja desetletja ekumenskih prizadevanj. Ekumenizem to cepivo potrebuje, saj se eksistencialna in duhovna trenja med zvestobo Jezusovemu klicu k edinosti in zvestobo narodni identiteti še vedno pojavljajo. Članek želi predstaviti delo dveh poljskih ekumenistov, ki sta si prizadevala za krščansko edinost in hkrati za spravo med Poljsko in njenimi sosedami v času komunistične dobe. Predstavitvi sledi obsežen oris ekumenske teorije o nacionalizmu, narodu, odnosih med narodi in Cerkvijo ter o spravi med narodi.*

Ključne besede: *ekumenizem, zgodovina, spomin, sprava*

Ecumenism is primarily about seeking visible unity among Christians. However, this general goal encompasses different methods, aspects and fields of involvement. It is reflected in adjectives employed to denote ecumenism, such as 'spiritual', 'doctrinal', 'social', 'practical', to name but a few. Years of ecumenical actions have showcased how difficult ecumenism is. Rather modest successes of doctrinal dialogues, new conflicts among Christians over ethical issues and the continuing politicisation of Christianity well bear out this opinion (Sonea 2023, 1).

History and historical experiences are among the most troublesome areas of ecumenical strivings. Different views on past experiences, cultures and ideas effectively hinder theological dialogue and thus ecumenical efforts. They are the more challenging, as they often concern national, ethnic, or group identities and lead to confrontation between the ecumenical vocation and identity belonging. From the very beginning, ecumenists have discerned this tension, particularly in two crucial moments in ecumenical history that occurred immediately after the two great wars. Hence, the origins of ecumenical organisations, such as the Life and Work movement and the World Council of Churches, have produced many prophetic documents on the nature of interdependencies among Christianity, nationality, and politics. Having been a fruit of shared theological reflection among Christians, often from nations hostile to each other, they still appear as a valuable source of peace in today's world.

However, ecumenism is not only a matter of agreements among official delegates of the Churches who produce theological documents. It is also a matter of the everyday life of many people who live by the conviction about the supreme value of Christian unity and who demonstrate how this value can change the history of nations and societies (World Council of Churches 2016, 17). Their work often remains hidden, or is known only to a tiny circle of professional historians who deal with the ecumenical movement. Like other countries, Poland has also had ecumenical heroes who, through their patient and arduous activities – often unappreciated and sometimes dangerous to them – overcame the boundaries of national, ethnic, and confessional identities to showcase ways of Christian reconciliation.

The article aims to showcase the work of two Polish ecumenists who advocated for Christian unity and, at the same time, for reconciliation between Poland and its neighbours during the communist epoch. It aims to emphasise their role, as already mentioned, which is often unknown, in the modern history of Poland and Central Europe. The presentation relies on excerpts from interviews conducted by the author. However, it is preceded by an extensive outline of the ecumenical theory on nationalism, nation, relationships between nations and the Church, and reconciliation among nations. Besides the interviews, literary analysis is the primary method employed in this article.

1 The ecumenical theory: between Christian universalism and national particularism

It may be trivial to reference the famous tenets of history by Ernst Troeltsch. However, as one of the leading representatives of Protestant liberal theology, he can be considered a good patron of an ecumenical view of history, especially since his consideration of history was formulated with theological purposes in mind. When discussing the method of scientific approach to history (criticism, analogy, correlation), the German theologian, therefore, argued that »all events in history constitute a stream in which each event is related to others; nothing may be isolated from the fabric of history, nothing may be taken out of context as absolute« (Reischle 1901, 267). Such a historical correlation helps discern lesser-known historical facts, apparently insignificant events, gestures or decisions that nonetheless turned out to be groundbreaking for history.

The history of the ecumenical movement provides many examples of this. Already during the preparatory meeting of the Life and Work movement in Geneva in 1920, one of the pioneering ecumenical organisations, came to a clash between French and German delegates: the former refused to participate unless the Germans confessed to guilt for starting the Great War, whereas the Germans were not eager to take full responsibility. A prophetic role was then played by Ernesto Giampiccoli, a delegate of the Waldensian Church from Italy, who said that, although he had lost his son because of the war, he was convinced that the conference would be an occasion for Christian love towards people from enemy nations. Next, he invited conference participants to say the Lord's Prayer together, emphasising the words »And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us«. Paul Bock, a historian of the ecumenical movement, wrote that Giampiccoli saved the young ecumenical movement from building itself on the rocks of nationalism (Bock 1974, 33).

Giampiccoli's utterance can be regarded as a motto for a future ecumenical approach to the idea of the nation. It was of special significance in the interwar period, when European countries were immersed in authoritarian (at least) political systems. The two early ecumenical organisations: the Life and Work and the Faith and Order had to challenge the results of prevailing nationalism and ongoing totalitarianisms, such as Nazism and communism. Interestingly, the consequences of nationalistic stances affected the ecumenical movement both externally and internally, as many theologians were not able to avoid thinking in terms of national belonging (Hugh 1962, 150).

Stockholm and other interwar ecumenical conferences (in Edinburgh, Lausanne, and Oxford) addressed many non-theological issues: poverty, the consequences of urbanisation and industrialisation, secularisation, education, and nationalism. In particular, the last gathering, held in 1937 under the shadow of an oncoming war, focused on the consequences of ideology and nationalism.

The conference's motto, *Let the Church Be the Church*, was supposed to draw attention to a conviction that the Church must not be merged with or entangled with any ideology; instead, she must be a critic of each secular world order. While observing increasing political tensions and conflicts among European countries, participants of the conference strove to develop a shared Christian theology of the state. The post-conference report confirmed the conviction that the state is a historical reality to which the highest authority in the political sphere is ascribed. However, on the other hand, the state is subordinated to the authority and will of God; it aims to uphold law and order and is called to serve the people living within its boundaries. Eventually, the state is not the ultimate source of the law; instead, it is a guard and advocate of the law given by God. For Christians, God is the supreme and ultimate authority (Bock 1974, 31).

Since the conference was taking place in the shadow of what was happening in Nazi Germany, much was said about the necessary boundaries between state and nation. The Life and Work members emphasised that the state and the nation must not be subjugated to one another. Nation, and, more precisely, one's belonging to a nation, ought to be regarded as God's gift to humans. Yet, concomitantly, they warned that, as with every gift, it can be misused or employed to render evil. Each sort of national egoism, which uses the idea of the nation to oppress other nations or national minorities living within the borders of a given national state, is a misuse of God's gift (Kopiec 2022, 8).

The *Life and Work* conference in Oxford took place in the shadow of the oncoming war. The beginning of the World Council of Churches occurred in the shadow of the war's consequences and, furthermore, in the face of an increasingly intense ideological clash between the capitalist West and the communist East. During the founding assembly held in Amsterdam in 1948, the theologians must have dealt with wounded post-war societies and nations hating each other.

Nevertheless, despite the fresh experiences of the horrific war, the idea of Christian universalism crossing national and cultural boundaries loudly reverberated during the meeting. It was manifested already by the words »the kingdom of the Son wider than nation, deeper still than race« (Visser't Hooft 1949, 22) from the hymn *Oikoumenikos* sung at the opening of the first plenary session. Such universalism was also reflected in the idea of a responsible society that prophetically emerged in the space of conflict between communism on the one hand and consumer capitalism on the other. The conference's delegates held that »man is created and called to be a free being, responsible to God and his neighbour. Any tendencies in State and society depriving man of the possibility of acting responsibly are a denial of God's intention for man and His work of salvation.« (Visser't Hooft 1949, 77)

The next WCC's assemblies followed the path of Christian universalism and a conditioning of national belonging marked out in Amsterdam and earlier, at the interwar ecumenical conferences. For example, during the first WCC assembly organised in 1975 in Nairobi, Africa, ecumenists listed disordered nationalism among the »structures that obscure the confession of Christ« and argued that »in our discussions with one another we were also sensitised to the fact that a kind of nationalism can develop which is a distortion of the legitimate search for cultural identity and can obscure our confession of Jesus Christ the Unifier«. (Paton 1976, 47)

The quotations above are merely samples of the WCC's teaching on nationalism and national idea. Actually, each of the eleven WCC's Assemblies referred to the issue of a contrast between Christian universalism and national particularism. However, the WCC is not a sole ecumenical organisation – it functions alongside other bodies, whether of international or national reach, such as the Conference of European Churches (CEC). This organisation, founded in 1959, gathers different Churches from Europe, representing Orthodox, Lutheran, Reformed, Old-Catholic and Anglican traditions; in addition, it strictly cooperates with the Catholic Council of Bishops' Conferences in Europe. Among many areas of involvement (theological dialogue, human rights, human work, cooperation with EU institutions, integrity of creation, just peace, and migration), the CEC, since its inception, has emphasised the Church's role in reconciliation among nations. Glen Garfield Williams, the organisation's first general secretary, mentioned that:

> The roots of the tree strike back to the last period of World War II, when, even before the dust of the last battle in Europe of that fearful conflict had settled, ecumenical efforts were under way to build bridges between churches of the former enemy nations. From a devastated Europe, with millions of stateless people on the move and the continent beginning to divide itself into eastern and western blocks, the process of reconciliation of peoples, churches and leaders became dominant. Who better to tackle such an issue than the Christian churches? Indeed could Christian warmth and fellowship bridge the gap which was beginning to unfold into the 'cold war'? (Gurney and Negro 2009, 11)

This quest for reconciliation is thus somewhat inherently ascribed to the Churches, and the CEC played a crucial role in reconciling post-war European countries. Here, it is worth mentioning the European Ecumenical Assemblies as among the most significant undertakings of the CEC (Basel 1989; Graz 1997; Sibiu 2007), which are now regarded by many as a pinnacle in European ecumenism. Especially the gathering in the Styrian capital that took place under the motto *Reconciliation: a Gift of God and a Source of New Life* (Noll and Vesper 1998, 331), concentrated on the theology of reconciliation in its many dimensions. It even worked out a hermeneutics of reconciliation, defining it comprehensively as a quest for visible unity among Christians, the reconciliation of nations, cultures, societies, genders, and finally, an internal reconciliation of each human being.

When specifying the theology of reconciliation, the Graz Assembly indicated some of its features. First, reconciliation must not omit justice and truth, and, as a consequence, it must not be reduced to a mere cheap tolerance that relativises the guilt committed. Second, laws relied on justice must be put in light of God's grace; otherwise, they can be mere instruments of political goals. Third, this Christian mercy is not an abstract idea; rather, it is mirrored in the intergenerational and intergender relationships of many Christian families and transmitted through history. Fourth, when seeking visible unity, the Churches must strike a balance between the two positions, in order to foster a more Christian culture on the one hand and avoid the instrumentalisation of religious differences on the other. Finally, reconciliation among nations, societies and cultures will be unfeasible without an existential reconciliation; it means, without coming to terms with the end of biological life, without a resignation from ensuring control on each aspect of human life, without a promotion of a sense of superiority and oppositions of winners and loser in societies (Noll and Vesper 1998, 331). Also, this last feature is an expression of Christian universalism.

The above-outlined excerpts from the reconciliation theory, created by large ecumenical organisations, can help envision what their teachings are on national and cultural particularisms and Christian universalism, as well as their role in building more peaceful and just relationships among different social entities. It also introduces a more detailed aspect of this teaching, that is, a reconciliation of memories.

2 Reconciliation of memories

Giampiccoli's words were about the consequences of nationalism and about reconciliation. Of course, reconciliation is a primary condition of each ecumenical action. Nevertheless, it also requires a patient and integrated work of historians and theologians to unveil the often almost forgotten causes of divisions, to purify remembrance of centuries of unjust opinions, stereotypes, and polemics, and to come to terms with different views on historical facts.

It seems, however, to be one of the most challenging fields of ecumenism, often because Churches are deeply tied to national ideas and are supposed to be strong advocates for national integrity and community. Born in the time of national Darwinism and unfolding despite a national imperative, the ecumenical movement created a model of approach that helped act beyond national particularisms, without rejecting the national identities of the people involved. It must be said, however, that building this model often occurred against their own nations and Churches. Reconciliation usually entailed confessing one's guilt and asking for forgiveness, even if one's own Churches and nations regarded such confessions as acts of treason. The reactions of German society at the time to the announcement of the Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt by the Evangelical Church in Germany clearly illustrate this.

In addition, reconciliation has diverse aspects, including reconciliation of remembrance or memories. This is a point at which an allegiance to confessional or national identity clashes especially strongly with Christian universalism. It has certainly not been a chief topic of the official ecumenical dialogues conducted by the Churches on a global level. Actually, among the sheer theological issues – such as the Trinity, sacraments, ecclesiology, Mariology, and controversies over ethical problems – a healing of memories is rarely addressed by official interchurch dialogues. Yet, some significant examples, such as the report *Called Together to Be Peacemakers* by the International Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Mennonite World Conference can be given. Unlike similar ecumenical agreements, this document focuses on historical ruptures and the hermeneutics of history (of course, sheer theological issues are addressed as well). Hence, both partners declared that the dialogue needs to contribute to healing memories and, thereby, to reconciliation between divided Christians.

A healing of memories encompasses several steps: a purification of memories, a call for a spirit of repentance, ascertainment of a shared Christian faith and an openness to move beyond past isolation and a readiness to begin new relationships. As this list suggests, a healing of memories is a comprehensive and cohesive program that occurs not only at the intellectual and conceptual level but also engages all dimensions of a Christian attitude. The primary condition for healing memories is a spiritual wish to be closer, which is in accordance with Christian love.

What does this program look like in detail? Purification of memories means first that

> past events and their circumstances need to be reconstructed as precisely as possible. We need to understand the mentalities, the conditions and the living dynamics in which these events took place. A purification of memory includes an effort to purge from personal and collective conscience all forms of resentment or violence left by the inheritance of the past on the basis of a new and rigorous historical-theological judgement, which becomes the foundation for a renewed moral way of acting. (*Called to be Together* 2007, 253)

This general definition, when addressing an example of the Catholic-Mennonite relationship, means taking concrete steps, such as a revision of the different and sometimes opposite views of the history of Christianity. For example, both sides of the dialogue discerned the facts of the history of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformation and the post-Reformation diffently, thereby reinforcing negative stereotypes and polemics. The document emphasises the significance of the Second Vatican Council and its readiness to acknowledge the culpability of Catholics as well.

Yet the purification of memories would be merely an intellectual act without a spirit of repentance. Both sides blatantly state that »when Christians are divided and live with hostility towards one another, it is the proclamation of the gospel that often suffers« (*Called to be Together* 2007, 255). Christians, both Catholics and Mennonites, have reasons to »ask God's forgiveness as well as forgiveness from each other« (*Called to be Together* 2007, 255). In this regard the Catholic side recalled the Day of Pardon, proclaimed by John Paul II during the Day of Pardon on March 12, 2000, and calling to a steadfast attitude of the Catholic Church to ask forgiveness for the sins of her members committed in the service of the truth and sins »which have harmed the unity of the church« (*Called to be Together* 2007, 256). The

Mennonite side acknowledged regretting »words and deeds that contributed to fracturing the body of Christ« (*Called to be Together* 2007, 257).

The third step is discovering and ascertaining what is in common. This is a conceptual foundation on which further relationships can be built. Catholic and Mennonite stress, for example, that the Christian's first responsibility is to praise God, to pray and read the Bible. Then the agreement lists other common elements: the faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (fully divine and fully human), the trinitarian faith as expressed in Apostle's Creed, numerous perspective on the church and her role on matters of mission, evangelism, peace and justice, life of discipleship, and finally, the situation of Christian faith in rapidly secularised world. Of course, the list of what is in common does not cancel existing differences.

The last step of the healing of memories program is a commitment to foster new relationships, including future cooperation. Without such a commitment, the program would remain merely a declaration.

Obviously, the above-presented healing of memories program refers to the interconfessional area. However, one can easily imagine that ecumenists, when equipped with the mandate to seek Christian unity, can transmit it to the sphere of reconciliation among nations.

3 Polish ecumenism and reconciliation

These earlier excerpts of ecumenical theory can be illustrated by living examples of people involved in ecumenism in Poland who not only dedicated their lives to Christian unity but also discerned that reconciliation among nations and confessions is inherently tied to the ecumenical mandate. At least the two introductory remarks can be formulated before their presentation. First, the beginnings of ecumenism in Poland were confined to small circles and leaders who understood the ecumenical imperative in Christianity, even though the confessional and social situation in Poland called its relevance into question. Second, Polish ecumenism was initiated and developed by the people of the borderlands, whether national, confessional, or cultural, by those for whom living between cultures and languages was a part of their upbringing.

It may be redundant to describe the historical process of ecumenism in Poland, as it is well documented and covered in numerous studies. Nevertheless, some selected information is needed to contextualise the presented persons. The official history of Polish ecumenism began in the interwar period, when Churches of different Protestant traditions, and later the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church, joined the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches. Nevertheless, this and other acts of the interwar ecumenical relationships in Poland were rather incidental and met with reluctance or indifference (Gastpary 1978, 35). The atrocities of World War II and the widespread persecutions of Churches imposed by communist authorities in the 1940s and 1950s left little place for interconfessional relationships. However, two moments of the post-war Poland were of high importance for Polish ecumenism: the founding of the Polish Ecumenical Council in 1946 (a body including Churches of Protestant, Orthodox and Old Catholic traditions) and the establishment of the Commission for Ecumenism of the Polish Bishops Conference in 1966 (Glaeser 2016, 31). Nevertheless, ecumenical institutions in Poland experienced many ruptures and difficulties and functioned in the shadow of the communist state control.

The aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, the pontificate of John Paul II and the collapse of communism have contributed to an ecumenical opening. Notably, the 1990s and 2000s were marked by ecumenical achievements, such as common declarations by churches in Poland on mutual recognition of baptism, interconfessional marriages, the integrity of creation, and the preservation of Sunday. Ecumenism became obvious and mainstream, though still contested by many vocal groups stemming from each tradition. On the other hand, it has still been a matter of appointed delegates, lacking grassroots enthusiasm and widespread interest. Nowadays, ecumenism in Poland is seeking to redefine its purposes and fields of activity. It also meets new challenges, such as secularisation of the vast part of the society, especially among younger generations on the one hand, and increasing confessional fundamentalism on the other. The Russian invasion of Ukraine, the consequences of migration and political polarisation bring about new frameworks for ecumenical work.

As already stated, Polish ecumenism has been a matter of tiny circles and leaders who were able to discern the significance of the ecumenical mandate (Żurek 2021, 5). Of course, it would be unfeasible to list them in this short paper. Nevertheless, the article wants to give voice to some of them, especially to those who linked a quest for Christian unity with reconciliation among nations. The interviews with them shed a new light on the history of the ecumenical contribution to the political and cultural relationships between Poland and its neighbours.

In the article, two ecumenist leaders will be summoned: Archbishop Alfons Nossol and Halina Bortnowska. In their work towards ecumenism, they made a significant contribution to post-war Polish-German reconciliation.

Even though this reconciliation was sometimes referred to as a reconciliation-kitsch (*Versöhnungskitsch*), and, according to many critics, it was still rather a wishful thinking, or merely a matter of only a part of the societies on both sides, it brought a great deal of memorable acts and achievements that have bridged both nations. Actually, when considering post-war experiences and memories of the war atrocities, this reconciliation was hardly imaginable. Yet, it became a matter of fact, at least to a certain degree, mainly due to the prophetic gestures and words.

Their best-known examples, though not specifically ecumenical, are the two famous documents issued in 1965: the Ost-Memorandum by the Evangelical Church in Germany and the Pastoral Letter of the Polish Bishops to their German Brothers, *We forgive and ask for forgiveness*. Both documents were groundbreaking and served as points of reference for the next steps in reconciliation (Muszyński 2016, 140). Both also became »canonical« texts for many other efforts at rapprochement between nations (it is worth noting that the Pastoral Letter is awaiting inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List). Finally, both entailed hysterical and hostile reactions in their countries, including accusations of treason. For Poles, the Pastoral Letter was also all the more critical as it was breaking a petrified approach perpetrator – victim and a view on Germans as 'natural' enemies (in accord with a famous saying from 17th century »as the world is, Germans and Poles will never be brothers«; by the way, these words were recently, in July 2025, cited by one of the Polish bishops during the sermon delivered at the Sanctuary of Our Lady in Częstochowa).

4 The living examples

Referenced ecumenists did not directly participate in the preparation of both documents. But they worked behind the scenes, earlier and later, relentlessly striving for Christian unity, and, concomitantly, for the Polish-German rapprochement.

4.1 Archbishop Alfons Nossol

Archbishop of Opole, Silesia, Alfons Nossol, is among the most famous advocates of ecumenism and reconciliation in Poland. The list of his works and achievements is too extensive to be presented, but it is worth mentioning that he was the founder of the Ecumenical Institute at the Catholic University of Lublin, the first such institution in Poland.

Having been born and grown up on the borderline between Poland, Germany and Czechia, he had experienced cultural and linguistic diversity as something natural. As a young vicar, he observed a post-war turmoil, departures of Germans and the arrival of the Polish population resettled from the Soviet Union. About the significance of his homeland, he confessed that:

> My life in Upper Silesia shaped me. Here, it was always extremely important to distinguish between otherness and foreignness. In Silesia, we enriched ourselves with this otherness. We benefited from the fact that many people from the Eastern borderlands came to Silesia with their own mentality, which was emotional and different from the more rational Western mentality. Silesia has always been a region of three cultures: Czech, Polish, and German. This is an extremely valuable asset. We tried to understand people in their otherness, and they felt as if they were in their own castle: understood, authentic, sincere, and only in this way could they achieve even greater humanisation, that is, greater happiness. This mutual complementarity essentially brings people closer together, but also leads to a personal deepening of the mystery of God. In order to accept otherness as a value, one must be open to the diversity and multidimensionality of human culture, thinking, and attitudes. We cannot reduce everything to a single path. What kind

> of God would it be if He were only accessible in a single line? (2018)

However, his approach to professional ecumenism began at the Catholic University of Lublin. When attending a doctoral course in Theology, he was asked by the then Rector of the University, Rev. Wincenty Granat, to elaborate on the Protestant position on given areas of the Dogmatics treatise (Granat was then preparing his famous handbook on Catholic Dogmatics and decided to include Protestant and Orthodox perspectives). Nossol got in touch with Protestant theologians from Western Germany and thereby initiated a more intensive cooperation with them, including their travel to Poland. However, such arrivals were extremely difficult to organise at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s. As a place where a network of theological friendships transcended national and confessional borders, the Catholic University of Lublin became one of the first steps toward reconciliation between Poland and Germany.

As mentioned earlier, 1965 was a groundbreaking year in the history of this reconciliation, when *Ostmemorandum* and *Reconciliation letter* were issued. Nossol, being 'inside' this exchange of acts, said:

> The Reconciliation letter of 1965 was preceded by the Memorandum of the Evangelical Church in Germany, which emphasised that Germany must finally officially recognise the borders on the Oder and Neisse rivers. It also contributed significantly to the subsequent exchange of letters between Roman Catholic bishops from Poland and Germany. West Germany did not want to recognise the border on the Oder and Neisse rivers politically, leaving it to a peace agreement, and so the Polish side continued to wait. The Evangelical Church in Germany clearly emphasised in its Memorandum that this was the most concrete way to achieve mutual rapprochement. Therefore, the Catholic Church wanted, in a sense, to help settle this international issue of definitively establishing the western border, leading to stable peace. Here, however, the Polish episcopate miscalculated somewhat, because the German Catholic episcopate was not so decisive, saying that they should not interfere in politics and that it was not their business.

> It was considered that it was necessary to wait for a peace conference to settle the matter. (2018)

When he began his duties as a bishop of Opole and a professor at the Catholic University of Lublin, for years Nossol worked patiently and tirelessly for reconciliation between Poland and Germany, as well as for developing ecumenical relationships. Often his labour was not understood and was harshly criticised, not only by the communist authorities, but even by some more conservative Polish bishops. His professional life abounded with unexpected moments when his decisions impacted the history of global ecumenism, such as an acute reaction of Protestant delegates to the announcement of the Declaration *Dominus Iesus*.

> I remember what happened when the Declaration was published. For 17 years, I was a member of the Commission for Dialogue with Lutherans. At that time, we had a plenary session near Rome. When the news of its publication reached the Lutherans, they decided that the dialogue should be suspended. Together with Cardinal Walter Kasper, who was the chairman of this body before me, before he became the head of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, we tried to convince them to first look at the text of the declaration together. At the time, there was a danger that if we began to interpret some of its provisions in a restrictive manner, ecumenism could face a difficult future.
>
> Yet, it was not easy. Cardinal Walter Kasper took a rather general approach to the issue and was met with outrage from the Lutherans, who felt that he was dictating terms to them. I tried to approach the problem from a broader perspective and give it a more anthropological focus: auf den Einzelnen bringen. My assumption was that conflict would lead nowhere and that we had to stop our brothers at all costs! I suggested that we calmly analyse the text of the declaration together, and then, if the Lutheran part of the commission decided to leave, we would interrupt the proceedings. I undertook to discuss the most contentious and sensitive issues with Cardinal Ratzinger, whom I have known for many years. Thus, we managed to cool down the emotions somewhat. (Nossol 2018)

The twilight of communism in Poland and the first years after the political change marked a period of profound social transformation. The Polish society experienced ideological pluralism, often leading to relativist chaos on the one hand, and increasing economic and social exclusion on the other. In his diocese, in which the largest population of people of German origin lived, Nossol has built the Church socially and ecumenically involved and respecting national identities. He also consequently advocated for reconciliation among Poles and Germans. He again found himself in big politics in 1989 in Krzyżowa (Kreisau) in Lower Silesia, a place symbolic in the history of German resistance against the Nazis, when the Reconciliation Mass was celebrated, in which the then German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki participated. During the Mass, both politicians shook their hands when the celebrant said the traditional formula »give each other the sign of peace«. It was another sign of reconciliation, facilitating difficult discussions before the German reunification in 1990. When recalling this day, Nossol said:

> The tension in Krzyżowa was palpable. A distinguished elderly gentleman approached me and suggested that I omit the liturgical sign of peace so as not to put Prime Minister Mazowiecki or Chancellor Kohl in an awkward situation. It was then that I realised the power of this gesture. I replied that it was part of the liturgy and could not be omitted. There was another attempt by a young man, well-trained in philosophy, who stated that every rule has exceptions. I replied that he could contact the Holy See and possibly ask for permission to apply an exception. He laughed a little diabolically and walked away. There was no exception, but there was blessed restraint.
>
> I saw the event in Krzyżowa as a unique opportunity in the process of Polish-German reconciliation. I thought to myself: occasio nobis data est. There is an opportunity to shake hands, to engage in dialogue, to break down stereotypes and mounting mutual prejudices. It was also a good opportunity to help the inhabitants of Silesia in some way, to call for equal opportunities for them and respect for their cultural and confessional diversity. At the time, I was unable to grasp all this so clearly. I know one thing: ecumenism helped me in this matter and opened me up to a greater

> and broader concept of humanity, without ideological or political constraints. I knew it would not be easy. The night after Krzyżowa, a message appeared in large letters on the bishop's curia: »Nossol to Berlin – get out!« I thought, »Let it be«, but worse still, it was also written on the church wall in my hometown. My loved ones suffered, and that was more painful. And then someone added to these inscriptions: »German medicine for Polish hospitals.« Sometimes I think that's how it has to be. You can't treat everything so deadly seriously, because then you won't get much done. (2018)

Focusing on the ecumenical impact on reconciliation among nations, this short summary of the unpublished interview with the archbishop can be concluded with his ecumenical testament about the ultimate purpose of Christianity. It also reflects the whole life of the Silesian bishop for whom dialogue and reconciliation have been an inherent commitment of the Christian mission to the world:

> Christianity, by its very nature, should integrate. It should bring all people together, regardless of their religious beliefs or national and social affiliations. After all, we all have the same anthropological goal: to permanently enrich the human being internally. And this happens when we open ourselves to transcendence. And the goal of all authentic transcendence is, sooner or later, God. I would like to refer to the thought of John Paul II from his programmatic encyclical *Redemptor hominis*, that the shortest path to God for a human being is another human being, every human being. (Nossol 2018)

4.2 Halina Bortowska

For Halina Bortnowska, the next interviewed ecumenist, reconciliation with Germans was not merely an additional activity stemming from the ecumenical mission; rather, it was an existential source of her ecumenical involvement. A renowned Polish intellectual, long-time journalist of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak*, two of the most important centres of an independent thought in communist Poland, an Observer in the Second Vatican Council and in the General Assemblies of the World Council of Churches, Bortnowska critically and creatively reported the situation in the Polish society and Christianity, striving steadfastly for the Church more open to the challenges of modernity and more ecumenical.

> My life is difficult to describe because it is very chaotic. Today, I find it difficult to follow these paths because it all happened somewhat by accident. One of the beginnings of my ecumenical awareness and a very lasting pillar was the feeling that cooperation between two countries, Poland and the GDR, was necessary. I do not promote the term 'Iron Curtain', even though it was widely used at the time, because I am aware of how porous it was and how well we managed to organise things in spite of the 'curtain', or simply by ignoring it. This is even a better term, because 'in spite of' would mean that we were fighting something, and we were merely trying to do our job. This involved lively contact with East Germans at a time when Poland was full of contempt for that country. The existence of the curtain could have fostered mistrust that those who had crossed it had paid for it in some way. Personal acquaintance was very important, as it enabled people to overcome this mistrust. When navigating this ecumenical network, or being at its main hubs, it was always about getting to know people so that we could trust each other, gain something from it, and be sure that nothing unnecessary would be taken away, that we could be trusted, and we could trust others. (Bortnowska 2018)

Having been deported as a child to Germany during World War II, she very early met with the German language and ambivalence of the attitudes in the German society. Despite the cruelty of the war, she had never hated the Germans; on the contrary, she accentuated good memories from this time:

> It helped me that I met people who demonstrated a 'disarming' attitude. Germans, as well as Poles in Germany, forced labourers had been there for a long time, had settled in and were particularly concerned about the fate of children. After returning to Poland, I could only dream of such good food as there. Our guardian, a gardener from a tannery, was able to bring us grapes. And he demanded underwear, shoes, and warm clothes for us from the Germans, because we had nothing. The kindness of people, including the

> Germans, whom I met, helped me a lot. The Germans, who were hungry themselves because times were very hard then, would throw us a piece of bread or a tomato wrapped in paper through the fence, and their behaviour meant a lot to us. When we went to town, someone gave us a bread card, and the priest in the church told them to make room for us. We were ashamed to sit down, lest they catch lice from us, but the priest ordered it, so they made a decent place for us. (Bortnowska 2018)

Studying philosophy in the best Polish universities (such as in Toruń and Lublin, where she met Karol Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II), and abroad, in the Netherlands, knowing the most influential Catholic intellectuals of that time, an excellent fluency in several languages, all that helped her to become an efficient ecumenical 'influencer' of that time. Her ecumenical commitment overlapped, however, with an intensive activity for the sake of reconciliation. Actually, her personal story illustrated how interconfessional and ecumenical bodies have contributed to building bridges among earlier hostile nations. When acting ecumenically, she met with people and circles that went down in the history of the resistance against communist regimes in Europe and sought rapprochement among nations and societies. She said:

> The topic of reconciliation appeared on the initiative of Germans, because our primary contact was the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (*Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*), but we only took it seriously after some time. At first, they wrote us tender letters in German, and no one responded to them. Not even in Tygodnik Powszechny. When they tried to write to us in Polish, it bore fruit. We started corresponding with them, then they appeared in person, and we became very good friends. The centre was Berlin, and then, for example, Merseburg. Eastern Germany became one of my small homelands, and I was involved in very lively contacts with this country. My presence in that environment was connected to the fact that we had entered into an entire ecumenical network covering parts of Germany, and were also in direct contact with the World Council of Churches. We were partners there and participated in the programs designed there. The people from there had the main initiative, although the WCC also played a part, because one

> of its prominent leaders, Thomas Wieser, was appointed curator of what was beginning to happen between Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. We had small but quite significant groups of partners from these countries, and we organised meetings using what and where we were allowed to. In Poland, it was possible to arrange meetings without telling anyone, by making arrangements with a farmer's wife, who was rewarded with work in the meadow somewhere in the Tatra mountains. In Prague, it was possible to use their network, a fairly energetic structure composed of highly educated and very dedicated people, most of whom were associated with Charta 77. It was very closely related to what continues to this day as a semi-official Catholic Church in the Czech Republic. The Czech Brethren also participated in our ecumenical group and work; and everything was rather a free Church, some of whose members had spent several years in prison. To this day, I try to find out what is going on there, and so far, they do not wish to talk about it. We met for a few years, and we feel that we have never really stopped being connected to these people with whom we shaped our lives and our future. (2018)

This excerpt from the interview, when recalling the names of the well-known movements and institutions and simultaneously tying them with ordinary, weekday details, tells much about the scope of overlapping ecumenical involvement and a quest for reconciliation. Hanna Bortnowska (like Alfons Nossol, and many others who could not be referred to in this article due to its limits) were the living example and witness of such a spiritual, intellectual and existential permeation.

To conclude, it would be best to recall Bortnowska's confession about ecumenism:

> I experience the question of ecumenism a bit like drivers do. Anyone who has driven a small Fiat and then switches to a bus feels strange, as if they had a much larger body and had to fit into the bus. We had the feeling that our Christianity had taken on such a form that we must always try to fit it in its entirety. It is a feeling that this is not a relationship between the first and the second, but that this is what existence is all about. This relationship is much

> simpler, deeper, and more natural than any agreement. It is a completely different experience of ecumenism than treating it as inter-church negotiations. We had no right to conduct them; they were always interpersonal matters, although we used inter-church agreements because they are a kind of basis. (2018)

Conclusion

From its outset, the ecumenical movement struggled with a problem of memories, particularly concerning collective memories of nations. The first ecumenical gatherings had to come through over the wounds of remembrance of people who belonged to different, and often hostile, nations. Nevertheless, this early experience had helped to elaborate teaching that later became a theological vaccine for the following decades of ecumenical strivings. Of course, ecumenism still needs this vaccine, since existential and spiritual clashes of fidelity to Jesus's call »may they all be one« and loyalty to national identity will certainly happen. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and its interconfessional aftermath prove this observation well.

However, ecumenism is called to go beyond national and historical particularities, somehow by default. Presented above are excerpts from the ecumenical theory as well as ecumenical witnesses recorded in the interviews, demonstrating the often prophetic role played by ecumenical leaders, by people who were not afraid to sacrifice their loyalty to the nation for the sake of ecumenical purposes. Sometimes, their decision was manifested by small gestures and words; other times, by more spectacular appearances. However, irrespective of this, they have created an ecumenical paradigm that discerns that the quest for Christian unity offers efficient (maybe the most efficient) methods, concepts, and motivations for the reconciliation of nations.

No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.
Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.

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The Catholic Perspective on Social Communication in the Pontificate of John Paul II

Katoliški pogled na družbeno komuniciranje v pontifikatu Janeza Pavla II.

Abstract: This study explores the social teaching of the Catholic Church on communication during the pontificate of John Paul II, placing it within the broader historical development of Christian reflection on the media. It analyses key magisterial documents – encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, World Communications Day messages, and texts from the Pontifical Council for Social Communications – highlighting how media serve the human person and the common good when guided by truth, ethics, and dignity. The study addresses major themes such as the meaning of media in society, ethical challenges, principles of Christian communication, the digital revolution, the theological-pastoral foundation of communication, and the need for integrated pastoral planning. It emphasizes the importance of responsible media use, digital formation, cultural dialogue, and inclusive participation. While centred on the contributions of John Paul II, this study is intended to complement prior analyses of other pontificates and invites further research on communication and digitalization during the pontificate of Pope Francis.

Keywords: John Paul II, Christian social thought, practical theology, media, digital culture

Izvleček: *Študija obravnava družbeni nauk Katoliške cerkve o komuniciranju v času pontifikata Janeza Pavla II. ter ga umešča v širši zgodovinski razvoj krščanskega razmišljanja o medijih. Analizira temeljne cerkvene dokumente – okrožnice, apostolske spodbude, poslanice ob svetovnem dnevu sredstev družbenega obveščanja in besedila Papeškega sveta za družbeno komuniciranje – ter izpostavlja, kako mediji služijo človeku in skupnemu dobremu, kadar jih vodijo resnica, etika in človeško dostojanstvo. Študija se osredotoča na glavne teme, kot so pomen medijev v družbi, etični izzivi, načela krščanskega komuniciranja, digitalna revolucija, teološko-pastoralni temelji komuniciranja in potreba po celostnem pastoralnem načrtovanju. Poudarja pomen odgovorne uporabe medijev, digitalne vzgoje, kulturnega dialoga in vključujočega sodelovanja. Čeprav se osredinja na prispevek Janeza Pavla II., želi študija dopolniti prejšnje analize drugih pontifikatov in spodbuditi nadaljnje raziskovanje o komuniciranju in digitalizaciji v času papeža Frančiška.*

Ključne besede: *Janez Pavel II., krščanski družbeni nauk, praktična teologija, mediji, digitalna kultura*

Introduction

The first Magisterium document reflecting on the media is Encyclical *Vigilanti Cura*, which focuses on the cinema and examines its positive and negative consequences (Pius XI 1936). Subsequently, the Encyclical *Mirandi Prorsus* addresses the mass media, considering their potential to contribute to truth and the common good (Pius XII 1957). This was the beginning to the reflection of the Catholic Church on social communication. Later, the Vatican II paves the way for a public, moral, and pastoral theology of communication. In fact, the Ecumenical Council introduced the subject of social communication with the Decree *Inter Mirifica*, which announced the world communications day messages to reflect on communication from a Christian perspective (Second Vatican Council 1963). Hence, the first World Communications Day Message launched the preparation of a Pastoral Instruction on communication, entitled *Communio et Progressio*, which established the theological, doctrinal and pastoral principles that would be developed in successive ecclesial documents (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1971).

Various official documents in the Pontificate of Pope Paul VI explored the relevance of communication in the contemporary world, the role of the media in society, the right to information and to public opinion, the place of the media in education, the formation of communicators and receivers, the ways in which the Church conceives the media, and the participation of Catholics in the media (Sánchez-Camacho 2024, 226). The ecclesial documents of this pontificate, especially the *Decree* of the Council, the *Pastoral Instruction on Communication* and the messages of the World Communications Day, indicate that the principles of Christian communication are theologically rooted in the communication of the Trinitarian mystery. It has important implications for communion, dignity of the person, right and plurality of information, common good, welfare society, educational sector, family, teaching of communication, evangelization of the Church, Catholic communicators, religious information, and pastoral plans for communication which includes communication offices (Sánchez-Camacho 2024, 226–227).

In order to advance in this line of research, and to further complement another study carried out on communication in the magisterium of Benedict XVI (Sánchez-Camacho 2022), this article explores the ecclesial documents published during the pontificate of John Paul II (1978–2005), in which the subject of communication is addressed.[1] For this reason, the primary sources of research are the encyclicals, the apostolic exhortations, the messages of the World Communications Day, and the documents of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications. Although there has been insufficient research on the teachings of the Church on mass media in John Paul II pontificate, a quantitative study revealed that in the last decade of the papacy (1995–2005), there was an unusually high production of documents focusing extensively on the media (Michele Martini 2022). For this reason, it is convenient to carry out a qualitative analysis that interprets the contents of the teaching of the Church in the field of communication during such pontificate.

This study not only aims to delve into the perspective of the Church on communication, but also to explore the documents analysed from the social, technological, and religious context, inferring their ethical consequences. The study seeks to answer several research questions about the relationship between social doctrine and communication during the pontificate of John Paul II: What is the role and significance of the media in contemporary society? What are the main challenges facing communication today? How can Christian ethical principles influence media practices and the ethical use of the Internet? How does the theological pastoral care of communication address the opportunities and challenges that the Internet presents for ecclesial life? Finally, how can the Church design and implement a comprehensive pastoral plan for social communications? To this end, firstly, the study presents the meaning of the media for society. Secondly, the main challenges of communication in society are explored. Subsequently, principles of Christian ethics in the media and the ethical dimension of the Internet are examined. In addition, the theological pastoral care of communication is introduced with the opportunities and challenges of the Internet for ecclesial life. Finally, the study explores

1 Other publications, from different perspectives and approaches, have also studied the impact of the media on Catholic social thought (Javier María Pascual 1976; Arasa, 2012; José María Díaz Dorronsoro 2022; José María Díaz Dorronsoro 2022; Michele Martini 2022; Alessandra Vitullo and Mastrofini 2023).

how to develop a comprehensive pastoral plan for social communications in the Church.

The meaning of the media for society: at the service of the humans and the common good

Since newspapers, radio, television, and cinema emerged as mass media, communication has played a crucial role in enhancing our understanding of global events (McQuail 1987). The media plays a key role in reporting events and influencing public opinion on social, political, and cultural matters (Webster 1995). In the last century, mass media brought about a fundamental change in the lives of people. As *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture* states, »the advent of the information society is a real cultural revolution« (Pontifical Council for Culture 1999, no. 9). The media are so imbricated in the daily lives of people that they influence the way of understanding the meaning of life itself (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 4). Similarly, the media are capable of creating unity and progress in the human family (John Paul II 1991b).

The teaching of the Church believes that the modern equivalent of the Areopagus is the world of communication, which is bringing humanity together into what is often called a global village. Social communication channels have become so influential that, for many, they serve as the primary source of information, education, guidance, and inspiration, shaping their personal lives, family interactions, and role in society (John Paul II 1990, no. 37). In that context, faith and culture are meant to converge and engage with one another, particularly within the realm of communications. In fact, »culture itself is communication«, making the media a powerful bridge not only for connecting people but also for fostering dialogue between faith and culture (1984, no. 2.6).

However, while the media can promote unity and understanding, they can also be used to spread »divisive ideologies and distorted perspectives on life, family, religion, and morality«, potentially threatening human dignity and destiny (John Paul II 1981a, no. 76). In this regard, media professionals have the power to dismantle barriers of hostility that separate individuals and nations, diminishing misunderstanding and mistrust (2005, no. 5). That is why the media should play a role in fostering »the integral development of the person which embraces the cultural, transcendent and religious dimensions of man and society« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 7).

According to the perspective of the Church, the question of how the media is used is becoming increasingly crucial, particularly in the hands of those who shape its structures, policies, and content – corporate executives, governing board members, owners, publishers, station managers, editors, news directors, producers, writers, correspondents, and even the audiences themselves, including viewers, listeners, and readers (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 1). In an era of transition from mass media to digital culture, depending on how they use the media, people can grow in sympathy and compassion or become isolated in a narcissistic, self-referential world.[2] Thus, the contents of the world of communication can »range from hard news to pure entertainment, prayer to pornography, contemplation to violence« (no. 2).

In an era of rapid communication, it is essential to ensure that information is guided by truth, ethical reflection, and human dignity. In that sense, »the Church's culture of wisdom« provides a moral framework that prevents media from becoming merely a collection of facts, instead transforming information into meaningful knowledge that serves the common good (John Paul II 1999a, no. 3). That is why the media are called to serve human dignity by encouraging people »to be conscious of their dignity, enter into the thoughts and feelings of others, cultivate a sense of mutual responsibility, and grow in personal freedom, in respect for others' freedom, and in the capacity for dialogue« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 6).

2 The pontificate of John Paul II was marked by the mass media characteristic of the information society and electronic communication such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television and cinema. At that time, citizens were beginning to make their own non-professional sound recordings and videos. The Pontiff defines videocassettes and audiocassettes as follows: »[They] are truly remarkable gifts of God to our times, making it possible for us to conserve and easily transport.« (John Paul II 1993) In fact, it was also the beginning of Internet communication, which was able to redefine the communication industry.

Principal challenges of communication in society

Social communication brings economic, political, cultural, educational and religious both benefits and challenges (Webster 1995). Furthermore, digital networks are shaping a new framework for social interaction and communication (Castells 1996), and with the rise of the Internet, the media has revolutionized its practices, industry, and impact on citizens through the use of digital technology (Thorburn and Jenkins, 2003). According to the Catholic teaching on communication in the Pontificate of John Paul II, these are the main challenges in the issue of media:

a) *The media in the economy: serving human development or reinforcing the neoliberal system?*

In the economic field, the social doctrine of Catholic thought during the pontificate of John Paul II notes that the media can serve the humans by supporting businesses, stimulating economic growth, creating employment opportunities, and promoting prosperity. They can also encourage improvements in the quality of goods and services, foster responsible competition for the public good, and empower citizens to make well-informed choices. However, in some cases, the media are used to sustain the neoliberal economic system, prioritizing greed and profit over social responsibility. This fails to prevent the gap between the »information rich« and the »information poor« at a time when access to information is crucial for both prosperity and survival (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 7.14).

b) *The political power of the media: ally of democracy or instrument of control?*

In the political area, Catholic thought during this pontificate focuses on the issue that the media can benefit society by supporting democracy, providing citizens with access to information, encouraging public participation in the political process, enabling leaders to communicate with the people, and ensuring transparency by holding those in power accountable (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 8). However, some politicians misuse the media to manipulate public opinion, spread false information, and justify unjust policies or oppressive regimes, using propaganda to distort the truth and create social tensions. Even in democratic countries, the media can be exploited to influence public opinion in favour of policies that oppress certain groups and violate fundamental rights (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 15). That is why professionals in social communication have a duty to shape and share public opinion based on truth and the common good (John Paul II 1986, no. 5), as misinformation can have serious consequences, including threats to the right to life.[3]

c) *The influence of media on culture: artistic flourishing or cultural decline?*

In the cultural sphere, the social doctrine of communication argues that the media can contribute to the common good by offering people access to literature, drama, music, and art, as well as by preserving and enriching the cultural heritage of nations and promoting human development (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 9). However, the media sometimes succumb to superficiality and degradation, such as sexuality and violence.[4] Similarly, the media sometimes distort the true meaning of family or portray family life in a misleading way. Nevertheless, when used responsibly, the media can also be a valuable source of cultural enrichment for families (John Paul II 1980).[5] In addition, on a global scale, the media often impose cultural dominance by prioritizing certain

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3 Therefore, Christians should distinguish themselves by promoting justice, peace, fraternity, and moral values, in order to build the Kingdom of God founded on truth, justice, and peace (John Paul II 1986, no. 5). In connection with the right to life, the document on ethics in communication states that often »the media popularize the ethical relativism and utilitarianism that underlie today's culture of death« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 15). In this regard, the Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* adds that the media often support a culture that portrays contraception, sterilization, abortion, and euthanasia as symbols of progress and freedom, while labeling pro-life positions as contrary to progress (John Paul II, 1995a, no.17). The Encyclical notes that it is often difficult to recognize the signs of the culture of life in society because they do not receive sufficient attention in the media (John Paul II 1995a, no. 26).

4 Media's inadequate portrayal of realities such as infidelity, sexual activity outside marriage and the absence of a moral and spiritual vision is often a subject of criticism. The Church tries to encourage a realistic and sympathetic presentation of the family in the media, highlighting not only the failures and disappointments of marriages, but also the virtues that are manifested in love, fidelity, forgiveness and the generous giving of oneself for others (John Paul II 2004, no. 3). According to the teaching of the Church, parents also need to regulate the use of media at home. This should include planning and scheduling media use, strictly limiting the time children devote to media, making entertainment a family experience, putting certain media entirely off limits and periodically excluding all of them for the sake of other family activities (no. 5). It is important to consider that »pornography and sadistic violence debase sexuality, corrode human relationships, exploit individuals – especially women and young people, undermine marriage and family life, foster anti-social behavior and weaken the moral fibre of society itself« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 1989b, no. 16).

5 To avoid the risks of the media and to make them a benefit to the family, parents can educate themselves and their children, choose programs wisely, and critically evaluate their content, since with proper control, media becomes a tool for positive growth rather than a risk (John Paul II, 1980). Specifically, television can enrich family life, but it can also harm it, when programs are not morally

perspectives while excluding traditional cultural expressions, particularly those from less developed countries (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 16).[6]

d) *The educational role of media: developing knowledge, freedom, and responsibility*

In the field of education, in accordance with Christian social teaching on communication, the media play an important educational tool throughout life, from school to the workplace (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 10). However, they can sometimes distract us from learning or be used for indoctrination, limiting access to information and restricting knowledge. In such cases, instead of expanding knowledge and capabilities, the media serve an ideology, narrowing human horizons (no. 17). Social communications should protect children and promote their best interests in both family and society (John Paul II 1979c). The media can also help young people develop their vocation as individuals and Christians through a free and responsible choice, preparing them to be future leaders (1985). Additionally, women play a key role in advocating for better representation in the media by promoting solid media education programs, raising awareness of the dignity of women, and recognizing their role in both media and society (1996a).

e) *Media and faith: navigating dialogue, misrepresentation, and understanding*

In the religious context, the media play a crucial role in bringing religious life to many people by sharing news about events, ideas, and religious figures. In the Catholic Church, they serve as tools for evangelization, catechesis, spirituality, and prayer (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 11; John Paul II 1979a, no. 46). However, tensions exist between the media and religion. The media may ignore

objectionable. In this regard, television channels, whether publicly or privately managed, must »exist to serve the well-being of society as a whole« (John Paul II, 1994).

6 Today, the spiral of silence theory, which explains how public opinion is shaped by the fear of isolation that people experience, presents a significant challenge (Noelle-Neumann, 1984). The Pastoral Instruction *Aetatis Novae* explains that many people perceive reality based on what the media acknowledges. This means that when the media ignores certain individuals or groups – such as the voice of the Gospel – they can be effectively silenced, preventing their message from reaching society (Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 1992, no. 4).

or marginalize religious ideas, misrepresent faith, promote certain religious trends while undervaluing traditions, treat religious groups with hostility, or assess religious experiences through secular lenses, favouring rationalism and scepticism. On the other hand, religious institutions may view the media negatively, misunderstand journalistic objectivity, present messages manipulatively, use media for control, practice unnecessary secrecy, downplay the call to conversion, or foster fundamentalism and exclusivism, leading to hostility toward others (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 18).

Principles of Christian ethics in the media

Technological advances are improving everyday life, but their misuse can have unintended consequences. It is therefore crucial to analyse the potential impact of new technologies as they evolve, evaluate their applications and make informed decisions about their adoption and use (Moor 2005). This is the focus of information and communication ethics (Capurro 2005), which in recent years has begun to explore the ethical aspects of technology from a variety of perspectives (Anderson and Anderson 2011), also from a Christian ethical perspective (Campbell and Garner 2016). The nature of the social doctrine of the Church, having as its source Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Fathers, theologians and the Magisterium, formulates permanent ethical principles to be applied in the field of communication.[7]

7 The principles of the teaching of the Church are as follows: dignity of the human person, based on the fact that he or she is created in the image and likeness of God and elevated to the transcendent end of life; human rights, which have philosophical and theological foundations and legal, social, political and ethical implications, and are inscribed by the Creator in human nature; the person-society relationship, because of the intrinsically social nature of human beings; the common good, which is the social conditions that favour the full development of the person; solidarity, which goes beyond any mere individualistic conception; subsidiarity, which protects intermediate groups from the danger of losing their legitimate autonomy; the organic conception of social life, which, starting from the family, reaches up to supranational bodies and the universal society of all peoples; the participation, in a just, proportionate and responsible manner, of all members and sectors of society; the human structures and community of persons, in accordance with the development of true humanism; and the universal destination of goods, since the riches of the earth are destined for the use of all in an equitable way (Aparicio Malo 2015, 30–34).

Is the human person becoming better because of the media?[8] In the face of the trend of replacing human interaction with greater use of the media, it should »stimulate interpersonal communication rather than substituting for it« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 7). According to the social doctrine, it is necessary that all who employ the media must be acquainted with the norms of morality and conscientiously put them into practice (Second Vatican Council 1963, no. 4). The mission of the Church is not to indicate a specific model for the media, but to point out the ethical and moral criteria to be considered in the way of human solidarity and the integral development of the human person (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 12–13).[9]

Jesus emphasized that communication is a moral act, teaching that a word from a person reflects their inner character and warning against causing harm to others, especially the most vulnerable (Mt 12:34-37; Mk 9:42). The social doctrine is concerned with the moral attitude of those who receive the communication – viewers, listeners, readers – and especially the ones who determine their structures, policies, and content – public officials and corporate executives, members of governing boards, owners, publishers, station managers, editors, news directors, producers, writers, correspondents. From a theological perspective, depending on the way in which the media are used, the history of human communication can be seen »as a long journey from Babel, site and symbol of communication's collapse (Gn 11:4-8), to Pentecost and the gift of tongues (Acts 2:5-11) – communication restored by the power of the Spirit sent by the Son« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 3).[10]

Social communication can either serve or harm the human person. Indeed, media play a fundamental role in enriching the lives of people

8 The Pontiff considers that the human being is becoming better whether he or she is being more »mature spiritually, more aware of the dignity of his humanity, more responsible, more open to others, especially the neediest and the weakest, and readier to give and to aid all« (John Paul II 1979b, no. 15).

9 It is stated that the core ethical mission of the media is to serve the human person, promote a community based on justice, solidarity, and love, and communicate the truth about human life and its ultimate purpose in God (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 33).

10 Ethical responsibilities in social communication go beyond professional communicators and extend to audiences as well, requiring discernment and informed consumption by recipients. For this reason, the Church, educational institutions and parents play a crucial role in guiding the use of the media (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 25).

by »encouraging men and women to be conscious of their dignity, enter into the thoughts and feelings of others, cultivate a sense of mutual responsibility, and grow in personal freedom, in respect for others' freedom, and in the capacity for dialogue« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 6). Nevertheless, media can also undermine the integral good of human beings. In this context, communicators must responsibly exercise their freedom by consciously selecting what they communicate, just as users are called upon to practice their own freedom and responsibility (John Paul II 1981b, no. 3).[11]

A fundamental principle on communication in the social teaching of the Church is the commitment to truth, as it is essential for individual freedom and genuine human relationships (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 20). Other key principles of Christian social ethics, such as solidarity, subsidiarity, justice, equity, and responsibility, also apply to communication. The ethical dimension of communication extends beyond the content and process of messages to include how they are received. It also involves broader structural concerns, such as economic and political implications related to media ownership and the common good, ensuring that financial interests do not overshadow the responsibility to serve the public (no. 20).

In the areas of message, transmission, and systemic structures, ethical communication should prioritize the dignity of individuals and the well-being of the community. Media should serve as a means for people to connect and contribute to personal and collective growth, ensuring that communication fosters human development on all levels (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 21).[12] This foundational principle is fol-

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11 The media can become tools of oppression when controlled by powerful interests, even in free societies, violating religious freedom and exploiting people (John Paul II 1981b, no. 3).

12 For this reason, the integral development of the person requires not only the provision of material goods and products, but also attention to the inner dimension of the human being (John Paul II 1987b, no. 29.46). In that sense, »everyone deserves the opportunity to grow and flourish in respect to the full range of physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual goods« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 2). The issue of growth needs to be challenged by the media, which should not merely expose »trends of opinion through carefully orchestrated repetition« (John Paul II 1991a, no.41). The Encyclical *Laudato si'* brings a new perspective that broadens that anthropocentric horizon. Indeed, integral ecology presents a holistic approach to reality with the goal of »combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature« (Francis 2015, no. 139).

lowed by another key idea: the well-being of individuals is closely linked to the common good of the communities they belong to (no. 22). In this sense, the common good should be understood inclusively, ensuring that all members of society benefit. It also calls for global equity, addressing the unequal distribution of communication and information technology resources, which are essential for productivity and economic development.[13]

Another important principle is the need for inclusive participation in decision-making about media content, communication processes, and the systems that control resources. A key challenge is ensuring the involvement of the most vulnerable. Media should prioritize issues such as poverty, aging populations, illiteracy, political repression, human rights violations, social and political conflicts, interreligious tensions, and the suppression of indigenous cultures (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 22).[14] However, since government intervention can sometimes result in exclusion and oppression, it is recommended that regulation follow principles of public service and public responsibility (1992, no. 5). In this sense, the presumption should always be »in favour of freedom of expression«, though this principle »is not an absolute, indefeasible norm« (2000, no. 23). The media have a special role in promoting responsible human freedom (John Paul II 1981b), which requires balancing freedom of expression with truthfulness, impartiality, and respect for privacy through ethical standards for media professionals (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 23).

A further principle underlines the importance of public participation in decision-making on communication policy, which should be organized,

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13 The virtue of solidarity is defined as »a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good«, and ought to govern all areas of social life – economic, political, cultural, religious – (John Paul II 1987b, no. 38).

14 In this regard, the most vulnerable groups are identified as the poor, the elderly, unborn children, youth, the oppressed and marginalized, women, minorities, the sick and disabled, as well as families and religious communities (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 22). It is noteworthy that the way in which particular groups are set against each other in the name of »class conflict, exaggerated nationalism, racial supremacy, ethnic cleansing, and the like« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 22). Communication companies are becoming increasingly »multinational« so that some countries are becoming more dependent on foreign material to the detriment of a specific local culture (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 5). Regarding elderly people, the media should not only provide entertainment but also offer appropriate programs and materials to support their lifelong learning, with particular attention to those who are confined to their homes (John Paul II 1982, no. 5).

systematic, genuinely representative and impartial towards any specific group, even when the media are privately owned and for-profit. In that sense, communicators »must seek to communicate with people, and not just speak to them« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 24).[15] Market studies are sometimes presented as the best indicators of public opinion; however, decisions about media content and policies should not be based solely on economic factors, but must protect the public interest as a whole, including the legitimate interests of minorities (no. 24).[16] In this sense, »the first Areopagus of the modern age is the *world of communications*, which is unifying humanity and turning it into what is known as a *global village*« (John Paul II 1990, no. 37). Social communication, therefore, can contribute to peace by promoting the correct, fair, and constructive use of information, preventing oppression, abuse, and discrimination, and by fostering values based on human dignity and rights (1983, no. 3–4).[17]

Regarding media models (Hallin and Mancini 2003), Catholic social teaching criticizes the risks associated with both public and liberal systems. On one hand, governmental intervention in public systems can lead to their misuse for »ideological and political manipulation«, turning media into an »instrument of oppression and exclusion«. On the other hand, it warns that »unregulated commercialization and privatization« characteristic of liberal systems can also yield negative outcomes, particularly when »profit, not service, tends to become the most important measure of success«. This is notably apparent with advertisers who, driven by profit rather than genuine public needs, create »artificial needs and patterns of consumption«. Given these potential deviations inherent in both models, Catholic

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15 It emphasises the importance of understanding the needs and struggles of the people, and to communicate with the sensitivity that respects human dignity (John Paul II 1987a, no. 4).

16 Problems in the media such as the exclusion of some groups, the restriction of the right to information, and the power of economic, social and political elites, point to profound challenges in media policies and structures. However, the essential function of the media is to contribute to the realization of the right to information, to promote justice in the pursuit of the common good, and to assist in the search for truth by giving all voices the opportunity to be heard, especially the voice of the voiceless (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 4, 14).

17 In the fortieth anniversary of the Encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, John Paul II explores the relationship between *media and truth*, regarding society, the common good, and God; *media and justice*, in connection with human relationships at all levels of society; *media and freedom*, following the demands of communicators moral conscience and serving the real needs and interests of society; and *media and love*, keeping the highest standards of commitment to goodness (John Paul II 2003a, no. 3).

social thought advocates for »regulation according to criteria of public service and in greater public accountability« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 5).[18]

Regarding ethical practices in the Church, communication praxis should exemplify truthfulness, accountability, and sensitivity toward human rights.[19] Additionally, internal Church communication must encourage a two-way exchange between pastors and the faithful, supporting freedom of expression, responsible public opinion, and respect for the role of the Magisterium (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 26). For social communication to truly serve justice and peace, media should undertake key actions: raise awareness about the connection between injustice and war; identify, expose, and reject the root causes of violence and injustice; overcome obstacles to achieving »works of justice« that build peace; support and promote initiatives favouring peace and justice; and affirm the inalienable rights of every human being.[20] Indeed, »the qualified information of public opinion has a direct influence on the promotion of justice and peace« (John Paul II 1987c).

The ethical dimension of the Internet

In a cybercultural context, where digital technologies mediate communicative practices, social interactions and cultural expressions, new dynamics emerge and profoundly influence the creation, dissemination and interpretation of information (Lévy 2001). Digital journalism has created

18 The document *Ethics in advertising* examines the increasing influence of advertising, acknowledging its economic and cultural benefits while addressing ethical concerns such as manipulation and consumerism. It emphasizes the responsibility of advertisers to uphold truth, human dignity, and social welfare. While advertising serves as a tool for information and engagement, it must avoid exploitation and misleading practices. The Church advocates for ethical standards, public awareness, and appropriate regulations to mitigate potential harm. Ultimately, it calls upon advertisers to contribute positively to human development and the common good (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1997).

19 In connection with communication practices in the ecclesial community, the Church aims to foster dialogue and cooperation with public authorities, cultural and academic figures, other religions, and media professionals to ensure that communication serves »for the glory of God and the service of the human race« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 2000, no. 30).

20 It warns that the media often distort reality by isolating people, promoting false values, encouraging conflict, spreading false or trivial content, and neglecting meaningful messages like the Gospel (Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 2000, no. 13).

a new media ecosystem, pushing the industry to adapt to changing information landscapes and business models (Thorburn and Jenkins, 2003). This contemporary form of journalism provides audiences with multimedia experience through the integration of textual, auditory, and visual content, while fostering higher levels of interactivity and participatory engagement (Manovich 2001).

Today, the Internet is generating profound transformations in various fields, including commerce, education, politics, journalism, and intercultural and international relations, influencing not only communicative practices but also the way people understand their own lives. This raises the ethical consideration of whether such changes contribute »to authentic human development and helping individuals and peoples to be true to their transcendent destiny« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 1). New media constitute powerful instruments for educational advancement, cultural enrichment, commercial activities, political engagement, intercultural dialogue, and religious expression. Nonetheless, these same communication technologies, despite their potential to serve positive human and communal ends can be used »to exploit, manipulate, dominate and corrupt« (no. 1). In fact, Internet raises concerns about some of the »radically new consequences it brings: a loss of the intrinsic value of items of information, an undifferentiated uniformity in messages that are reduced to pure information, a lack of responsible feedback and a certain discouragement of interpersonal relationships« (Pontifical Council for Culture 1999, no. 9).

According to the social teaching of the Church, the Internet is perceived not merely as a source of challenges but also as an instrument capable of bringing substantial benefits, provided that appropriate resources are effectively applied to resolve these issues (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 6). The Internet offers several favourable characteristics, being instantaneous, immediate, global, decentralized, interactive, flexible, and egalitarian (no. 7). Additionally, the rapid expansion of information technologies has greatly increased the ability of individuals and groups to communicate, enabling the Internet to support responsible exercises of freedom and democracy, broaden educational and cultural perspectives, mitigate divisions, and facilitate human development in a variety of ways (no. 9).

There are individualistic, libertarian and entrepreneurial approaches that fall into a use of the Internet that would allow all kinds of expressions, as well as commercial activity according to a neoliberal model to the detriment of human dignity (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 8). Additionally, the Internet can accentuate divisions among individuals and groups along ideological, political, economic, racial, ethnic, intergenerational, and religious lines, creating circumstances propitious to international conflict and contributing to phenomena such as cyberterrorism (no. 9). Consequently, cyberspace should function as an inclusive resource for information and services, freely accessible to all and available in a variety of languages, with public institutions responsible for ensuring this accessibility.

One of the main concerns in academic discourse is the digital divide, which separates rich and poor populations, both within and between countries, due to unequal access to new information technologies (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 10). Accordingly, »cyberspace ought to be a resource of comprehensive information and services available without charge to all, and in a wide range of languages«, of which public institutions have a responsibility to ensure (no. 11). Furthermore, an additional cultural preoccupation emerges from the potential use of the Internet not as a facilitator of intercultural dialogue and understanding, but rather as an instrument contributing to cultural imperialism.[21] Another area of concern pertains to freedom of expression, recognized as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of democratic societies.[22] Moreover, from a journalistic perspective, while the Internet significantly enhances the rapid dissemination of news and information, it simultaneously facilitates sensationalism and blurs distinctions between news, advertising, and entertainment. Therefore, it is necessary that »honest journalism is essential to the common good of nations and the international community« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 13).

21 An example of this is the fact that the Internet spreads Western secular values to societies unprepared to handle them, contributing to serious issues such as the global crisis of marriage and family life (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 11).

22 It notes that governments often restrict or manipulate media to control information, limit free expression, and spread propaganda, problems seen not only in dictatorships but also in democracies influenced by money and political distortion (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 12).

Educational institutions should incorporate training on the proper use of the Internet within comprehensive media education, promoting both technical knowledge and critical discernment of digital content (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 15).[23] Moreover, social teaching on the Internet advises against governmental censorship, advocates regulation limited to necessary interventions, and calls for international consensus on issues such as privacy, security, intellectual property, rights of women, and bridging the digital divide (no. 16–17).

Pastoral theology of communication

Pastoral or practical theology reflects on the action of Church as the continuation of the praxis of Jesus, aiming to realize the Kingdom of God within society (Casiano 1991, 187). A key aspect of this reflection is the pastoral ministry of the word (*martyria*), involving proclamation of the Gospel both *ad intra* (e.g., catechesis, homilies, parish bulletins) and *ad extra* (e.g., mass media, interdisciplinary and interreligious dialogue) (Guerrero Rodríguez 2012, 747–748). Thus, pastoral ministry is fundamental to a theology committed to receiving and communicating divine revelation.

The foundation of Christian communication is the communicative action of the Trinity, which directly fosters love and communion in human relationships (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1971, no. 8–11). The Son is the Word eternally »spoken« by the Father; and through Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, God communicates Himself and His salvation to humanity (2000, no. 3). Thus, divine self-communication calls all human persons into communion with God, where »Christ is both the content and the dynamic source of the Church's communications in proclaiming the Gospel«, inviting humanity to live out »God's reconciling love in creative new ways« (1992, no. 6).

From a theological perspective, human communication can be viewed as a journey: Babel symbolizes the breakdown of communication (Gen 11:4-8),

23 It is stated that »the virtue of solidarity is the measure of the Internet's service of the common good« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002b, no. 15).

while Pentecost represents its restoration in Christ through the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:5-11). As Scripture states: »In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son.« (Heb 1:1-2) And with the incarnation, resurrection and Pentecost human communication is restored with the sending of the Spirit sent by the Son (Acts 2:5-11). In its mission, the Church is sent into the world to proclaim the Good News (Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15). Thus, all human communication finds its foundation in the Trinitarian communion; consequently, »communication in and by the Church finds its starting point in the communion of love among the divine Persons and their communication with us« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 3). Because »communication therefore is of the essence of the Church« (2002a, no. 3) the ecclesial community must actively foster a »genuine and profound communication of the truths of the faith« (John Paul II 1998a, no. 105).

A positive theological view of communication must include a critical evaluation of mass media and its cultural impact. Accordingly, the Church offers ethical and moral guidance, rooted in human and Christian values, to shape the development and use of communication technologies (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 12). Given the contemporary split between the Gospel and culture, described as a profound fracture (Paul VI 1975, no. 20), culture today represents a modern *Areopagus* for the mission of the Church. Consequently, »it is not enough to use the media simply to spread the Christian message and the Church's authentic teaching. It is also necessary to integrate that message into the new culture created by modern communications«, since this new culture emerges from novel languages, techniques, and psychologies, not merely from the conveyed content (John Paul II 1990, no. 37).[24] Thus, the role of the media in new evangelization demands a critical, evaluative approach, following the methodology of »see, judge, act« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 11–12).[25]

24 Although the Encyclical of the John Paul II goes beyond an instrumental vision of the media, seeing them as a new culture, the subsequent document *Ethics in Communications* notes that »the media do nothing by themselves; they are instruments, tools, used as people choose to use them« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 3).

25 The Pope recalls the activities of Catholics, mentioning particularly »the three great Catholic Media Organizations: The International Catholic Office for Film and Cinema (OCIC), The International

In continuity with the post-conciliar Magisterium, the Church views media not merely as tools for disseminating religious information, but as means for authentic dialogue and active participation within secular media. To achieve this, a developed anthropology and theology of communication is required »so that theology itself may be more communicative, more successful in disclosing Gospel values and applying them to the contemporary realities of the human condition« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 8). Such dialogue also applies internally within the Church, reflecting the »radical equality in dignity and mission which arises from baptism«, expressed through an »honest and respectful sharing of information and opinions« (no. 10).[26]

The Church encourages pastors and the People of God to deepen their understanding of communication issues and to explore the pastoral implications of new media realities (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 2–3). It affirms the fundamental nature of the right to information, closely linked to religious freedom, which extends beyond mere freedom of worship (no. 15). The Church also emphasizes the essential role of the laity, particularly media professionals, in spreading the Gospel through modern communication (John Paul II 1988b, no. 44), recognizing a continued public interest in religious matters despite secularization (1989).

The following points represent the essential theological and pastoral priorities that the Church identifies as central in the context of communication in contemporary society:

- *Defense of human cultures*. Instead of developing new media solely for evangelization, the Church should strive to »preserve and promote folk media and other traditional forms of expression«. In doing so, the Church should pay special attention to minorities, ensuring their active, autonomous, and responsible participation in communication

Catholic Press Union (UCIP), and the International Catholic Association for Radio and Television (Unda)« (John Paul II 1992).

26 Nevertheless, the document refers to the *Instruction on the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian* to clarify that, in cases of dissent, freedom of expression does not justify pressuring public opinion as a suitable method for resolving doctrinal issues (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 1990, no. 30).

processes that »help to shape the conditions of their lives« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 16).

- *Development and promotion of the Church's own media of social communications*. Communication should be an essential part of every pastoral plan. At the same time, the Church must continue to develop, maintain and promote its own Catholic media initiatives, including the press, publishing houses, radio, television, public information offices, media relations, communication organizations, formation programs, and research institutes (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 17).[27]
- *The formation of Christian communicators*. Christians working in Church media must be professionally trained and well-formed in doctrine and spirituality (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 18). Communication education should also be a key part of the formation of all pastoral agents and priests in seminaries, theological faculties, and formation institutes (Congregation for Catholic Education 1986; John Paul II 2003c, no. 30).
- *Pastoral care of communications personnel*. Pastoral care programs, including ongoing formation, should be developed to support communication professionals in addressing moral challenges through the lens of Christian ethics (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 19).

While professional Christian communicators play a key role in evangelization, the entire Church is called to be present in the media and to proclaim Christ effectively today (John Paul II 1996b, no. 99). This mission requires collaboration among Christian denominations and cooperation with other religions to ensure a meaningful religious presence in mass media (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1989a, no. 1; John Paul II 1999c, no. 48). Communicators must also engage in the search for meaning in human life (John Paul II 1999a), recognizing that Catholic communication involves not only sharing the Gospel explicitly, but also

27 In the case of cinema, the Pope exhorts directors, filmmakers and all actors who profess themselves Christians to act in full coherence with their own faith and to take initiatives to make the Christian message more present in the world (John Paul II 1995b). Cinema could be a vehicle for cultural exchange and invites human beings to reflect on realities that are foreign to their own education and mentality (John Paul II 1995b).

highlighting real human needs, especially those of the most vulnerable (2000).[28]

The opportunities and challenges of the Internet for ecclesial life

The media are valuable tools for spreading the Christian message (John Paul II 1990), offering inspiration and support to both religious communities and those confined at home (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2000, no. 11). Understanding the new media languages is essential (John Paul II 2003b, no. 63), making the Internet a current pastoral priority. Effective communication today requires knowledge of how to use the Internet well (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002a, no. 5). While it cannot replace real community, sacraments, or liturgy, the Internet can complement and enrich religious life (no. 5). Its immediacy, interactivity, and participatory nature improve both internal and external Church communication, moving beyond past one-way models (no. 6). It also benefits administration, governance, public communication, expert consultation, pastoral planning, education, and collaboration at all Church levels (no. 6–7).

The Internet poses specific challenges for the Church, including hostility toward Christian values, defamation, attacks on religious and ethnic groups, pornography, violence, hatred, and lack of regulation (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002a, no. 8). Another concern is the rise of self-identified Catholic websites that promote doctrinal confusion, mixing authentic Church teaching with eccentric interpretations and ideological agendas (no. 8). Therefore, alongside research, the Church should promote positive pastoral planning for the Internet, aiming »to lead people from cyberspace to true community and how, through teaching and catechesis, the Internet might subsequently be used to sustain and enrich them in their Christian commitment« (no. 9).

28 In the context of the Great Jubilee of the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, the World Communications Day Message underlines the opportunity for Christians to witness through the media (John Paul II 2000).

Everyone in the Church is called to use the Internet creatively and responsibly to support its mission: *Church leaders* should integrate media into pastoral plans and ensure doctrinal accuracy, possibly through voluntary certification;[29] *pastoral workers* – clergy, religious, and laity – need media training to improve communication and deepen theological understanding; *educators and catechists* must teach ethical media use, while Catholic institutions should offer specialized communication courses; *parents* should model and guide responsible Internet use at home (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002a, no. 10–11). In the *celebratory* area, although the Internet cannot replace the deep experience of God in liturgy and sacraments, it can support and prepare believers for that encounter and accompany them on their faith journey (John Paul II 2002, no. 3).

According to the Pontiff, digital communication offers new and valuable opportunities to proclaim the Christian message to the entire human family, breaking through barriers and borders (John Paul II 2001a). While online relationships cannot replace direct human contact, the Internet is a new public forum that calls the Church to use its potential for evangelization: »This challenge is at the heart of what it means at the beginning of the millennium to follow the Lord's command to ›put out into the deep‹: *Duc in altum!* (Lk 5:4).« (John Paul II 2002; no. 2)

An integrated pastoral plan for social communications

Institutional communication is essential for the Church to share its message, shape its public image, and engage with society, especially through digital media. This includes news coverage, media strategies, and crisis communication (La Porte 2012, 11–39). The Church calls on each episcopal conference and diocese to develop a pastoral communication plan, which should include a clear vision, media analysis, evangelization strategies, outreach to media professionals, and financial planning. A dedicated team,

29 Due to the sometimes confusing proliferation of unofficial websites labeled as Catholic, it is proposed a system of voluntary certification at the local and national level under the supervision of representatives of the Magisterium: »The idea is not to impose censorship but to offer Internet users a reliable guide to what expresses the authentic position of the Church.« (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 2002, no. 11)

composed of Church members and media experts, should guide this process in two phases (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 23–25):

Research. It is a crucial first step in developing a pastoral communication plan. At this stage, information is gathered on the structure of internal communication, identifying both its strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and challenges the new plan may face. This process includes three components: a needs *assessment*, to identify pastoral areas that require special attention; a *communications audit*, to evaluate current communication practices; and a *resource inventory*, to determine the communication tools available to the Church, technologies, personnel, and potential collaborators, including stakeholders from business, industry, or other religious communities (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 26).

Design. In the second stage, the communication strategy focuses on several key areas. In *education*, to promote communication training through Catholic schools, universities, and courses for parents, teachers, pastoral agents, writers, artists, and media professionals; *spiritual formation and pastoral care*, to support the faith journey of communication professionals through retreats, seminars, and support networks; *cooperation*, to encourage partnerships among Church institutions, other religious groups, public organizations, and private companies in the communication sector; *public relations*, to promote active engagement through public relation offices, media awards, World Communications Day, publications, and media productions; *research*, to foster academic and theological study of communication and the mission of the Church via institutes and universities; and *development of peoples*, to contribute to freedom of expression and support peace and justice in society (Pontifical Council for Social Communications 1992, no. 27–33).

In summary, the Church is called to communicate the Christian message not only to believers, but to all people of good Will (John Paul II 1997b). When properly used, social communication can help build and sustain a human community rooted in justice and charity, becoming a sign of hope (1998b). To achieve this, the Church should invest in the formation of competent communicators (1997a, no. 111; 1999b, no. 72), and develop pastoral communication plans at national, diocesan, and parish levels (2001b, no 21). In many less developed regions, Churches require greater solidarity, making continental cooperation programs essential for advancing these communication initiatives (1995c, no. 126).

Conclusion

The Catholic social thought on communication under John Paul II highlights media as means to serve the human person and the common good. It calls for ethical use, formation, and inclusion to face digital challenges. The Church must integrate faith with culture and develop pastoral plans to evangelize responsibly. The following are more focused and concrete conclusions drawn from the analysis of the teaching of Church on communication:

- Media plays a key role in shaping culture, informing society, and influencing values. The Church sees it as a space for dialogue between faith and the modern world. While it can promote unity or cause harm, its true purpose is to serve the human person and the common good. Therefore, communication must be guided by truth, ethics, and dignity.
- Social communication offers great benefits in economic, political, cultural, educational, and religious life but also presents serious challenges. It can support justice, development, and dialogue or be misused to manipulate, divide, or marginalize. The Church emphasizes using media ethically, which requires truth, inclusion, and respect across all sectors.
- Christian ethics in media call for communication rooted in fundamental principles such as truth, human dignity, the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity, justice, and responsibility. Media should foster dialogue, promote inclusion, and support both personal development and communal well-being. The Church encourages freedom of expression guided by moral responsibility, inclusive participation in decision-making, and ethical regulation. Ultimately, communication must serve peace, protect human rights, and reflect the dignity of every person.

- The Internet has transformed communication, culture, and society, offering great potential for education, dialogue, and human development. However, it also raises ethical concerns such as manipulation, inequality, and cultural domination. The Church calls for responsible use rooted in human dignity, truth, and the common good, emphasizing that media education, regulation, and inclusive access are essential to ensure it truly serves all.
- Theological and pastoral priorities in Church communication include proclaiming the Gospel as a continuation of the mission of Jesus, grounded in Trinitarian communion and oriented toward human dignity and the common good. Communication must foster dialogue with culture, integrate faith into new media, and support truth, solidarity, and justice. The Church emphasizes the formation of communicators, the development of Catholic media, and the protection of cultural diversity. Above all, it calls the entire Christian community to evangelize through responsible, inclusive, and ethically guided communication.
- The Internet offers valuable opportunities for the Church to evangelize, support community life, and enhance communication, education, and collaboration. It complements but does not replace live liturgical and community experiences. At the same time, it presents challenges like misinformation, hostility to faith, and doctrinal confusion, to which the Church must respond through ethical use, formation, and pastoral planning to proclaim the Gospel effectively in the digital age.
- An integrated pastoral plan for communication is essential for the Church to share its message, engage society, and respond to modern media challenges. This involves research and strategy design, focusing on education, formation, cooperation, public relations, and social development. Each diocese should develop a clear plan with expert collaboration. To be effective, the Church must form skilled communicators and promote solidarity, especially in less developed regions.

This study presents key findings which reflect the teaching of the Church on communication, particularly during the pontificate of John Paul II. However, it must be understood in context and in continuity with the broader historical development of Christian social thought on communication already explored in previous studies. The pontificate of John Paul II presents its continuousness with the social doctrine of communication developed during the pontificate of Paul VI after Vatican II, which shows the extent to which communication is a significant issue for public theology and delves into the right to information, public opinion, the media and education, the training of communicators and receivers, the importance of the media for the Church, and the participation of Catholics in the media (Sánchez-Camacho 2024).

Subsequently, the issues surrounding communication ethics and the Internet developed by John Paul II will be addressed by the teachings of the Church in a context of greater technological urgency. Therefore, during his pontificate, Benedict XVI explores the benefits and dangers of technological progress and its relationship with information ethics, the use of the Internet and social media, and the implementation of digital technology as a vehicle for evangelisation (Sánchez-Camacho 2022). For a more updated and comprehensive view of the social doctrine of the Church on this matter, it is particularly significant to complement such analyses with the study of communication and digitisation during the pontificate of Pope Francis. His encyclicals, apostolic exhortations and World Communications Day messages will offer a valuable continuation of the reflection developed here. At a time when the crisis of communication has intensified due to manipulation and misinformation, especially because of the use of social media, reflection on the Christian ethics of communication become more important for building a more just society where the question of our neighbour arises.

No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.
Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.

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Cecilija Oblonšek

Obhajanje zakramenta svete birme in njeni teološki ter liturgično-glasbeni vidiki

The Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation and Its Theological and Liturgical-Musical Aspects

Izvleček: V prispevku ugotavljamo, da zaradi nekaterih poudarkov naše pastoralne prakse v okviru podeljevanja zakramenta birme teologijo tega zakramenta zaznamuje določena negotovost, zaradi česar prihaja do zamegljenega razumevanja logike prejema zakramentov uvajanja, v okviru katerega bi morala biti evharistija tista, ki je vrhunec in cilj »uvajalne« dobe, birma pa je eden od zakramentov uvajanja, in ne zakrament služenja, kot se v našem okolju podzavestno dojema. V okviru tega zavedanja smo vzeli v ozir predvsem sámo obhajanje zakramenta birme znotraj maše, ki lahko v naši pastoralni praksi bodisi potrdi bodisi razvrednoti poudarke zakramenta. Liturgična glasba znotraj obreda lahko pripomore k slovesnosti obreda, hkrati pa je priložnost, da preko péte liturgije birmancem predočimo ključne poudarke delovanja Svetega Duha, jih soočimo z dragocenimi glasbenimi zakladi vesoljne Cerkve in jim omogočimo, da vstopajo v odraslo vero.

Ključne besede: birma, liturgična glasba, zakramenti, koralni spevi, inkulturacija

Abstract: *This article posits that due to specific emphases in our pastoral practice in the context of the sacrament of confirmation, the theology of this sacrament is characterised by a certain uncertainty, which engenders a blurred understanding of the logic of receiving the sacraments of initiation. The Eucharist should be the culmination and goal of the »initiation« period, while Confirmation is one of the sacraments of initiation and not a sacrament of service, as it is subconsciously perceived in our environment. In this awareness, the primary consideration has been the celebration of the sacrament of confirmation within the Mass, which has the capacity to either affirm or diminish the significance of the sacrament in our pastoral practice. The role of liturgical music in a ceremonial context is twofold: firstly, it contributes to the solemnity of the event, and secondly, it provides an opportunity to present the key emphases of the Holy Spirit's work to the confirmands through the medium of sung liturgy. In addition, it serves to introduce them to the precious musical treasures of the universal Church, and to enable them to enter adult faith.*

Keywords: *confirmation, liturgical music, sacraments, choral singing, inculturation*

Zgodovinski razvoj zakramentov uvajanja v Katoliški cerkvi latinskega obreda dokazuje, da »pri oblikovanju posebnega zakramenta birme v latinski Cerkvi teološka refleksija ni bila pred praktično izvedbo«, ampak je bilo prav obratno »in so dejanski razvoj šele naknadno reflektirali in teološko razložili« (Koch 2010, 113). Danes ni bistveno drugače, saj je birma v katehetski in liturgični praksi sicer dobila nekatere nove poudarke, teologijo zakramenta birme pa vedno znova zaznamujeta relativno velika negotovost in nerazumevanje. Za področje liturgične inkulturacije to dejstvo na neki način pomeni priložnost v smislu, da se ta »negotovost« v obredu birme skuša razumeti kot proces rasti, kar je osnovni dar zakramenta birme – rast vere v moči Svetega Duha. Presenetljivo sporočilen, čeprav za nekatere na videz nebistven element obhajanja zakramenta svete birme je pri tem vidik liturgične glasbe oz. vsebine glasbe, ki jo sam obrednik predvideva za petje znotraj obreda. Čeprav je praksa izbire pesmi znotraj tega obreda pogosto prepuščena mladim ali pa usmerjena predvsem na mlade, se zdi vredno opozoriti na teološke poudarke, ki jih s »petjem maše«, v tem primeru maše ob podelitvi zakramenta birme, v polnosti zajamemo.

Ovrednotenje obredne glasbe zakramenta

Spevi, določeni za posamezne dele bogoslužja, ki jih obrednik predvidi ali svetuje, v rimskem obredu izhajajo iz koralne glasbe, ki ji zadnji koncil priznava »principem locum« (SC, 116) in jo daje za zgled vsaki novokomponirani glasbi. Zato upoštevanje usmeritev obrednika glede glasbenih vsebin (ne nujno neposredno povezanih s koralnimi napevi, ampak s konkretno svetopisemsko vsebino) sam zakrament preko pesmi tako tesno in organsko poveže z njegovo temeljno vsebino, da je to vredno upoštevati ne glede na glasbene sloge, ki jih pastoralisti želijo približiti predvsem mladim, ker menijo, da jim bo tako obred bližji in bolj razumljiv. Liturgična glasba, katere besedila predvidevajo obredne knjige, nam namreč razkriva bogato duhovnost in svetopisemsko osnovo posameznega zakramenta. Starodavna praksa Cerkve in tudi novejše psihološke vede potrjujejo, da lahko ima péta Božja beseda, oznanjena na pravem mestu v bogoslužju, večji učinek kot pridiga in kateheza skupaj.

Danes je glasba, zlasti popularna glasba, razumljena predvsem

> kot sredstvo za užitek. Vendar jo je treba razumeti kot sredstvo, ki nas vodi k višjim ciljem. To je ključnega pomena za liturgično glasbo, saj je izbira glasbe za liturgijo pogosto utemeljena kot zabava ali v najboljšem primeru kot poučevanje;[1] vendar to zbledi, ko je dosežen njen pravi namen v liturgiji: dvigniti našo pozornost k naši najvišji dejavnosti, božjemu čaščenju. Povzdigniti mora častilca v razmišljanje o Kristusovem delovanju v liturgiji, da bi ga pritegnila k sodelovanju. (Mahrt 2022, 3)

(Ne)upravičenost obstoječe prakse podelitve zakramenta birme?

Premislek o inkulturiranem obredu svete birme najprej trči ob pastoralno vprašanje primerne dobe za podelitev svete birme. Poznamo zelo različne pastoralne izbire. »Nekateri so svojo mladinsko pastoralo zgradili okrog tega zakramenta, drugi so iz njega naredili pomembno in dobro organizirano stopnjo v šolskem okviru. Tretji končno vidijo v njem ugodno priložnost za katehezo odraslega, ki je povezana z osebnim in cerkvenim poukom. Ne manjka dobrih pastoralnih razlogov, toda njihov teološki temelj ostaja negotov. To pa oslabi katehezo in smisel krščanske istovetnosti.« (Ouellet 2013, 113) Sprva je bil razlog za podelitev birme po prvem obhajilu samo odsotnost škofa, še vedno pa je bilo jasno, da evharistija okrona uvajanja. V 16. stoletju je bilo priporočeno, da naj se ta ne obhaja pred sedmim letom. V 18. stoletju so nekatere škofije z razlogom, da se zagotovi temeljita priprava na birmo, prestavile njeno podelitev v čas po prejemu obhajila. Tokrat se je torej red zakramentov uvajanja spremenil iz zgolj katehetskih razlogov. Ko je leta 1910 dokument *Quam singulari* določil, da naj se obhajilo obhaja okrog sedmega leta, je obratni vrstni red birme in obhajila postajal vse pogostejši. Tako se je pomen iniciacije porazgubil

1 Trditev avtorja citata morda zveni nekoliko grobo, a praksa potrjuje, da so nekatera obhajanja evharistije žal očitna potrditev tega, zlasti kadar se glasba izbira glede na to, kako bo všečna mladim, ne ozira pa se na liturgično primernost oz. na trenutek obhajanja pri bogoslužju (poudarek »zabave«), ali ko želimo znotraj obhajanja »katehizirati« (ko so pesmi le »uporabne« in smo jih iz kateheze prenesli v obhajanje, a niso liturgično ustrezne in umetniško nagovarjajoče), četudi ne gre zavrniti dejstva, da ima glasba v bogoslužju posredno tudi vzgojni oz. poučevalni učinek (npr. ponotranjenje Božje besede).

in trije zakramenti, ki jo sestavljajo, so se začeli obravnavati ločeno. Pomen birme je tako postal zelo nejasen (Nocent 2000, 64), hkrati pa se je razbilo razumevanje zakramentov uvajanja v vrstnem redu krst–birma–evharistija, ki evharistijo postavlja kot vrhunec in cilj samega uvajanja.

Postavlja se vprašanje, ali smemo iz pastoralnih ali celo zgolj iz praktičnih razlogov zavrniti zelo dolgo tradicijo. Najprej se je namreč »zgodila« zamenjava zakramentov birme in evharistije, nato se je z birmo odlašalo iz razloga, da bi prejemnikom omogočili boljšo pripravo, danes pa se kažejo že čisto praktični razlogi za še kasnejšo podelitev svete birme, ki so problematični v tem smislu, da ne zaobjamejo vseh poudarkov zakramenta birme. Zanimivo je, da slovenski plenarni zbor kot možnost v bodoče omenja kasnejše obhajanje[2] svete birme, kar kaže na njegovo precejšnjo naklonjenost tej drugi praksi (PZ, 195), medtem ko možnosti, kot jo prakticirajo v vzhodnih Cerkvah, torej podelitvi birme takoj za svetim krstom, sploh ne jemlje v ozir.

Pastoralna praksa podeljevanja zakramenta birme v zadnjih letnikih osnovne šole pastoraliste pogosto navdihne za izrazito specifične[3] oblike obhajanja samega bogoslužja svete birme oz. jim narekuje prilagoditev obhajanja zakramenta na načine, kot jih obred ne omogoča. Bistveno vprašanje pri tem, ko premišljujemo o konkretnem obhajanju, ni zgolj, kako dejavno vključiti mlade, ampak kako najbolje zastaviti samo vključenost birmancev in vernikov v obred, da bo ta deloval z največ milosti. Pogosto naredimo eno od dveh osnovnih napak: ali pripravljamo bogoslužje *za* birmance in jih kot slavljence prijazno potisnemo v pasivnost ali pa pripravljamo bogoslužje *z* birmanci, ki jih razumemo kot glavne akterje obreda in ki lahko iz obreda naredijo, kar si zaželijo (če kateheti v permisivni drži celotno oblikovanje obreda prepustijo mladim v izbiro, npr. na področju glasbenih delov maše). Obeh skrajnosti bomo ozdravljeni, če se bomo podredili moči obreda zakramenta birme in spoštovali njegove zakonitosti. Zadnji

2 Tako beremo v dokumentu plenarnega zbora: »Znotraj Cerkve na Slovenskem si moramo odgovoriti tudi na vprašanje, ali niso dozorele razmere, ki narekujejo premišljen premik uvajanja v zakrament svete birme proti času, v katerem odraščajoče spremlja mladinska pastorala.« (PZ, 186)

3 Specifične v smislu, da se obhajanje evharistije, znotraj katere se podeli zakrament birme, zaradi posebnosti izbire glasbe, ki se prilagodi mladim, in tudi nekaterih drugih form znotraj maše (prinašanje darov, ki pretirano poudarja le nekatere simbolne darove, zastre pa pomen darov za evharistijo, igrani deli evangelija ipd.), izrazito razlikuje od vsakega drugega obhajanja v župniji.

koncil je poudaril: »Obred birmovanja naj se popravi, da bo jasneje izražal notranjo povezanost tega zakramenta s celotnim uvajanjem v krščanstvo.« (B, 71) »Ta usmeritev vključuje prenovo ne le obreda, ampak tudi katehetske priprave. Dejansko bo vodila do ponovne vzpostavitve katehumenata odraslih in do razvoja pokrstne kateheze. Po eni strani bo jasno izražala vez med birmo in krstom, po drugi pa vez med birmo in evharistijo, ki krona krščansko uvajanje.« (Ouellet 2013, 107)

Vrniti zavedanje, da je birma zakrament uvajanja

Ne bomo razglabljali o pastoralnih razlogih za (ne)primernost dobe, v kateri podeljujemo sveto birmo v Cerkvi na Slovenskem (najpogostejša praksa je v višjih razredih osnovne šole), pozornost pa polagamo na zamegljeno razumevanje prejema zakramentov uvajanja, ki mu je v inkulturiranem obredu treba vsaj v razumevanju vernikov vrniti pravo zaporedje, torej zavedanje, da je evharistija tista, ki je vrhunec in cilj »uvajalne« dobe. V premisleku o zakramentu svete birme si je zato v zavest treba priklicati predvsem to, da je to eden od zakramentov uvajanja, in ne zakrament služenja, kot se v našem okolju podzavestno dojema. Stereotipno govorjenje o birmi kot o »zakramentu krščanske odraslosti« je s tega vidika torej napačno. Če bomo birmo ponovno premišljevali v povezavi s krstom in evharistijo kot enega od zakramentov uvajanja, bomo ponovno stopili v dinamiko rasti, zorenja, postopnosti. Vsako zorenje, zlasti zorenje v veri, je proces rasti. Slomšek je birmo imenoval pečat na pismo svetega krsta, torej čas prehoda v dobo oznanjevanja in življenja tega, kar smo prejeli pri krstu. »Birma predpostavlja vero, kot vsak drug zakrament, vendar ne zrele, odrasle vere, temveč vodi in pomaga birmancu k odrasli veri in k življenju iz vere. […] Zato – človeško in teološko gledano – pričakovanje, da bi že birmanci v polnosti živeli iz verskih resnic in bi bila taka zrelost pogoj za prejem birme, ni umestno.« (Vesel Mušič 2013) Tudi Strle je nekaj let pred izidom obrednika sv. birme poudarjal, da ne govorimo o zakramentu odraslosti v smislu neke psihološke zrelosti, »saj birma za takšno odraslost podeli le nekakšne nadnaravne kali, tako rekoč speče nadnaravne moči, ki pa jih je treba šele polagoma in z naporom uresničevati in razvijati« (1969, 15). Predpostavlja pa se vera, v moči katere lahko birmanec začenja svoj krst znotraj občestva Cerkve odgovorno živeti in oznanjati, potrjen z močjo Svetega Duha. Če bi razliko med krstom in birmo utemeljevali samo na podlagi njunih učinkov, zlasti subjektivnih – osebnega prejemnikovega posvečenja – in bi tako birmo zreducirali na pomnožitev milosti, ki jo prejmemo že pri krstu, bi s tem zameglili smiselnost zaporednosti zakramentov uvajanja krsta birme in sv. evharistije. Po tem razmišljanju bi bilo smiselno deliti celo dolgo časa po krstu, saj za zveličanje ni odločilna, in končno bi lahko prejemanje sv. evharistije celo nadomestilo birmo. (Strle 1969, 22–23) Teologi so se za odgovor obrnili k odrešitveno-zgodovinskemu gledanju na zakramente, pri čemer ni bilo treba tajiti ničesar, kar je poudarjala sholastična teologija birme, ki govori o posebnem učinku birme (dopolnitev neizbrisnega krstnega znamenja in podelitev večje polnosti Svetega Duha in njegovih darov ter s tem pomnožitev posvečujoče milosti, ki birmanemu omogoča, da z apostolatom prispeva k odrešitvenemu poslanstvu Cerkve), poudarilo pa je, da se s prejemom birme krščeni človek tesneje poveže s Cerkvijo, ki jo je šele binkoštna podaritev Svetega Duha usposobila za njeno svetovno odrešitveno nalogo, čeprav je bila rojena že na križu, ko je bila deležna temeljne podelitve Svetega Duha. Podobno lahko govorimo pri birmi kot o individualnih binkoštih, ko posameznik prejme obilje Svetega Duha na zakramentalno vidni način, pred javnostjo Cerkve in sveta, kar pomeni, da postane dolžnost apostolata, ki je bila naložena že s krstom, še večja. (25)

Ali obhajanje potrjuje ali razvrednoti poudarke zakramenta?

S tega vidika je vredno premisliti o izbiri glasbenih oblik znotraj bogoslužja. Zakrament birme daje poleg jasnih splošnih navodil glede glasbe znotraj evharističnega bogoslužja (veljajo torej pravila spoštovanja mašnega ordinarija in proprija) precej svobode pri izbiri pétih delov proprija (z besedami, da lahko pojemo »primerno pesem«),[4] veliko predlaganih spevov pa se prekriva z vsebino maše na binkošti, kar utrjuje razumevanje zakramenta birme kot individualnih binkošti. Obrednik je torej dober pokazatelj smeri, kakšne pesmi izbirati, vprašanje pa je, ali naj bo res celotno péto bogoslužje prilagojeno mladim. To ni koristno tako iz pastoralnih

4 Kar je izrazita značilnost pokoncilskih obrednikov in je do neke mere razumeti to zaupanje do bogoslužnih sodelavcev, ki da bodo znali izbrati primerne pesmi, saj so izhajali iz »šole strogih pravil« predkoncilskega obreda, ki je znotraj slovesnega bogoslužja predvidevala izključno speve, predvidene v liturgičnih knjigah, v latinskem jeziku. Danes tega zavedanja med cerkvenimi glasbeniki v glavnem ni in razlaga »primerne pesmi« se je raztegnila do neprepoznavnosti povezave z zakramentom.

razlogov, saj onemogoča mladim soočenje s katerokoli drugo zvrstjo glasbe, ki se poje v cerkvah, kot tudi ne s teološkega vidika, saj takšno početje ne izkazuje zaupanja mladim, ko jim daje »mlečno hrano«, hkrati pa jim s podelitvijo obreda zatrjuje, da so zmožni prave hrane (Heb 5,13-14). Glede na to, da so se mnoge oblike kateheze preselile »na spletne platforme, kot je Zoom, ki udeležencem omogočajo interaktivno sodelovanje s pomočjo zvoka in slike« (Šegula 2024, 37), je vredno premisliti o novih možnostih informiranja mladih, ki lahko določeno formacijo prejmejo preko interaktivnih vsebin, nato pa je več kot nujno potrebno te vsebine nadgrajevati in ovrednotiti v skupnosti, ki »posameznika sprejema, mu pomaga v razločevanju poklicanosti, hkrati pa mu nudi človeško, duhovno, intelektualno in pastoralno formacijo« (Šimenc 2025, 214). Tako nam torej tudi sodobna tehnika omogoča, da mlad človek prejme celostno formacijo, ki naj vključuje tudi srečanje z različnimi zvrstmi glasbe, zlasti s tisto, ki je lastna Cerkvi, tj. gregorijanski koral. A kakor v šolskem sistemu ugotavljamo, da učni proces ne omogoča dovolj srečevanja s prakso, in lahko občudujemo iznajdljivost nekaterih staršev, ki svoje otroke poučujejo na domu ter so poiskali možnosti, kako naj otroci pridejo v živ stik z najrazličnejšimi poklici (Leskošek 2025), tako je treba podobno razmišljati o birmanski pastorali, ki je pogosto zaupana ožji ekipi v župniji, ki sicer skrbno izvaja katehezo, a pri tem mladi ne pridejo v stik z večino župnijskega občestva. Ponekod velja praksa, da se mora pripravnik na birmo vključiti v eno od župnijskih skupin, kar je ena od možnosti, da začuti življenje župnije, še neizkoriščene možnosti pa so v oblikah karitativne dejavnosti, pomoči pri katehezi mlajših, sodelovanju v liturgični skupini, pevskem zboru, skupini psalmistov ipd. Današnji pastoralni pristopi izrecno poudarjajo pomen karitativne dejavnosti: »priprava mladih na birmo mora vedno vključevati priložnosti za bogatitev njihovih src, ne le preko kateheze, ampak tudi preko njihovega služenja revnim in drugim ljudem v stiski« (Adamczewski 2024, 176). Najrazličnejše oblike »prakse« bodo tudi dobrodošla protiutež mladostnikovi ujetosti v sodobno tehnologijo. Seveda je tudi sodobno tehnologijo smiselno izkoristiti v dobro, saj se je Cerkev »skozi vso zgodovino zavedala, da je del tega sveta. Vse pridobitve je poskušala uporabiti v dobro pastorale.« (Šegula 2024, 33) Tudi danes se v pastorali Cerkev trudi slediti tej logiki in otrokom ter mladim nudi veliko spletnih vsebin (npr. liturgični priročniki oz. liturgični zvezki založbe Družina, ki omogočajo več vsebin preko qr-kode na video izobraževalne vsebine), ki lahko krepijo njihovo vero. Vendar raziskave razvoja možganov že več kot desetletje potrjujejo, da je raba telefona za razvijajoče se možgane pogubna in da bi bila idealna popolna abstinenca od elektronskih naprav vse do odraslosti (Hari 2022). Takšno radikalnost si drznejo le redki in žal v večini šol otrok ne more slediti pouku brez elektronskih pripomočkov. Pomembno pa je zavedanje, da je vloga kateheze poleg podajanja znanj predvsem predajanje izkušnje vere, pri čemer lahko ekipi birmanskih animatorjev v veliki meri pomagajo najrazličnejši župljani. Zato je tudi področje dela z birmanci v okviru glasbene formacije odlična priložnost nadgraditve formacije preko sodobnih medijev na način, da se mladi srečajo v živo, da se učijo prilagajanja drug drugemu (izziv enoglasnega petja korala), razvijajo svoje talente glasbene nadarjenosti, razvijajo čut za služenje in s tem izstopanje iz značilne najstniške egocentrične drže, širijo estetske standarde ter nenazadnje razvijajo liturgični čut, ki jim bo pomagal pri rasti v veri.

Povezava zakramentov birme in krsta

Kako znotraj liturgično-inkulturacijskih procesov osvetliti povezanost obreda birme z drugima dvema zakramentoma uvajanja, tj. krstom in evharistijo? Birmanci bodo pri tem obredu sami izpovedali vero in tako obnovili krstne obljube, ki so jih zanje pri krstu izpovedali njihovi starši in botri. Ta nekakšna »zaobljuba«, s katero se začenja birmovanje, je kakor sklep neke pogodbe. »Spominja nas na tisto zavezo, ki jo je Bog na Sinaju sklenil z Izraelom. Tam je Bog postavil Izraela pred izbiro: ‘Predložil sem ti življenje in smrt … Izvoli torej življenje, da boš živel.’ (5 Mz 30,19) Birma je vaš Sinaj. […] Vprašanja in odgovori birmanske zaobljube so nekakšno navodilo za življenje; so cestni napisi za vzpon k življenju, ki ni vedno lagodno.« (Ratzinger 2003) Peti člen obrednika izpostavlja, da bi bilo v tej luči smiselno, da je boter pri birmi isti, kot je bil pri krstu, saj bo tako »jasneje označena zveza med krstom in birmo, služba in naloga botra pa bo učinkovitejša« (SB, 5). Ta vidik je treba birmancem in staršem predstaviti že med birmansko katehezo, a četudi ne gre za istega botra, je mogoče izpostaviti trdno vez med krstom in birmo tudi z izpostavitvijo staršev, ob izpovedi vere ipd.

Ena od možnosti je v predlagani obliki veroizpovedi, ki ji obrednik birme v inkulturacijskem smislu daje izrazito široke okvirje. V obredniku predlagana oblika veroizpovedi, ki je t. i. krstna izpoved vere (KO, 3) ali tudi trojna izpoved vere (KO, 5), je kot obnovitev krstnih obljub predvidena tudi tukaj. Pomembno pa je, da pri zadnjem delu veroizpovedi (To je naša vera ...) obrednik pravi: »Ta obrazec izpovedi vere je mogoče nadomestiti tudi z drugim. Lahko tudi zapojemo primerno pesem, s katero vse občestvo soglasno izrazi svojo vero.« (SB, 23) To birmovalčevo potrditev je torej mogoče nadomestiti s primerno pesmijo, kar daje neskončno paleto možnosti za inkulturirano obliko tega dela veroizpovedi, ki sicer v evharističnem bogoslužju nima toliko manevrskega prostora. Ob tem delu bogoslužja bi bilo vredno premisliti, kako morda z glasbenim elementom poudariti sodelovanje staršev, ki so v otrokovem imenu prvič izpovedali vero pri njegovem krstu, zdaj pa je ta isti otrok sposoben na pragu svoje odraslosti izreči svoj *Verujem*. Po skupni »trojni izpovedi vere«, ki jo skupaj z birmanci, botri in starši izpove vsa cerkev, bi bilo možno zadnji del veroizpovedi v obliki pesmi izpovedati v ustvarjalnejši obliki, npr. najprej birmanci sami, nato njihovi skrbniki (starši in botri), ki so njihovi prvi vzgojitelji v veri, ter nato še zbrano občestvo, ki je že z navzočnostjo pri krstu teh mladostnikov pokazalo, da vera ni samo zaklad družine, ampak celotne Kristusove cerkve (KO, 4). S takšno obliko pesmi bi izpostavili vidik postopne rasti v veri, ki ji mladi z dnem birme odpirajo vrata v krščansko zrelost in sodelovanje z darovi Svetega Duha, ter hkrati poudarili povezavo med zakramentoma krsta in birme.

Povezava zakramentov birme in evharistije ter podelitev birme znotraj svete maše

Kako pa izpostaviti povezavo med evharistijo in zakramentom birme? Kardinal Ouellet jedrnato razloži: »Če krst sestavlja vstop v družino [Cerkve] kot ud v celoti, če birma podeljuje zmožnost delovanja po Duhu v tej družini, ki je Duh troedinega občestva, tedaj je deležnost pri evharistiji prvo in največje dejanje pričevanje birmanega.« (2013, 110) Že dejstvo, da se zakrament birme obhaja znotraj evharističnega bogoslužja, poudarja to notranjo povezavo, hkrati pa bo skrbno pripravljen obred sam pripeljal birmance do razumevanja, da bodo le z okrepitvijo s kruhom močnih zmožni premagati svet (Jn 16,33), kar je seveda treba osvetliti tudi v homiliji. Tudi skrbno oblikovani glasbeni deli bogoslužja bodo pripomogli k vzvišenemu obhajanju svete evharistije. Prepoznavanje delovanja darov

Svetega Duha v svojem življenju izrazito krepi osebni odnos s Kristusom. Kako lahko mlad človek to prepozna? »Pavel omenja prisotnost Svetega Duha med drugimi duhovnimi vrlinami: 'v neoporečnosti, v spoznanju, v velikodušnosti, v prijaznosti, v Svetem Duhu, v nehlinjeni ljubezni'. (2 Kor 6,6) To dejstvo pomeni, da je prisotnost Svetega Duha mogoče primerjati s prisotnostjo duhovnih vrlin, kot so čistost, znanje, potrpežljivost, dobrotljivost in pristna ljubezen« (Adamczewski 2024,174) in mlad človek, ki v (četudi le občasni) spremembi svojega obnašanja, ki je sicer lahko nagnjeno k mladostniški lenobi, egoizmu in aroganci, prepozna delovanje Svetega Duha, postaja Kristusov učenec in stopa v tesnejši odnos z njim. »Birmani kristjan, poklican od Boga, posvečen v krstu, okrepljen z močjo Duha Vstalega, pričuje v prvi vrsti s tem, da se uradno pridruži skupnosti, da bi v njej in z njo opravljal duhovništvo nove zaveze.« (Ouellet 2013, 110–111)

Vstopanje v samo obhajanje liturgičnega slavja je za prejemnika zakramenta birme vstopna točka v dojemanje odnosa z Bogom in hkrati v konkretnem slavju prejema zakramenta tudi vrhunec dogajanja, zato je toliko bolj pomembno, da ga tako tudi dojame. »Naše razumevanje liturgije ne temelji le na analizi ali racionalizaciji, ampak na srečanju s konkretno realnostjo liturgije. […] Naša osrednja usmeritev k liturgiji je srečanje z misterijem, ki se praznuje, ne le besede ali dejanja, ampak predvsem naš odziv nanj. Osrednji misterij je evharistija.« (Mahrt 2022, 4) »Če birma ne vodi k evharistiji in se omejuje na to, da je povod za nejasno družbeno zavzemanje, tedaj zakramentalna milost ne doseže svojega cilja.« (Ouellet 2013, 114)

Kako lahko glasba pripomore k doživljanju te skrivnosti? »Najprej s tem, da naredi liturgijo lepšo. S tem jo odmakne od utilitarizma, od službe manj pomembnim namenom. Odmakne se od konteksta vsakdanjega življenja, postane sveto, namensko namenjeno svojemu edinstvenemu namenu. Prava lepota liturgije jo dvigne na raven, na kateri je njen primarni pomen nedvoumen. Drugič, poudari značaj in namen vsakega dela liturgije. Propriji maše razmejujejo in ločujejo procesije od meditacij, zbirno prošnjo od prefacija in tako naprej.« (4) Zato je tako pomembno, da skušamo v največji možni meri spoštovati liturgične predpise glasbe v obredu birme,[5] pri tem pa skrbno pripraviti program na način, da mladim ne bo popolnoma tuj in nedosegljiv njihovemu dojemanju, hkrati pa ne banalen v svoji preveliki enostavnosti. V naši najbolj razširjeni praksi rabe sloga sodobne krščanske glasbe, ki v zadnjih desetletjih pridobiva tudi liturgično kvaliteto (Oblonšek 2019), to seveda ne pomeni popolne programske spremembe, gotovo pa obrnitev pozornosti k vsebini spevov, ki jih obrednik predvideva, in predvsem spoštovanje logike petja mašnega ordinarija in proprija na način, kot vsakemu mašnemu delu pritiče. Konkretno to pomeni sodelovanje vseh vernih (ne samo birmancev, ampak tudi njihovih staršev in botrov ter drugih navzočih vernikov) pri petju mašnega ordinarija (izjema je Slava, ki jo lahko zapoje pevski zbor sam) ter izbiri primernih spevov za vstop in obhajilo. V obredniku sta predlagani dve možnosti vstopnega[6] speva in dve možnosti obhajilnega[7] speva, ki sta model pesmi, ki naj bi se pela na birmanskem slavju, še vedno pa velja pravilo (RMu 48 in 87) o izbiri druge primerne pesmi. Pri mašnem propriju je treba biti posebno pozoren na spev med berili, ki je edinstvena prilika, kako mladim predočiti pomen oznanila Božje besede, in ne osredotočanja nase. Če izberemo psalmista iz vrst birmancev, naj bo to nekdo, ki mu lahko poleg kvalitete lepega glasu pripišemo ponižen karakter, ki ga spodbuda k tej službi ne bo vodila v prevzetno držo, ampak bo v njem razvijala pravilno vrednotenje Božjega daru, ki ga vračam Bogu. Oznanilo psalma, ki je predvideno z ambona, nikakor ne sme izpasti kot predstava, zato je potrebna tudi primerna izbira uglasbitve, ki naj izpolnjuje kategorije svete glasbe (TS 2), in res dobra celostna – ne samo glasbena – priprava psalmista. Birmanski animatorji pogosto iščejo »mladinske uglasbitve« psalmov, ki imajo svojo dragoceno vrednost s parafraziranjem svetopisemskega besedila in jih na drugih mestih bogoslužja izrazito cenimo npr. kot vstopni, darovanjski ali obhajilni spev; na tem mestu pa bi bilo smiselno premisliti o priložnosti uvedbe značilnega recitativnega petja, ki je danes

5 T. i. »birmansko mašo« (SB, poglavje 5) lahko vzamemo »vsak dan v letu, razen na adventne, postne in velikonočne nedelje, slovesne praznike, pepelnico in delavnike velikega tedna« (SB, 57). Če je torej slavje sv. birme npr. v soboto v velikonočnem času, vzamemo obrazce te maše, dan kasneje, na velikonočno nedeljo, pa bi tako proprije kot Božjo besedo vzeli nedeljske.

6 Vstopna speva: »Gospod govori: Pokropim vas s čisto vodo in dam vam novo srce, novega duha vam vlijem v vašo notranjost« (Ezk 36,25-26) in »Božja ljubezen je izlita v naša srca po Svetem Duhu, ki prebiva v nas« (Rim 5,5; 8,11).

7 Obhajilna speva: »Veselite se v Gospodu vsi, ki ste bili razsvetljeni in ste okusili nebeški dar ter postali deležni Svetega Duha« (Hebr 6,4) ter »Stopite h Gospodu in razveselite se, okusite in spoznajte, kako dober je Gospod.« (Ps 33,6.9)

mladim precej tuje, a nepogrešljivo, če želimo spoštovati liturgična besedila obreda. Žal pa se nam nasploh pri mladinsko obarvanih bogoslužjih zgodi, da ta način petja popolnoma umanjka.

Pozorni smo še na vsebino in primerno umestitev prepevanja med samim birmovanjem. Obrednik pravi zgolj, da »med maziljenjem lahko pojemo primerno pesem« (SB, 29), naši škofje pa so v *Sporočilih slovenskih škofij* (*Navodila ob birmovanju* 1995) zapisali: »Prvim trem ali štirim birmancem (če je birmancev veliko) lahko podeli birmovalec zakrament birme na glas.« Ni torej strogega določila, kdaj začeti peti (škofovske konference po svetu imajo glede tega zelo različne prakse),[8] bistveno pa je, da pri vključitvi pesmi upoštevamo, da gre za pesmi na čast Svetemu Duhu, in ne trenutke zapolnitve s katerokoli glasbo. Smiselno se zdi premisliti tudi o možnostih vključitve nekaterih najslavnejših spevov Katoliške cerkve, kot je binkoštna slednica *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*, ki velja za eno največjih mojstrovin svetovne latinske sakralne poezije in jo bo vsa Cerkev pela na praznik binkošti, ko je obvezni del liturgije znotraj besednega bogoslužja, ali napev *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, ki ima dovolj preprosto koralno melodijo, zvrst glasbe, s katero bi bilo nujno, da se mladi verniki srečajo v cerkvi, in ne zgolj v šoli ter na koncertnih odrih. Pesmarica *On živi!* (2024) prinaša nekaj sodobnih uglasbitev pesmi slednice in drugih napevov v čast Svetemu Duhu. Glede na to, da je na praznik binkošti pesem slednica oznanjena na slovesen način znotraj besednega bogoslužja, ponekod podobno slovesno oznanilo slednice uvajajo na slavju birme na način, da ta spev nima zgolj spremljevalnega značaja med procesijo ipd., ampak pomeni del obreda. Da bi takšno oznanilo pri mladih zbudilo občutek »himne«, je vredno premisliti o njenem petju skupaj z župnijskim pevskim zborom v eni od slovesnejših uglasbitev pred samo podelitvijo svete birme, kar pa terja intenzivno predpripravo, ki je lahko integralni del predbirmanske kateheze (sama slednica je priložnost za poglobljeno

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8 Npr. navodila škofije Sacramento (Diocese of Sacramento 2017) predvidevajo, da se pri birmovanju zapoje primerna hvalnica ali psalm ali zaigra instrumentalna glasba; škofija Madison (Diocese of Madison 2020) poudari, da naj se glasba prične šele po tem, ko se vsaj nekaterim kandidatom že podeli zakrament. Škofija Harrisburg (Diocese of Harrisburg 2016) daje skrbna in podrobna navodila: »Glasba med maziljenjem s sveto krizmo ne sme prevladati nad liturgičnim dejanjem, ki poteka. Glasba v tem trenutku naj bo nežna in umirjena. Glasnost naj bo dovolj tiha, da se škof in birmanec med maziljenjem lahko med seboj razumeta. Besedila himn naj se nanašajo na Svetega Duha. V tem trenutku je možna tudi instrumentalna glasba, čeprav je zaželena glasba, ki spodbuja aktivno sodelovanje zbora. Upoštevajte, da litanije svetnikov v tem trenutku niso primerne za petje.« Kot vidimo, so nekatere škofije izdale zelo jasna navodila glede glasbe pri obhajanju svete birme.

meditacijo o delovanju Svetega Duha v človekovem življenju). V slovenski glasbeni zakladnici imamo nekaj dragocenih spevov v slovenskem jeziku, ki jih je nujno treba ohraniti, hkrati pa obuditi tudi poznavanje glasbenih zakladov iz zakladnice vesoljne Cerkve, kot so prej omenjeni koralni napevi. Zato je v okviru birmanske pastorale vredno razmišljati o vključitvi teh spevov v redna bogoslužja, ki jih obhajamo z njimi, pa tudi kot obliko kateheze.

Premislek glede materije in slovila pri podelitvi svete birme

Znotraj samega obreda birmovanja posvetimo pozornost 9. členu obrednika, ki pravi, da se zakrament svete birme »podeljuje z maziljenjem s sv. krizmo na čelu med položitvijo roke in z besedami: 'Sprejmi potrditev – Dar Svetega Duha'« (SB, 9). Tukaj so prevajalci slovilo poslovenili nekoliko po svoje, menda z utemeljitvijo, da bi lahko birmanec napačno razumel »dar« kot darilo botra, poudarek pa mora biti na darovih Svetega Duha. Izvorno latinsko besedilo slovila »Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti« bi pravilneje in dobesedno prevedli kot »Sprejmi potrditev daru Svetega Duha«, s čimer je dobro izražena povezava birme s krstom. Katehumen ali krščenec je prejel dar Svetega Duha že pri krstu, pri birmi pa prejme potrditev – lat. *confirmatio*, gr. *bebaiosis* – istega daru Svetega Duha. Zato je v vzhodnih obredih samo eno maziljenje s krizmo.

Ozrimo se najprej na še vidik maziljenja. Z inkulturacijskega vidika je zanimivo pogledati obliko maziljenja s krizmo v pravoslavni praksi, kjer se mazilijo mnogi deli telesa, spremljajoče besedilo pa prinaša čudovito hvalnico telesu kot Božji stvaritvi. Ob maziljenju oči tako duhovnik moli: *Naj ta pečat v imenu Jezusa Kristusa razsvetli tvoje oči, da ne bi nikoli zaspal v smrt.* Ob maziljenju ušes moli: *Naj ti maziljenje pomaga, da boš vselej slišal Božje zapovedi.* Ob maziljenju nosnic moli: *Naj bo ta pečat v imenu Jezusa Kristusa prijeten vonj, ki vodi v življenje.* Ob maziljenju ust moli: *Naj bo ta pečat v imenu Jezusa Kristusa varuh tvojim ustom in močna vrata tvojim ustnicam.* Ob maziljenju rok moli: *Naj bo ta pečat v imenu Jezusa Kristusa vzrok za dobro delo in vsa plemenita ravnanja.* Ob maziljenju srca moli: *Naj ta pečat v imenu Jezusa Kristusa v tebi ustvari čisto srce in v tebi obnovi pokončnega duha.* Ob maziljenju hrbta moli: *Naj bo ta pečat v imenu Jezusa Kristusa ščit moči, ki bo zaustavil ognjene* *puščice hudega duha.* Ob maziljenju stopal moli: *Naj ta pečat v imenu Jezusa Kristusa usmeri tvojo hojo proti večnemu življenju.* (Guroian 1985, 342–343) Četudi je maziljenje zanje nekoliko drugače izvedljivo, saj podelijo birmo takoj po prejemu krsta, torej večinoma majhnim otrokom, pa je sporočilnost, seveda ne v smislu direktnega prenosa takšne prakse v naše obhajanje, ampak morda predstavitev te prakse pri katehezi in premislek o njej, lahko zelo nagovorljiva za dobo, v kateri podeljujemo birmo v Katoliški cerkvi. Oblika molitve, izhajajoča iz oblike podelitve zakramenta v Pravoslavni cerkvi, bi pri katehezi mladim, ki v tem obdobju pogosto težko sprejemajo svoje telo, se soočajo z lažnimi ideali telesne lepote, ki v skrajnosti vodijo do bolezni bulimije, anoreksije ipd., dalo drugačno sporočilo o telesu, ki je tempelj Svetega Duha. Poleg tega bi spoznavanje določenih elementov iz pravoslavnega bogoslužja pri mladih spodbujalo konkretne ekumenske poteze.

Glede poteka samega maziljenja je sprva omenjeno maziljenje s sveto krizmo, kar je glede na apostolsko konstitucijo Pavla VI., ki je objavljena v samem obredniku, na prvi pogled v nasprotju z zgodovino, kjer je glavno vlogo igralo polaganje rok. Prav v dobi poudarjanja materije in slovila je maziljenje kot oblika materije postalo tako pomembno, da polaganje rok kot nevidna materija skoraj ni bilo več potrebno. Vendar polaganje rok sicer ostaja v novem obredu že pred podelitvijo zakramenta, ko je podeljeno celotni skupini birmanih in za udeležene ni ozaveščeno kot konstitutivni del obreda,[9] slovilo in polaganje rok ob maziljenju pa izražata, da to tvori zakrament. Pomembno je ozavestiti, da je ta gesta tudi konstitutivni element škofovskega in mašniškega posvečenja, kar dodatno poudarja, da je pri birmi prejemnikom podeljena polnost skupnega duhovništva Jezusa Kristusa, ki jim daje poslanstvo v Cerkvi. Izraz, da se birma »podeljuje z maziljenjem s sv. krizmo na čelu med položitvijo roke«, je dvoumen in *ne* pomeni, da mora birmovalec med maziljenjem s krizmo na čelu položiti kandidatu roko na glavo. Vendar pa glede tega izraza ni bilo dano nobeno jasno navodilo; kakor da bi formulacija v 9. členu želela ohraniti pomen polaganja rok, po drugi strani pa ga zmede

9 »Polaganje rok na birmance, ki se opravi s predpisano molitvijo pred birmovanjem, sicer ne spada k bistvu zakramentalnega obreda, vendar ga je treba zelo ceniti, ker spada k vsej popolnosti obreda in k boljšemu razumevanju zakramenta. Jasno je, da je to polaganje rok pred maziljenjem različno od polaganja roke pri maziljenju na čelu.« (Pavel VI. 1972, 10)

z maziljenjem. (Nocent 2000, 79–80) Ratzinger razlaga to »položitev roke« kot »naobrnitev kretnje razprostrtih rok v osebnostno območje. Polaganje rok je najprej kretnja polastitve. Če na nekaj položim roko, hočem s tem povedati: to je moje. Gospod položi svojo roko na nas. Njegovi smo. Moje življenje ne pripada samo meni samemu.« (2003, 89) Nocent očita spremljajoči Apostolski konstituciji, da je sicer njena metoda odlična, da pa v določenem trenutku inkulturacije ne sledi več prvotni smeri, saj je zasidrana v teologiji materije in slovila; podobno razne liturgične komisije v svojih študijah sledijo predvsem pastoralnim potrebam in predpostavkam ter tako ne omogočajo resnično objektivne raziskave tega zakramenta, saj želijo le najti odgovor na problem, ki jim je zastavljen (2000, 80). Dolžnost liturgično-inkulturacijskih procesov je torej objektivno premisliti zgodovinsko ozadje obrednih gest in hkrati tudi to, kako bi te našle sodobni obraz znotraj kulturnega izražanja nekega občestva. Ker sam obrednik birme ponuja kar veliko možnosti za ustvarjalnost (SB, 16), je prav, da v slovenskem cerkvenem prostoru to po vzoru dosedanjega obrednika v prihodnje še bolj upoštevamo.

Slovenska škofovska liturgična komisija je glede na možnost, ki je navedena v 17. členu obrednika, »sklenila, da naj birmovalec ob besedah 'Mir s teboj' položi birmancu roko na ramo. Če je primerno, posebno pri odraslih birmancih, lahko birmancu ponudi roko.« (17) V različnih slovenskih pokrajinah se tako znamenje poljuba miru po prejemu zakramenta svete birme razlikuje po posameznih pokrajinah – na Štajerskem, v Prekmurju in na Primorskem je uveljavljen način podajanja rok, medtem ko so v Ljubljani ohranili navado položitve roke na ramo. Obe gesti sta v našem kulturnem razumevanju doživeti kot pozitivni in za mladega človeka pomenita ohrabritev na njegovi poti. V obredu je predvideno, da naj bi tisti, ki je birmanca predstavil (torej po navadi boter), položil desno roko na birmančevo ramo in povedal škofu njegovo ime (SB, 26), kar pogosto iz praktičnih razlogov stori duhovnik, ki ime prebere iz potrdila za pristop k birmi. Takšno izpeljevanje liturgičnih dejanj na praktično rabo lahko siromaši bogoslužje s tem, da zamegli vlogo botra, zato se je treba takim prilagoditvam izogibati. Poleg tega je v eni od naših škofij vloga botrov znotraj obhajanja zakramenta ukinjena,[10] čeprav to ne pomeni, da je bilo ukinjeno tudi njegovo poslanstvo, le v samem obredu niso več navzoči na način, kot je bila praksa do nedavnega. Praksa v nekaterih župnijah pa je takšna, da je birmanec sam povedal svoje ime, kar pastoralisti utemeljujejo kot še en poudarek povezave med krstom in birmo; pri zakramentu krsta so ime otroka povedali starši (pri odgovoru na vprašanje »Kako bo ime vašemu otroku?«), zdaj pa je krščeni pred prejemom birme zmožen sam izreči svoje ime in s tem izkaže zrelost za prejem zakramenta birme, ki ga bo okrepil za javno izvrševanje apostolata Cerkve. Vidimo torej, da so prakse zelo različne, in če za njimi stoji teološka utemeljitev in niso v nasprotju s poudarki samega obreda, lahko doprinesejo k lepoti obhajanja in razumevanja vsebin zakramenta (kar obrednik tudi sam v široki meri omogoča in spodbuja).

Prihodnost zakramenta birme

V trenutni situaciji mnogi trdijo, da zakrament birme počasi izginja: nekatere župnije opuščajo pogoj birme za podelitev zakramenta svetega zakona (kljub določbi obrednika PO, 18), in ker o njem govorimo samo v terminih pričevanja, in ne več v povezavi z drugimi zakramenti, se ne razumeva več kot za zveličanje potrebnega (Nocent 2000, 86). Logična je skrb pastoralistov, da ob premiku birme na obdobje po prejemu evharistije s temi otroki ne bodo imeli več stika, zato iz teh razlogov podaljšujejo dobo priprave na birmo in samo podelitev zakramenta. Takšni razlogi za odlaganje podelitve zakramenta so izrazito vprašljive narave, poleg tega na zakrament ne smemo gledati kot na nekaj čarobnega, delujočega avtomatično in v vsakem primeru in zgolj iz tega razloga določenega na prehodu iz osnovnošolskega v srednješolsko obdobje.

Morda bi bilo smiselno pustiti birmo na mestu, kjer je bila od začetka, pred evharistijo, in iskati rešitev v tej trojici: kateheza, zakrament, mistagogija. Ni namreč smiselno po pripravi, tudi če je ta odlična, in po podelitvi zakramenta birmancev prepustiti samih sebi, kar se očitno dogaja v sedanji

10 Prekmurska škofija naj bi leta 2024 ukinila vlogo botrov pri obhajanju bogoslužja z argumentom, da se je njihov pomen izrodil, saj izbrani kandidati niso bili primerni in so pogosto tako slabotni v veri, da sami potrebujejo duhovno pomoč (Štumpf 2023).

praksi (četudi Cerkev na Slovenskem izvaja strukturirano mladinsko pastoralo, se vanjo vključuje le manjši odstotek tistih, ki jim je bil podeljen zakrament svete birme). Gre le za nekaj premislekov, ki pa terjajo veliko širšo in poglobljeno zakramentalno in pastoralno obravnavo.

Predvsem pa je treba znotraj inkulturacijskih procesov premisliti oblike, ki bodo mlade, bodisi že ali pa še ne birmane, vključile v živo občestvo vernih. Tu se odpira veliko širše vprašanje liturgičnega oblikovanja in pastorale družin, nove evangelizacije in pravih oblik mistagoške kateheze. Tako ugotavlja tudi slovenski pastoralni načrt *Pridite in poglejte*, ko piše, da glede na tradicionalno družbo danes v sekularizirani družbi otroška kateheza in prejem zakramentov nista več samoumevna, ampak se kaže potreba uvajanja zakramentov po katehumenskem modelu oz. mistagogičnih načelih (PIP, 118). Tako med ukrepi znotraj župnije predlaga »podeljevanje zakramentov po načelu duhovne, in ne kronološke zrelosti« (PIP, 49), hkrati pa si je na ravni celotne krajevne Cerkve zadal nalogo »podati smernice za podeljevanje zakramentov po mistagogičnem načelu« (PIP, 49).

Današnja pastoralna situacija je zelo podobna pastoralni situaciji prve Cerkve. Predkrstna kateheza se je v času cerkvenih očetov ukvarjala z razlago Svetega pisma, z resnicami vere, zapovedmi, molitvami, ki se jih je bilo treba naučiti, ipd. Šele po prejemu zakramentov so bili poučeni o tem, kaj ti pomenijo (Giraudo 2011, 113). Današnja praksa je nehote podobna: krstimo otroke, ki še ne razumejo, kaj to pomeni, birmanci se le bežno zavedajo, kaj je sveta birma, kateheza pred prvim obhajilom je prilagojena otrokom ipd. Za nekatere je prvo sveto obhajilo tudi zadnje, saj jih življenjske okoliščine odpeljejo proč od Cerkve, a se po več desetletjih vrnejo z odločitvijo za vero, ki jo je zasejal krst v otroštvu. Seveda je bila tudi praksa Cerkve prvih stoletij, ko so krstili celotne družine, v neki meri podobna, pa vendar drugačna, ker je bil način življenja družin bolj homogen in povezan z Cerkvijo, kar danes v nekaterih družinah umanjka. Tu je čas za začetek mistagogije, ki je v prvi Cerkvi potekala od velikonočne vigilije do velikonočne osmine, v bogoslužju, ki je inkulturirano v današnje okoliščine, pa se lahko razporedi na več mesecev ali let. Taka mistagogija je lahko odgovor tudi na vedno večje zahteve »rednih« vernikov, ki želijo rasti v svojem poznavanju in poglabljanju v bogoslužje in nauk Cerkve.

Sklep

Pri inkulturaciji obreda birme je potrebna pozornost na morebitne učinke navidezno malih sprememb, ki so lahko pozitivni, v smislu vključevanja nekaterih predlogov za sodelovanje občestva, staršev birmancev ipd., ali pa negativni, v smislu sprememb oz. zlasti opustitev nekaterih liturgičnih dejanj, ki se iz praktičnih razlogov ne zdijo bistvena, lahko pa zabrišejo pomemben poudarek pri obhajanju zakramenta. Zato je izrazito pomembno, da poznamo zgodovino obhajanja tega zakramenta, se poglabljamo v njegovo teologijo in s pastoralno tenkočutnostjo povezujemo izročilo s tem, kar človek potrebuje v naši dobi. Le iz organske povezanosti tega, kar je dediščina Cerkve, in upoštevanjem sodobnih potreb človeka se lahko v moči Svetega Duha nadejamo resnične rasti Kristusove cerkve do dne, ko bo »Bog vse v vsem«.

Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.
No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.

Kratice

KO *Sveti krst: Krščevanje otrok* 2014
PIP Slovenska škofovska konferenca 2012 [*Pridite in poglejte*]
PO *Sveti zakon: Poročni obred* 2005
PZ Plenarni zbor Cerkve na Slovenskem 2002
SB *Sveta birma: Sveta potrditev* 1972
SC Drugi vatikanski vesoljni cerkveni zbor 1967 [*Sacrosanctum concilium*]
TS Pij X. 1903 [2003] [*Tra le sollecitudini*]

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Tadej Strehovec and Mateja Pevec Rozman

The Meaning of Prayer in Mary's Messages of Medjugorje

Pomen molitve v Marijinih sporočilih iz Medžugorja

Abstract: For decades, the apparitions of the Virgin Mary and pilgrimages to Medjugorje have aroused different opinions and positions in the Catholic Church and the public. After an introduction, the authors first outline the broader historical and socio-political context of the Marian apparitions in Medjugorje. Then they present the views of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) on the apparitions in Medjugorje, with an in-depth analysis of the documents *Norms for Proceeding in the Discernment of Alleged Supernatural Phenomena* (2024) and *The Queen of Peace: Note About the Spiritual Experience Connected with Medjugorje* (2024), paying special attention to the understanding of prayer in the context of Medjugorje and its spiritual fruits in the context of the so-called Medjugorje phenomenon. In the fourth part, they analyse the content of the alleged messages of the Virgin Mary transmitted by the so-called seers, and in the last, fifth part, they focus on the meaning of prayer in Mary's messages of Medjugorje by analysing her calls to prayer through these messages. The article examines the role and importance of prayer as called for and encouraged by the Mother of God as the mediator between God and humanity, with special focus on her messages related to the events of the apparitions in Medjugorje. These invitations to prayer are in accordance with established Catholic doctrine, which considers prayer to be an essential means of communication with God and of receiving divine graces, thus promoting spiritual development. The originality of this scientific research lies in the evaluation of the meaning of prayer in Medjugorje in the context of Our Lady's messages and in the analysis of the position of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, which in its evaluation of the apparitions of Mary officially emphasizes the spiritual (prayerful) fruits of the Medjugorje movement and relies on Our Lady's messages in its assessment. The authors use descriptive and analytical methods. They find it extremely interesting that the Holy See, in its official position, refers to the messages of Our Lady of Medjugorje in its assessment without yet confirming the apparitions of Mary. In a situation in which the Holy See has not (yet) officially confirmed the authenticity of the Marian apparitions, the authors do not deal with the authenticity of the messages and apparitions transmitted by the so-called seers, but underline the thesis that the spiritual fruits are most likely to determine the authenticity of the Medjugorje phenomenon, in which prayer on both personal and collective levels is of decisive importance.

Keywords: prayer, Virgin Mary, Our Lady, Marian apparitions, Medjugorje, Messages of Virgin Mary, spirituality, faith

Izvleček: *Marijina prikazovanja in romanja v Medžugorje že desetletja vzbujajo različna mnenja in stališča v Katoliški cerkvi in javnosti. Po uvodu avtorja najprej orišeta širši* *zgodovinski in družbenopolitični kontekst Marijinih prikazovanj v Medžugorju. Nato predstavita stališča Dikasterija za nauk vere (DDF) o prikazovanjih v Medžugorju s poglobljeno analizo dokumentov* Norme za ravnanje pri razločevanju domnevnih nadnaravnih pojavov *(2024) in* Kraljica miru: Navodilo o duhovni izkušnji, povezani z Medžugorjem *(2024), pri čemer je posebna pozornost namenjena razumevanju molitve v kontekstu Medžugorja in njenih duhovnih sadov. V četrtem delu analizirata vsebino domnevnih Marijinih sporočil, ki so jih posredovali t. i. vidci, v zadnjem, petem delu pa se osredotočita na pomen molitve v Marijinih medžugorskih sporočilih z analizo njenih vabil k molitvi preko sporočil. Članek obravnava vlogo in pomen molitve, h kateri poziva in spodbuja Božja Mati kot posrednica med Bogom in človekom, s posebnim poudarkom na njenih sporočilih. Ti pozivi k molitvi so v skladu z uveljavljenim katoliškim naukom, po katerem je molitev bistveno sredstvo za komunikacijo z Bogom in prejemanje božjih milosti ter s tem človekovega duhovnega razvoja. Izvirnost te znanstvene raziskave je v vrednotenju pomena molitve v kontekstu Marijinih sporočil v Medžugorju in v analizi stališča Dikasterija za nauk vere, ki v svoji oceni Marijinih prikazovanj uradno poudarja duhovne (molitvene) sadove medžugorskega gibanja in se opira na Marijina sporočila. Avtorja uporabljata deskriptivno in analitično metodo. Posebej poudarjata, da se Sveti sedež v svojem uradnem stališču v svoji oceni sklicuje na sporočila medžugorske Marije, ne da bi predhodno potrdil tamkajšnja Marijina prikazovanja. V razmerah, ko Sveti sedež (še) ni uradno potrdil pristnosti Marijinih prikazovanj, se avtorja ne ukvarjata z avtentičnostjo sporočil in prikazovanj, ki so jih posredovali t. i. vidci, temveč zagovarjata tezo, da so za ugotavljanje pristnosti medžugorskega pojava najverjetneje najbolj pomembni duhovni sadovi, pri katerih je odločilnega pomena molitev na osebni in skupni ravni.*

Ključne besede: *molitev, Devica Marija, Naša Gospa, Medžugorje, Marijina prikazovanja, Marijina sporočila, duhovnost, vera*

Introduction

The Virgin Mary's apparitions in Medjugorje, including her messages, stir the spirits of believers and non-believers alike.[1] For better understanding of the subject, it is necessary to place it in a broader historical and political context. The complex and turbulent socio-political events in Yugoslavia during the 1980s provided an environment ripe for profound spiritual revelations. The significance of Mary's messages therefore transcends merely religious experience; they appear as a crucial and timely response to the profound struggles facing Yugoslavia's nations as they grappled with deep-rooted divisions and conflicts. A central and deeply compelling theme of the messages from Medjugorje is prayer, particularly the Rosary. The Virgin Mary fervently urges her followers to pray the Rosary, portraying it as a powerful and transformative tool for deepening one's personal

1 This paper was written as a result of work within the research programme P6-0269 (Religion, ethics, education, and challenges of modern society) which is financed by the Slovenian Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (ARIS).

relationship with God. The repetitive and meditative nature of the Rosary not only allows profound contemplation on the mysteries of Christ's life but also serves as a profoundly meaningful means to foster an intimate and mystical connection with the Virgin Mary herself. In the face of immense societal turmoil and upheaval, prayer becomes a vital source of comfort, strength, and peace for the many pilgrims who flock to Medjugorje, enabling them to find a profound sense of inner tranquillity amidst the prevailing chaos, especially when Yugoslavia disintegrated into war during the 1990s. Mary's messages from Medjugorje bring us a rich tapestry of various interrelated themes such as the call for personal conversion, the relentless pursuit of peace, the transformative power of fasting, and the centrality of the Eucharist. Each of these themes serves to underscore not only the essential importance of personal spiritual transformation but also the vital role of collective spiritual renewal among the faithful. The Rosary, as both a communal and deeply personal prayer, powerfully embodies and encapsulates these themes, enhancing the profound sense of unity and community among believers while simultaneously reinforcing the indispensable importance of prayer in daily spiritual life. The messages from Medjugorje and events related to Mary require an in-depth investigation and critical examination by the Catholic Church, which is presented in the documents of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith called *Norms for Proceeding in the Discernment of Alleged Supernatural Phenomena* and *The Queen of Peace: Note About the Spiritual Experience Connected with Medjugorje* from 2024.

1 Historical context of the apparitions in Medjugorje

The apparitions in Medjugorje are intertwined with the socio-political events of the late 20th century. Nestled in the rolling hills of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the small village of Medjugorje became a global pilgrimage site in former Yugoslavia following the reported apparitions of the Virgin Mary that began in June 1981.[2] To fully understand the significance of these

2 The first day of the apparition, June 24, 1981, six children on the Podbrdo hill saw a beautiful young woman with a child, who waved to them and called them to come closer to her. Surprised and frightened, they did not dare to approach her but immediately thought that it was the Virgin Mary. This was the first apparition; this time Mary did not give a message yet. (Peričić 2007, 15-16)

events, it is crucial to delve into the intricate tapestry of local history, the dynamics of the Yugoslav state, and the profound spiritual implications of the apparitions, which have left an indelible mark on both the local and global Catholic Church. In the years leading up to the apparitions, Yugoslavia was a state marked by both unity and division. Established after World War I (first as the Kingdom of SHS,[3] later Kingdom of Yugoslavia), Yugoslavia was a multi-ethnic federation composed of various nationalities, including Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bosniaks, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and others. Under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito, who led the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1945 until his death in 1980, the country maintained a delicate balance between its diverse ethnic groups through a unique form of socialist governance that allowed for some degree of religious practice (Ramet 2005, 255). Tito's regime promoted a secular identity while also recognizing the importance of national identities and religious traditions. However, Tito's death in May 1980 signalled the beginning of a turbulent era for Yugoslavia. The absence of a unifying figure led to a rise in nationalist sentiments and ethnic tensions. Economic instability further exacerbated these divisions, prompting frustrations that simmered beneath the surface. Against this backdrop of uncertainty and unrest, the village of Medjugorje – a predominantly Catholic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina – emerged as a beacon of hope, offering a unique spiritual refuge to those seeking solace amid the turmoil.

The first apparition occurred on June 24, 1981, when six young children – Mirjana and Ivan Dragičević, Ivanka Ivanković, Vicka Ivanković, Marija Pavlović, and Jakov Čolo – claimed to have seen a vision of the Virgin Mary on the hillside of Podbrdo (Rupčič and Nuić 2002, 21–29). This moment marked the beginning of a series of reported encounters that would capture the attention of the world. The Virgin Mary, as described by the seers, conveyed messages of peace, reconciliation, and the importance of prayer. These messages resonated deeply with a population yearning for guidance and reassurance in the face of political instability and social fragmentation. As the apparitions continued over the following days, the children reported receiving further revelations from the Virgin Mary, who urged them to share her messages with the world. The seers

3 Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

described encounters being filled with love and compassion, and their testimonies quickly attracted attention beyond the borders of Medjugorje. Pilgrims from various backgrounds began to flock to the village, seeking spiritual renewal and a connection with the divine. For many, the experience of witnessing the apparitions or participating in prayer sessions became a transformative journey, instilling a renewed sense of faith and purpose.

The Catholic Church's response to the Medjugorje apparitions has been complex and multifaceted. Initially, local church authorities, including Bishop Pavao Žanić of Mostar-Duvno, expressed scepticism about the authenticity of the apparitions (Udruga Međugorje – MIR, 1995–2025). Bishop Žanić declared the events as unverified, urging caution among the faithful and emphasizing the need for thorough investigation.[4] Despite the bishop's reservations and clear political opposition from the local government, the phenomenon continued to grow, attracting increasing numbers of pilgrims and media coverage.

In the early 1990s, as Yugoslavia descended into civil war and ethnic conflict, Medjugorje became a symbol of hope and peace. The messages of the Virgin Mary, emphasizing reconciliation and prayer especially for peace, resonated profoundly with those affected by the violence and division surrounding them. Pilgrims sought refuge in the hills of Medjugorje, where they found solace in the simplicity of faith and community. The village became a sanctuary, a place where people could come together in prayer and reflection, transcending the boundaries that divided their communities. The Holy See took a more active interest in the apparitions as their prominence grew. In 1991, the Yugoslav bishops' conference authorized an investigation into the events, leading to a range of opinions among theologians and church leaders (Medjugorje Website 2025). In 2010, under Pope Benedict XVI, a new commission was established to further evaluate the apparitions. The findings of this commission that the apparitions could not be confirmed yet remain a subject of debate within the Church,

4 In the most positive cases of phenomena of supposedly supernatural origin, the Vatican encourages the local bishop to pastorally evaluate such phenomena, taking into account the *Norms for Proceeding in the Discernment of Alleged Supernatural Phenomena*. The current *Rules*, dating from 1978, had been revised and, after years of corrections and comments for improvement under the auspices of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, they were presented to the Holy Father on May 4, 2024, who then approved them and set them to enter into force on May 19, 2024. (Fernandez 2024, 9)

reflecting the ongoing tensions between local believers and ecclesiastical authorities (McElwee 2015).

As time has progressed, the Medjugorje apparitions have remained a source of fascination and devotion for many believers. The ongoing nature of the apparitions, with the seers claiming to still receive messages from the Virgin Mary decades later, adds a layer of complexity to the narrative. These messages continue to emphasize themes of love, forgiveness, a call for peace, and a call to prayer, urging the faithful to deepen their spiritual lives. For many pilgrims, visiting Medjugorje has become a life-changing experience, providing them with a renewed sense of purpose and connection to their faith.

The spiritual impact of the apparitions extends beyond individual experiences; it has also led to the establishment of various religious initiatives and organizations dedicated to promoting the messages of Medjugorje. The village has become a vibrant hub for spiritual activities, including Mass services, confessions, prayer groups, and retreats, drawing thousands of visitors each year. Local residents have embraced the influx of pilgrims, recognizing the economic and social benefits that accompany this spiritual (religious) tourism. The village's transformation into a pilgrimage site symbolizes the enduring power of faith and the human desire for connection with the divine. As the Catholic Church continues to grapple with the authenticity and significance of the apparitions, Medjugorje retains its status as a sacred place where the messages of peace and reconciliation continue to inspire spiritual journeys for millions worldwide. The story of Medjugorje is not only an exploration of the divine but also a reflection of the resilience of the human spirit amidst chaos, war, and general uncertainty.

2 Analysis of the statements of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of Faith about supernatural phenomena with focus on Medjugorje

The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) released a statement in 2024 regarding the experiences and reported apparitions in Medjugorje and provides a comprehensive theological reflection on the interplay between faith, personal experience, and ecclesial authority. This analysis will delve into the key themes presented in the documents *Norms for Proceeding in the Discernment of Alleged Supernatural Phenomena* (NPDASP) and *The Queen of Peace: Note About the Spiritual Experience Connected with Medjugorje* (QP) (2024), examining their implications for the Church, the broader context of Marian apparitions, and the historical significance of Medjugorje within Catholicism. The document begins by acknowledging that God's presence and activity in history are manifested through the Holy Spirit, who, proceeding from the heart of the risen Christ, operates within the Church with divine freedom, bestowing valuable gifts that support spiritual growth and fidelity to the Gospel. This action may also be expressed through supernatural occurrences, including apparitions or visions of Christ or the Blessed Virgin (Fernandez 2024, 7).

The DDF affirms the experiences of pilgrims who have visited the site since 1981, emphasizing the conversion, prayer, and deepened devotion to Mary and Jesus that many have reported. This recognition of spiritual fruits is essential, as it validates the genuine experiences of many believers while situating these experiences within the broader framework of Catholic doctrine.

> The positive fruits are most evident in the promotion of a healthy practice of a life of faith, in accordance with the tradition of the Church. In the context of Medjugorje, this applies both to those who had been previously distant from the faith as well as to those who had practiced the faith only superficially. The uniqueness of the place lies in the large number of such fruits: abundant conversions, a frequent return to the sacraments (particularly, the Eucharist and Reconciliation), many vocations to priestly, religious, and married life, a deepening of the life of faith, a more intense practice of prayer, many reconciliations between spouses, and the renewal of marriage and family life. (QP 3)

The DDF states that the fruitfulness of these experiences cannot be denied, as many faithful testify to a renewed faith. This acknowledgment reflects the Church's pastoral concern and commitment to the spiritual well-being of its members. A central theme of the document NPDASP is the call for discernment. The DDF urges the faithful to approach the experiences in Medjugorje with both openness and caution. This duality is essential, as the document recognizes the complexities inherent in the Medjugorje phenomenon, which has persisted over several decades. By advocating for a discerning attitude, the DDF reinforces the importance of aligning personal experiences with established Church teachings. The call for discernment is particularly relevant in a contemporary context where subjective experiences can challenge objective truth claims. As noted in the document: »When spiritual experiences are accompanied by physical and psychological phenomena that cannot be immediately explained by reason alone, the Church has the delicate responsibility of carefully studying and discerning these occurrences.« (NPDASP 8)

Moreover, the DDF addresses the ongoing investigations into the Medjugorje apparitions, indicating that the Church is committed to a thorough examination of the reported events. This acknowledgment reflects a broader ecclesial commitment to understanding and validating supernatural claims while safeguarding the integrity of the faith. The DDF states that the process of discernment continues, and the Church remains open to the findings of ongoing studies. This careful wording suggests that while the Church does not yet affirm the apparitions' authenticity, it is open to the possibility pending further investigation. Historically, the Church has taken this approach with other claimed apparitions, as seen with the cases of Lourdes and Fatima, which were eventually recognized as worthy of belief after extensive investigation.

Another significant aspect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith's position is its emphasis on the role of local bishops in the discernment process. The DDF underscores the necessity of ecclesial authority in guiding the faithful and ensuring that any claimed revelations do not detract from the Church's established magisterium. The document asserts that the local bishops play a crucial role in the discernment process, providing guidance and ensuring fidelity to the Church's teachings. Likewise, »The Diocesan Bishop is encouraged to *appreciate* the pastoral value of this spiritual proposal, and even to *promote* its spread (I, par. 17)« (Fernandez 2024, 8). This emphasis on ecclesiastical authority is vital, as it reaffirms the hierarchical structure of the Church and the necessity of submission to that authority. The DDF appears to signal that while personal experiences can be transformative, they must always be aligned with the teachings and authority of the Church, echoing the sentiments expressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which states that »the functions of the magisterium are to interpret and safeguard the deposit of faith« (CCC 890). The DDF's statement also serves as a reminder of the potential for division within the Church regarding private revelations. The phenomenon of Medjugorje has garnered both fervent support and strong scepticism among the faithful and theologians alike. The DDF's call for discernment is an attempt to foster unity among believers. By encouraging a reflective and measured approach, the document seeks to mitigate extreme reactions and promote a spirit of dialogue and understanding. The statement emphasizes that the Church seeks to build bridges of understanding among those who hold differing views on the apparitions, reflecting a pastoral desire for unity that is particularly important in a time of polarization.

The Dicastery also warns against the possibility of abuse of events of alleged supernatural origin.

> At the same time, in some events of alleged supernatural origin, there are serious critical issues that are detrimental to the faithful; in these situations, the Church must respond with utmost pastoral solicitude. In particular, I am thinking of the use of such phenomena to gain »profit, power, fame, social recognition, or other personal interest« (II, Art. 15, 4°) – even possibly extending to the commission of gravely immoral acts (cf. II, Art.15, 5°) or the use of these phenomena »as a means of or pretext for exerting control over people or carrying out abuses« (II, Art. 16). (Fernandez 2024, 8)

The Dicastery is very clear when it alerts that when considering such events, one should not overlook the possibility of doctrinal errors, an oversimplification of the Gospel message, or the spread of a sectarian mentality. Finally, there is the possibility of believers being misled by an event that is attributed to a divine initiative but is merely the product of someone's imagination, desire for novelty, tendency to fabricate falsehoods (mythomania), or inclination toward lying (Fernandez 2024, 8).

Furthermore, the DDF highlights the importance of an informed faith (good knowledge of the doctrine of the Catholic Church). It encourages believers to engage with the teachings of the Church, which have developed over centuries and are rooted in Scripture and Tradition. The DDF says that an informed faith fosters a deeper understanding of God's revelation and enables individuals to navigate their spiritual journeys more authentically. The document states:

> The positive fruits are most evident in the promotion of a healthy practice of a life of faith, in accordance with the tradition of the Church. In the context of Medjugorje, this applies both to those who had been previously distant from the faith as well as to those who had practiced the faith only superficially. (QP 3)

This call for an informed faith aligns with the Church's broader mission to educate and enlighten its members, ensuring that personal experiences are contextualized within the larger tapestry of Catholic belief. In conclusion, the statement from the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith regarding the experiences in Medjugorje encapsulates a careful balance between acknowledging the spiritual impact of the apparitions and exercising caution in their discernment. Ultimately, the document serves also as a pastoral guide for the faithful, encouraging them to navigate their spiritual journeys with both openness to the divine and fidelity to the Church's authority. The DDF's approach emphasizes that while personal experiences of faith are significant, they must be integrated within the context of the Church's rich tradition and teachings, fostering a deeper and more authentic relationship with God.

The spiritual experience surrounding Medjugorje, often emphasized through the messages attributed to the Virgin Mary, highlights the profound importance of prayer in fostering peace and deepening one's faith. The DDF reflects on the significance of these messages and identifies several core themes that underscore the transformative power of prayer in the lives of believers and the broader community.

3 Analysis of Mary's messages from Medjugorje

Speaking about the phenomenon of Medjugorje, it is necessary to emphasize that the identity of Medjugorje is formed by the following characteristics:

the Virgin Mary, the six seers, and the messages transmitted by Mary through the visionaries (seers). By the nature of the matter itself, it is necessary to add the eventual miracles, especially the miraculous healings and the spiritual fruits of the phenomenon of Medjugorje (Rupčić and Nuić 2002, 49). In our discussion, we focus only on the messages, especially the importance of prayer in them and in the awareness that Mary's apparitions and messages have not yet been confirmed by Church authorities. The messages of the Virgin Mary of Medjugorje, which have captivated millions of believers since the first reported apparitions in June 1981, encompass profound spiritual guidance that resonates with the themes of faith, love, peace, and inner conversion of a human being. Over the years, the messages have sparked both devotion and controversy, prompting a deeper examination of their implications within the contemporary religious landscape.

3.1 The primacy of prayer

One of the most consistent themes in the messages of Medjugorje is the emphasis on prayer as an essential foundation of spiritual life (QP 18). The Virgin Mary frequently urges the faithful to pray daily, asserting that through prayer, individuals can open their hearts to God's grace and experience transformative encounters with the divine. In the message of June 25, 2006, she said, »Dear children, thank you for having responded to my call. Pray, pray, pray!« (Archive of Marian Messages – Medjugorje [n.d.]) This call to prayer aligns with traditional Catholic teachings, where prayer is understood as a vital means of communication with God and essential for nurturing one's faith. Mary emphasizes different forms of prayer, including personal meditation, communal prayer, and especially the Rosary. The Rosary is the Church's traditional prayer as a method of inner prayer which leads us into communion with the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Philippe 2013, 108-109). The Rosary is the Church's prayer to remember the mysteries of Jesus Christ. It originated or developed from the prayers of monks and consecrated persons (Slovenian Bishops' Conference 2023). For many Catholics, the Rosary serves as a powerful tool for contemplation and connection with Mary's maternal love. The repetitive nature of this prayer invites believers to reflect on the mysteries of Christ's life and draw closer to God through Mary's intercession.

3.2 Conversion and personal transformation

Another significant message from Mary is her call to conversion. She implores individuals to turn away from sin and toward a more profound commitment to their faith. For instance, she proclaims, »Dear children, today I invite you to conversion. You cannot be a Christian if you do not pray« (Medjugorje Website 2025). This message emphasizes that conversion is not merely a one-time event but an ongoing process that requires self-reflection and a willingness to embrace change. »Conversion seems to be the focus of Mary's message: 'Dear children! Today I call you to conversion. This is the most important message I have given you here.' (25 February 1996)« (QP 15) The concept of conversion is deeply rooted in Christian theology, where it signifies a transformative turning toward God and a rejection of sin. Mary's call invites believers to examine their lives and consider how they can align their actions with their faith. Many followers of Medjugorje report that these messages have inspired them to embark on journeys of personal transformation, leading to renewed faith and greater commitment to their spiritual lives.

3.3 Peace and reconciliation

The theme of peace is central to the messages of Medjugorje, reflecting Mary's identity as the »Queen of Peace«. She frequently speaks on the importance of peace within oneself, in relationships, and in the world at large. In one of her messages, Mary states, »I am the Queen of Peace. I have come to tell you that peace must reign in your hearts« (Medjugorje Website 2025). These words underline peace and resonate powerfully in a world often marked by conflict and division. Mary's messages encourage believers to cultivate inner peace through spiritual practices such as prayer and fasting, which can then be extended to their interactions with others. The call for reconciliation underscores the need for forgiveness and understanding, reflecting the Christian belief in the transformative power of love. In this context, Mary becomes an advocate for dialogue and harmony among individuals, God, and communities, urging followers to work toward resolving conflicts peacefully.

3.4 Fasting and penance

Fasting emerges as a vital component of Mary's messages, often presented as a practice that enhances prayer and fosters spiritual growth. She encourages the faithful to incorporate fasting into their lives as a means of purification and self-discipline. In her words, »Do not give in! [...] I do not want to reproach you further; instead, I want to call you once again to prayer, fasting, and penance (28 January 1987).« (QP 16) This call to fasting can be viewed as a return to traditional spiritual disciplines that have been somewhat overlooked in modern religious practice. Fasting is understood not only as a physical act of abstaining from food but also as a spiritual exercise that invites believers to focus on their relationship with God. It serves as a reminder of the need for humility and dependence on divine grace. Many followers of Medjugorje report experiencing profound spiritual benefits from fasting, including increased clarity, deeper prayer experiences, a tool against sin, and a greater sense of community with fellow believers.

3.5 The mass and Eucharistic adoration

Mary underlines the importance of the sacrament of Eucharist and adoration as the source of spiritual nourishment for believers. She emphasizes the significance of the Mass and encourages the faithful to partake in the Eucharist regularly. In her messages, she states, »The Eucharist is the strength of your life. Adore Him.« (Medjugorje Website 2025) This emphasis on the Eucharist aligns with Catholic doctrine, which teaches that the Eucharist is the true body and blood of Christ, offering believers the opportunity to encounter the divine in a tangible way. The Eucharist is the focal point of the worship of the community, uniting the faithful in a common experience of grace in the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation). By advocating for a deeper appreciation of the Eucharist, Mary invites believers to recognize the profound mystery of Christ's presence and the transformative power of the sacrament in their lives.

The messages of the Virgin Mary of Medjugorje have generated significant theological discourse, particularly concerning their authenticity and implications for Church teachings. The Vatican has approached the

Medjugorje apparitions with caution, conducting investigations into the claims and scrutinizing the messages for alignment with Catholic doctrine. While some local bishops have expressed support for the messages, the Vatican has not officially approved them, leading to division among Catholics (especially among the faithful and clergy). The theological implications of these messages raise questions about the nature of private revelations and their role within the Church. According to Catholic teaching, private revelations do not add to the public revelation of Christ but may serve to deepen the understanding of that revelation. Furthermore, the messages have sparked discussions regarding the role of Marian devotion in contemporary spirituality. While some view the Medjugorje apparitions as an authentic manifestation of Mary's presence, others express concern about the potential for sensationalism or misinterpretation. The tension between personal experience and ecclesiastical authority creates an environment in which believers must navigate their faith delicately. The messages of the Virgin Mary of Medjugorje provide a rich exploration of fundamental Christian themes, including prayer, conversion, peace, fasting, and the Eucharist. They invite believers to deepen their faith and engage in a transformative journey toward God. While the authenticity of these messages remains a topic of debate within the Church, their impact on the lives of countless individuals is undeniable. The Medjugorje phenomenon challenges believers to reflect on their spiritual journeys and consider how they can embody the messages of love, peace, and reconciliation in a world that yearns for healing. Ultimately, the messages serve as a reminder of Mary's maternal care and her desire for humanity to embrace a life rooted in faith and love.

4 The meaning of prayer in the messages of the Virgin Mary of Medjugorje

To better understand why Mary emphasizes the importance of prayer so much, we need to explain what prayer actually is and what its goal and purposes are. The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines Catholic prayer as a living relationship with God[5], as a gift of God (CCC 2559–2561), as a covenant (CCC 2562–2564), as communion (CCC 2565). God is the one who first seeks humanity, calls them into existence through creation, and invites them to a mysterious encounter in prayer (CCC 2566–2567). Prayer is the drama of the covenant between God and humanity. God tirelessly calls every person to a spiritual encounter in prayer. »This step of love on the part of the faithful God is always the first step in prayer; humanity's step is always a response. When God reveals himself, he reveals himself to humanity, and prayer becomes a mutual calling, a drama of commitment. In words and deeds, this drama touches the heart. It is revealed throughout the history of salvation.« (CCC 2567)

Prayer, as seen in the context of Mary's messages from Medjugorje, is first understood as a conversation and as a relationship with the living God (Pevec Rozman 2025, 12). God invites believers to enter an interpersonal relationship with him. When a person enters an interpersonal relationship, they are transformed, and it is to this »conversion« that Mary invites in her messages. Furthermore, prayer is understood as the »means« by which the relationship with God is kept alive; the aliveness of the relationship implies a more or less constant effort to communicate, which includes conversation as dialogue, reflection, presence in the vicinity, meditation, silence, listening, observing and recognizing the signs of God's nearness and presence through people, through events and experiences, through nature, in fact, in the whole of Creation. In this context, prayer is simply a connection or a conversation with God. A conversation that does not exclude silence, distance, doubt, abandonment, absence, and sometimes overflowing joy and overflowing love that has the power to transform hearts. Prayer is not, in fact, easy to define, for, as the wisdom of the Church Fathers on prayer sums it up, »great is the mystery of prayer« (Kocijančič 1993, 7).

Prayer plays a key role in Mary's messages, but it goes beyond the boundaries of personal spiritual practice and is intertwined with the religious

5 In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, prayer is defined as a relationship with the living God: »'Great is the mystery of the faith!' The Church professes this mystery in the Apostles' Creed (Part One) and celebrates it in the sacramental liturgy (Part Two), so that the life of the faithful may be conformed to Christ in the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father (Part Three). This mystery, then, requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer.« (CCC 2558)

life of the community. The emphasis on the importance of prayer is often perceived in the context of deepening the spiritual connection between the individual and God, which is reflected in the messages through the call to a daily prayer life. The messages from Medjugorje recommend various forms of prayer, including the Rosary, meditative practices, and devotions, which are in line with the basic teachings of the Catholic Church and awaken a desire for inner peace and spiritual growth.

4.1 Prayer as communication with God

At the heart of the Medjugorje messages is the notion of prayer as a profound communication with God. Mary emphasizes that prayer is not merely a ritual but an intimate dialogue with the divine. This understanding is echoed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which states, »Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God« (CCC 2559). This definition highlights the relational aspect of prayer, which invites believers to express their innermost thoughts and feelings. Mary's messages often encourage individuals to engage in prayer during times of distress and uncertainty. For example, she states, »Pray, pray, pray! Pray for those who do not know the love of God« (Medjugorje Message, April 25, 1988 [Archive of Our Lady Messages (n.d.)]). This call to prayer reflects the belief that through prayer, individuals can find solace, guidance, and strength, reinforcing the idea that prayer serves as a lifeline to God in challenging times. Mary's invitations to prayer are often accompanied by an invitation to fast:

> If you are in distress or in need, come to me. If you do not have the strength to fast on bread and water, you can give up other things. Besides food, it would be good to give up television because after watching television programs, you are distracted and cannot pray. You could also give up alcohol, cigarettes, and other pleasures. You yourselves know what you must do (8 December 1981). (QP 19)

4.2 Prayer as a pathway to peace

In the messages, Mary often identifies herself as the »Queen of Peace,« inviting individuals to seek a deeper understanding of peace that transcends mere absence of conflict. This peace is multifaceted, encompassing spiritual, familial, and social dimensions. As stated in the document *The Queen of Peace*, »This peace is achieved primarily through prayer, but it is also spread through missionary efforts« (QP 6). Through prayer, individuals can cultivate a profound sense of inner tranquility that allows them to become instruments of peace in their families and communities. The Virgin Mary said in one of her apparitions, »I call upon you all to pray responsibly for peace. Pray, dear children, for peace to reign in the world, for peace to reign in the hearts of men and in the hearts of my children. Therefore, be my bearers of peace in this restless world. Be my living sign: a sign of peace (5 August 2013).« (QP 6) The call for personal and collective prayer for peace has special meaning because the war in the former Yugoslavia (1991) began almost exactly ten years after the first apparition of Our Lady in Medjugorje.

4.3 The role of prayer in personal conversion

The transformative power of prayer is another recurring theme in the Medjugorje messages. Mary calls her followers to return to prayer as a means of purification and spiritual renewal. She often encourages believers to seek conversion, stating, »Convert, convert, convert« (Medjugorje Website 2025). This emphasis on transformation aligns with the biblical understanding of repentance and renewal, as expressed in Romans: »Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.« (Romans 12:2) Through consistent prayer, believers are invited to develop virtues such as love, patience, and forgiveness, essential for their spiritual journeys. This transformative aspect is echoed in the writings of many saints, including St. Teresa of Avila: »In the prayer of quiet, the soul is so united to God that it is not aware of itself or of anything else; it is a loving union in which the soul is so completely absorbed that it is as if it were in a state of ecstasy, and the soul's love is so great that words are no longer necessary to express it.« (Saint Teresa of Ávila 1958, 290–291) Many testimonies from pilgrims to Medjugorje reveal that prayer plays a crucial role in personal transformation. As individuals engage in daily prayer practices – such as the Rosary, Eucharistic adoration, and confession – they often report significant changes in their lives. The document notes, »For many people, life changed after they accepted the spirituality of Medjugorje (messages, prayer, fasting, adoration, Holy Mass, confession, etc.) in their daily lives, leading them to pursue a call to the priesthood or religious life« (QP 5). These personal transformations frequently lead to a greater willingness to serve others, embodying the peace and love that prayer nurtures (Platovnjak and Svetelj 2025, 132–139).

4.4 Community and collective prayer

The community aspect of prayer is another crucial element emphasized in the messages. The parish of Medjugorje has become a beacon of spiritual activity, where collective prayer is a vital part of the community's life. Millions of people flock to this special place from virtually all over the world, seeking solace, encouragement, and meaning in life through personal or communal prayer. The document *Queen of Peace* describes the parish's vibrant spiritual environment: »In that parish, we can observe the daily recitation of various parts of the Rosary, the celebration of the Holy Mass… adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and numerous confessions.« (QP 4) Events such as Youth Festivals and annual retreats not only draw individuals closer to God but also strengthen communal bonds. In this shared spiritual experience, participants find encouragement and support from one another, reinforcing the notion that prayer is most powerful when shared. The Virgin Mary frequently calls for groups to gather and pray together, emphasizing the importance of fellowship and shared faith. For instance, she states, »When you pray together, you are stronger« (Medjugorje Message, December 25, 1991 [Archive of Our Lady Messages (n.d.)]). This communal aspect reinforces the idea that faith is not merely a personal endeavor but a collective journey. The importance of community in prayer is supported by Scripture, particularly in Matthew: »For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.« (Matthew 18:20) This verse underscores the belief that communal prayer fosters a sense of belonging and support among believers, strengthening the unity of the Church.

4.5 The fruits of prayer: vocations and service

The transformative power of prayer extends beyond individual experiences to the broader community. The messages from Medjugorje have inspired many to discover their vocations, whether in priesthood, religious life, or lay ministry. The document states, »Many people have discovered their vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life in the context of the

'Medjugorje phenomenon'« (QP 5). Pilgrims often return home with a renewed sense of purpose, ready to engage in charitable works and support those in need. The emergence of numerous prayer groups and charitable initiatives worldwide, inspired by the spirituality of Medjugorje, attests to the far-reaching impact of prayer. According to the document, the messages from Medjugorje serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of prayer in our lives. Through prayer, individuals can experience a profound sense of peace, undergo personal transformation, foster community, and respond to the call of service. As the document concludes, »In the midst of this phenomenon, the Holy Spirit is carrying out many beautiful and positive things« (QP 5). As we embrace the call to prayer, we join in a collective effort to spread peace and love in a world often marked by division and strife. The journey of faith, illuminated by these messages, invites us to trust in God and seek His presence through the gift of prayer.

> In this journey, prayer is fundamental. The exhortation to pray is both constant and insistent in the messages: »I call on you once again to decide for prayer because, with prayer, you will be able to experience conversion. Each of you will become, in simplicity, similar to a child who is open to the Father's love (25 July 1996). [...] I call on you to fill your day with short, ardent prayers. When you pray, your heart is open, and God loves you with a special love and gives you special graces. Therefore, make good use of this time of grace and dedicate it to God as never before (25 July 2005).« (QP 18)

4.6 Intercession and divine will

In the Medjugorje messages, prayer is portrayed as a means of intercession. Mary invites her followers to pray not only for their own intentions but also for the needs of others, the Church, and the world. This call to intercessory prayer reflects a belief in the interconnectedness of humanity and the importance of selflessness. As St. Paul writes: »I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people.« (1 Timothy 2:1-2) Additionally, Mary's messages suggest that through prayer, believers can align themselves more closely with God's will. She emphasizes the need for discernment and openness to divine guidance, encouraging her followers to seek understanding and fulfilment of their purpose.

> Dear children! Also, today I call you to pray for peace. Pray with the heart, little children, and do not lose hope because God loves His creatures. He desires to save you, one by one, through my coming here. I call you to the way of holiness. Pray, and in prayer you are open to God's will; in this way, in everything you do, you realize God's plan in you and through you. Thank you for having responded to my call (March 25, 2003). (Medjugorje Website 2025)

4.7 Prayer as resistance to evil

Another significant theme in Mary's messages is the role of prayer as a defence against evil. She warns of the spiritual battles individuals face and emphasizes that prayer is a powerful weapon against negativity and division. For instance, she states, »The Devil is trying to conquer us. Do not permit him. Keep the faith, fast and pray. I will be with you at every step (November 16, 1981).« (Medjugorje Website 2025) This perspective instils a sense of urgency and responsibility among believers to engage in prayer as a means to combat spiritual darkness. This understanding is supported by Ephesians, which urges believers to »[p]ut on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes« (Ephesians 6:11-12). The call to prayer as a form of resistance underscores the belief that spiritual warfare is an integral part of the Christian life, emphasizing the necessity of prayer for protection and strength.

4.8 Cultivating a prayer life

The Virgin Mary through the seers encourages the faithful to cultivate a consistent prayer life, suggesting that regularity and discipline in prayer can lead to deeper spiritual insights and experiences. She advises, »I desire each one of you to dedicate more time to God. Satan is strong and wants to destroy and deceive you in many ways. Therefore, dear children, pray every day that your life will be good for yourselves and for all those you meet (September 25, 1990).« (Medjugorje Website 2025) This practical guidance aims to make prayer accessible and integral to the daily lives of believers. Incorporating prayer into daily routines fosters a sense of mindfulness and spiritual awareness. The practice of daily prayer aligns with the biblical exhortation in 1 Thessalonians: »Pray without ceasing.« (1 Thessalonians 5:17) This encouragement to maintain an ongoing conversation with God reflects the understanding that prayer is not confined to specific moments but should permeate every aspect of life.

The messages of the Virgin Mary in Medjugorje present prayer as a multifaceted practice that is essential for spiritual development, community building, and resistance against evil. By urging believers to embrace prayer in various forms, Mary invites them to deepen their relationship with God, transform their lives, and engage actively with the world around them. This emphasis on prayer not only reinforces traditional Christian values but also resonates with the contemporary need for spiritual connection and community amidst the challenges of modern life. The ongoing relevance of these messages highlights the enduring power of prayer as a fundamental aspect of the Christian faith, encouraging believers to recognize prayer as a transformative and communal practice that strengthens their relationship with God and one another. Through prayer, the faithful are called to embody the love and grace of God in their lives, fostering a deeper understanding of their faith and its implications for the world.

Conclusion

The messages of Our Lady of Medjugorje conveyed in this context have been met with both fervent devotion and cautious scepticism. Proponents argue that the messages emphasize the importance of prayer as a transformative power in personal and communal faith life, urging believers to deepen their relationship with God through devotion to Mary, while also advocating for peace, reconciliation, and intercessory prayer. These themes resonate deeply within the Catholic tradition, highlighting the significant role of prayer as a means of sanctification and spiritual growth. Conversely, the Dicastery's stance reflects a nuanced understanding of the nature of private revelations, which, while not essential to the faith, can still possess value when aligned with Church teachings. The ongoing investigation into the events in Medjugorje illustrates the delicate balance between pastoral care and doctrinal integrity. The Dicastery has approached the reported apparitions with a desire for discernment, considering the need for a thorough evaluation of the experiences shared by believers. In this light, the emphasis on prayer, as articulated in the messages from Medjugorje, is seen not as an endorsement of the apparitions but rather as an encouragement toward genuine spiritual practices that foster a deeper faith and community engagement. It should be noted that the apparitions of Mary and the transmission of her messages are not yet complete, which means that the Holy See cannot yet make a definitive statement on these apparitions and messages.

As the Church continues to navigate the complexities surrounding Medjugorje, the significance of prayer as a foundational element of the Christian life remains unchallenged. The messages from Medjugorje serve as a reminder of the Church's enduring call to seek holiness through prayerful reflection and participation in the sacraments. By reaffirming these core tenets, the Church not only upholds its commitment to guide the faithful but also acknowledges the diverse pathways through which believers may encounter God's grace. Ultimately, the dialogue between personal experiences of faith and the authoritative guidance of the Church illustrates the dynamic interplay that defines the spiritual journey of the faithful, particularly in contexts marked by contested visions and apparitions. In this context, it is crucial to emphasize that the messages conveyed through these profound spiritual experiences often highlight the fundamental need for prayer as a powerful means of personal and collective transformation. Prayer, understood in a broad and contemplative sense, serves as a sacred bridge that connects the individual soul with the transcendent divine, enabling spiritual reevaluation and a profound focusing of attention on the eternal spiritual values that bring profound peace, stability, and purpose into people's lives (Platovnjak and Svetelj 2022, 634–635).

The visionary experiences encountered by the faithful pilgrims often convey powerful messages of hope, unconditional love, and a catalysing call for personal and societal renewal. Such transformative messages encourage individuals to engage in regular, heartfelt prayer, meditation, and contemplative practices, which have become pivotal points in the spiritual development and awakening of many. This is not merely a personal spiritual experience; many insightful observers report a profound collective effect that the Medjugorje phenomenon has on the wider community. The profound spiritual breakthroughs that arise from the individual's connection with the divine have, even before being shared with others who have had similar transcendent experiences, further strengthened the tangible sense of belonging and created a sacred space for shared sincerity, empathy, and solidarity (Platovnjak and Svetelj 2024, 170–182).

The entire Medjugorje phenomenon also enables a remarkably positive and inspiring shift in the collective perception of peace – not only at the level of individual inner peace and harmony, but also in a broader, more holistic social context. The Medjugorje experiences encourage and empower grassroots efforts for peace that stem directly from personal transformations, as the attainment of inner peace and profound personal change within the individual directly and positively impact the quality of relationships in society. When individuals find enduring inner peace, this leads to more harmonious, compassionate, and mutually supportive interpersonal relationships, which can effectively reduce conflicts and foster a collective, community-wide pursuit of peace, unity, and the common good. By consistently encouraging prayer, contemplation, and the sincere opening of souls to deep spiritual renewal, Medjugorje serves as a vital and benevolent catalyst, offering a timely and eternally relevant response to the complex challenges of the present era. Therefore, it is to be expected that theologians and others will continue to study the Medjugorje phenomenon and analyse Our Lady's messages. It is likewise a task for further inquiry – as the article itself encourages – to undertake a focused treatment and analysis of the concepts of private revelation in Catholic theology and the discernment of the authenticity of apparitions within this context, which constitutes both a scientific endeavour and a complex theological and pastoral challenge.

No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.
Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.

Abbreviations

CCC *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1997
DDF Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith
NPDASP Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith 2024a [*Norms for Proceeding in the Discernment of Alleged Supernatural Phenomena*]
QP Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith 2024b [*The Queen of Peace: Note About the Spiritual Experience Connected with Medjugorje*]

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Pilgrimage in the Digital Age: Spiritual Pluralism and AI-Supported Transformation on the Camino de Santiago

Romanje v digitalni dobi: duhovni pluralizem in z umetno inteligenco podprta transformacija na poti Camino de Santiago

Abstract: The Camino de Santiago has emerged in late modernity as a ritual space where diverse spiritual, religious, and secular orientations converge. This article explores the Camino as a site of spiritual pluralism and self-transcendence, highlighting its transformative potential for pilgrims independent of doctrinal belief. Drawing on empirical studies, we demonstrate that the pilgrimage experience fosters exceptional human experiences (EHEs), personal growth, and a shift in values toward universalism and benevolence. Embracing an integrative perspective on spirituality, we propose a framework for designing ethically grounded, AI-guided pilgrimage companions that support rather than commodify the journey. Instead of serving merely logistical functions, such AI systems can nurture reflection, facilitate encounters with diverse spiritual perspectives, and reinforce the Camino's communitarian and existential ethos. This vision invites further interdisciplinary research on how digital tools can enhance spiritually meaningful human experiences.

Keywords: Camino de Santiago, pilgrimage, AI and spirituality, spiritual transformation, integrative perspective

Izvleček: *Camino de Santiago se je v pozni moderni dobi uveljavil kot ritualni prostor, kjer se srečujejo pripadniki različnih duhovnih, religijskih in sekularnih usmeritev. Članek raziskuje Camino kot prostor duhovnega pluralizma in samotranscendence ter poudarja njegov transformativni potencial neodvisno od romarjevega prepričanja. Na podlagi empiričnih študij pokažemo, da romanje spodbuja izjemne človekove izkušnje (IČI), osebnostno rast ter spremembo osebne hierarhije vrednot v smeri univerzalizma in benevolence. V okviru integrativne perspektive duhovnosti predlagamo zasnovo etično utemeljenih, z umetno inteligenco (UI) podprtih romarskih spremljevalcev, ki ne komodificirajo poti, temveč jo podpirajo. Takšni UI-sistemi ne opravljajo le logistične funkcije, temveč lahko spodbujajo refleksijo, omogočajo srečevanje pripadnikov različnih duhovnih usmeritev in krepijo skupnostni ter eksistencialni značaj Camina. Ta vizija odpira prostor za nadaljnje interdisciplinarne raziskave o tem, kako lahko digitalna orodja poglabljajo duhovno osmišljene človekove izkušnje.*

Ključne besede: *Camino de Santiago, romanje, umetna inteligenca in duhovnost, duhovna transformacija, integrativna perspektiva*

Introduction

We are living in the era of artificial intelligence (AI), a technology that Lin and Chang (2023) argue mimics human intelligence and thought processes.[1] According to the Coursera Staff (2024), AI refers to computer systems capable of performing complex tasks that historically only humans could do — such as reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving. Despite its impressive development, the question of whether AI constitutes true intelligence remains contested. Žalec (2023, 814) questions whether AI possesses the core attributes of intelligence, while McGilchrist (2024) argues that it merely processes information, lacking depth, value orientation, and contextual understanding. While McGilchrist (2024) warns of a growing risk that humanity may become subjugated to machines, arguing that this represents not a distant apocalypse but an ongoing one, others such as Isbrücker (2024) suggest that dystopian or utopian framings often obscure the fact that AI remains, fundamentally, a tool – and one whose impact depends entirely on the values embedded by its designers and users.

AI's underlying logic mirrors the cognitive style of the left brain: it prioritizes control, data-processing, and efficiency – what McGilchrist (2009) considers hallmarks of modern Western society's abstraction and rationalization. As a possible counterbalance to this trajectory, spirituality – often grounded in intuition, embodiment, and holistic perception – is increasingly recognized as a defining feature of late modernity. Spirituality offers a way for individuals to seek meaning and purpose, navigate existential uncertainty, and connect to something greater than themselves (Sheldrake 2012; Walach 2017). This spirituality has a certain resonance in contemporary holistic science, characterised both by a synthetic theoretical approach that makes sense of surprising facts and by the collective nature of scientific communities that give scientific explanations the status

1 This paper was written as a result of work within the research project J6-60105 (Theology and Digitalization: Anthropological and Ethical Challenges) and research programme P6-0269 (Religion, Ethics, Education and the Challenges of Contemporary Society) which are financed by the Slovenian Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (ARIS).

of reality (Pohar 2023). Yet, as Giddens (1991) and Berger and Luckmann (1995) observe, the disembedding of institutional religion from everyday life leaves modern individuals vulnerable to meaninglessness and ontological insecurity.

Pilgrimage, especially on the Camino de Santiago, emerges as a powerful response to this crisis of meaning. As a rite of passage, pilgrimage reconnects individuals to shared values and traditions, offering not only physical challenge and solitude but also a space for deep inner reflection, symbolic release, and community. Schnell and Pali (2013) speak of a »yearning for rituals« in late modernity – a trend clearly reflected in the exponential rise in the number of pilgrims walking the Camino: from under 3,000 in 1987 to over 499,200 in 2024 (Pilgrim's Office 2025).[2]

Pilgrimage is a liminal space. Here, individuals temporarily shed their social identities and roles, entering into communitas – a space of equality, presence, shared humanity, and the closeness of fellow beings (Brumec 2023). This experience is intensified by the rhythms of walking, the shared rituals at shrines like Cruz de Ferro and Alto del Perdón, and the egalitarian atmosphere of pilgrim shelters (albergues), where people of vastly different spiritualities meet as equals. As O'Mara (2019) explains, walking not only improves mental and physical health but fosters a sense of social connection through movement and rhythm. Even solitary pilgrims walk with and for an imagined community. Walking – especially with a higher purpose – strengthens social cohesion, deepens reflection, and inspires transformation. Contemplative walking also enables a deeper connection with transcendence or the Absolute, facilitating transformation in the spirit of the individual (Platovnjak and Zovko 2023).

It is in this context that we propose to explore the possibilities of using AI to shape and support the holistic experience of pilgrimage – particularly

2 This count includes only those pilgrims who arrived in Santiago de Compostela and received the Compostela certificate from the Chapter of the Metropolitan Church. To obtain the Compostela, pilgrims must undertake the journey for religious or spiritual reasons – or at minimum with an attitude of personal searching – and complete at least the last 100 kilometers on foot or horseback (or 200 kilometers by bicycle), and collect official stamps in the Credencial del Peregrino as proof of passage along the route.

on the Camino Francés.[3] Our aim is not to technologize spirituality, but to consider how AI, when designed with care, humility, and embedded universalist values, could serve as a tool for deepening the pilgrim's journey. We draw inspiration from Hadar-Shoval et al. (2024), whose findings suggest that leading large language models (LLMs), such as those accessed via ChatGPT, already prioritize values like universalism and de-emphasize achievement and power. However, they also caution that such embedded value biases raise important concerns for culturally sensitive applications, including those in mental health or spiritual contexts. AI may reinforce certain value systems, while marginalizing others, if not carefully aligned with diverse human and spiritual experiences.

Despite these concerns, we suggest that the Camino itself – through its structure, symbolism, and transformative power – already embodies a set of values aligned with universalism, humility, and human connection. Rather than shaping pilgrims according to the biases of AI, we propose that AI be shaped in service to the values that emerge from pilgrimage. This includes helping pilgrims prepare mentally and spiritually before the journey, supporting reflection and solitude during the walk, and assisting in the integration of transformative insights upon return.

In this article, we explore whether and how AI could be responsibly used to co-shape the pilgrimage experience through an integrative perspective on spirituality. This perspective encourages pilgrims to listen deeply, to engage in dialogue with others across religious, secular, and esoteric worldviews, and to return to society with a renewed capacity for universalism, humility, and care for the common good and our shared home – the planet. By supporting not only individual self-transcendence but also shared meaning-making, AI might contribute to nurturing communitas in a digitally mediated age, creating spaces of harmony and mutual respect among diverse seekers on the way.

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3 According to data from the Pilgrim’s Office (2025), the Camino Francés is the most popular route leading to Santiago de Compostela. It is named after its traditional starting point in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, located at the foot of the French Pyrenees. The route spans approximately 800 kilometers and typically requires four to five weeks of walking.

1 Integrative Perspective on Spirituality

In contemporary discourse, spirituality is increasingly recognized as a complex and multifaceted concept that extends beyond traditional religious boundaries. A growing body of research highlights the distinction between spirituality and religion, allowing for more inclusive interpretations that address diverse individual experiences and needs (Rego et al. 2018; Moreira et al. 2020; Counted et al. 2023). While spirituality often emerges within religious or esoteric contexts, it is no longer confined to institutional or doctrinal frameworks (Sheldrake 2012).

Religious spirituality is grounded in personal and communal relationships with the divine as articulated within specific religious traditions. It provides a path to meaning and purpose through sacred texts, rituals, commandments, and faith-based practices. This form of spirituality seeks union with God and a holistic vision of life grounded in relationality – with self, others, creation, and the divine (Walach 2017; Rego et al. 2018; Al-Daghistani 2023; Dahlke 2024; Platovnjak and Svetelj 2024).

Secular spirituality, by contrast, offers a non-theistic route to personal growth and existential reflection. It centres on inner peace, emotional balance, and ethical responsibility toward others and the natural world. Drawing on sources such as nature, science, art, and philosophy, secular spirituality often employs practices like mindfulness, meditation, and creative expression to foster connection and meaning (Walach 2017; Carneiro et al. 2020; Platovnjak and Svetelj 2024).

Esoteric spirituality is characterized by personal quests for inner transformation and connection to a transcendent universal reality. It embraces symbolic language, mystical insights, and often secretive or initiatory practices rooted in traditions like Hermeticism, Kabbalah, or Taoism. This type of spirituality emphasizes autonomy, self-realization, and experiential knowledge of higher truths (Faivre 1994; Sheldrake 2012; Asprem and Strube 2021).

Recognizing the richness and diversity of spiritual orientations, Platovnjak and Svetelj (2024) propose an integrative perspective on spirituality. This approach encourages mutual listening and dialogical engagement between religious, secular, and esoteric spiritualities. Rather than promoting syncretism or exclusivist truth claims, the integrative model seeks to honour the uniqueness of each path while affirming shared values and fostering mutual respect. It promotes spiritual humility and a collective commitment to the common good and care for our common home, cultivating a space of harmony and respectful dialogue among diverse seekers. A respectful attitude toward diverse forms of spirituality enables individuals to become more fully human within the framework of their own journey. Where diversity is embraced as a gift, fellow human beings are no longer seen as threats or competitors, but as companions and interlocutors on the path of spiritual growth.

This integrative framework aligns with the ethos of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, where spiritual diversity is a lived experience. It provides a valuable lens through which we can begin to explore how AI might be used not to standardize or commodify the spiritual journey, but to support and enrich it – respecting the pluralism and depth that make pilgrimage such a powerful transformative practice.

2 The Camino de Santiago pilgrimage

The Camino de Santiago offers a unique ritual space where diverse spiritual orientations, motivations, and expectations intersect. As Oviedo et al. (2013) argue, in the context of late modernity, the Camino is characterized by the coexistence of contrasting forms of spirituality – where religious, spiritual, and secular pilgrims walk side by side, sharing the same physical and symbolic space. This spiritual pluralism (Margry 2008) enables a fluid interplay between tradition and individual interpretation, allowing for deeply personal encounters with meaning, regardless of religious affiliation.

Both atheist and religious pilgrims engage in experiences of horizontal and vertical transcendence – referring respectively to connection with nature, others, and the self, and to connection with the divine or a higher reality (Farias et al. 2019). As Brumec et al. (2023a) emphasize, there are no »purely religious« pilgrims on the Camino: religious motivation rarely appears in isolation. Instead, it coexists with spiritual and secular motives, reflecting a hybridization of intent that is emblematic of contemporary pilgrimage.

Interestingly, even nonreligious pilgrims frequently participate in religious rituals. As Radcliffe (2012) notes, secular individuals often find personal meaning in acts such as embracing the statue of Saint James in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. This observation is confirmed by data from the CETUR study (2007–2010), which found that although 82% of pilgrims reported nonreligious motives for walking the Camino, the majority still participated in religious practices: over 70% embraced the statue of Saint James, more than 80% collected the Compostela, and approximately 97% attended the pilgrim's mass.[4]

Pilgrims on the Camino frequently undergo Exceptional Human Experiences (EHEs) – intense, transformative experiences triggered by the unique conditions of pilgrimage (Brumec et al. 2023b; 2024b). These include encounters with natural beauty that elicit awe and a sense of transcendence and the sacred, visits to shrines and cathedrals, and prolonged periods of walking in silence. Ritual elements such as singing, physical exertion, and perceived life energy contribute to altered states of consciousness, enhancing the potential for inner transformation.

Empirical research on post-pilgrimage outcomes (Brumec and Aracki Rosenfeld 2021; Brumec 2022a) reveals substantial psychological and spiritual growth among pilgrims. These include an increased appreciation of life, a strengthened sense of purpose, greater openness to others, deeper self-acceptance, and an enriched spirituality. While values are generally stable over time, pilgrimage appears to reshape the value hierarchy of individuals. A study based on Schwartz's theory of basic human values (n = 500) demonstrated the most pronounced increases in universalism and

4 In connection with these findings, the French academic and writer Jean-Christophe Rufin (2016) offers a compelling reflection in his travelogue The Santiago Pilgrimage: Walking the Immortal Way. Explaining why he, as a self-identified non-religious person, chose to attend the final pilgrim Mass at the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela, he writes: »We should stick to the rules of the game: since the Church has appropriated this pilgrimage, which in my opinion is filled with a wider, more abstract spirituality, we should let it provide the finale. Unlike the individual and almost dreamlike gesture of the visitors, who embrace the saint one after the other, the pilgrims' High Mass is a real moment of communion. It is a crucible, which melts together all the differences, the journeys, the ordeals of each pilgrim, to create a beautiful alloy of pure sound for the duration of a prayer.«

benevolence, suggesting a heightened concern for the welfare of others. Conversely, values related to self-enhancement – such as power, dominance,[5] and personal achievement – significantly decreased (Brumec 2022b).

Further findings (Brumec 2024b) indicate that pilgrims often report an enhanced sense of authenticity, equanimity, moral clarity, and connection with life's deeper meaning. Many describe a renewed sense of life mission and a commitment to contributing to the common good. These shifts are understood as markers of self-transcendence – a movement beyond self-interest toward values that support collective well-being and the flourishing of humanity.

Brumec (2023) found that pilgrims foster an egalitarian and creative community that transcends generic social bonds. This community is characterized by profound comradeship, mutual generosity, and a shared ethos of humility, with wisdom regarded as an ontological value. In contrast, participants who engage in the pilgrimage solely through organized group tours for the final 100 kilometres are often not perceived as fully integrated into this community and are classified as pseudo-pilgrims.

Thus, the Camino de Santiago serves not only as a physical journey but also as a transformative psychosocial and spiritual process (Roszak and Mróz 2024). It fosters pluralistic, inclusive spirituality while strengthening self-transcendence values, making it a powerful site for personal growth and social reconnection.

3 Designing a transformative AI-guided Camino pilgrimage experience

To preserve the Camino Francés as a spiritually meaningful pilgrimage rather than a commodified touristic product, AI can be conceptualized not as a logistical planner or a commercial tool, but as a supportive tool for spiritual guidance, helping pilgrims engage more deeply with their journey

5 Regarding human dominion over nature, which is found in the Biblical text about creation in Genesis 1:1–2:3, see Lülik (2024, 125–150).

without replacing human presence and personal insight (Lumbreras and Garrido-Merchan 2024). In this role, AI would serve to foster self-reflection, solitude, communitas, and the cultivation of universal values throughout the journey. The following proposals outline how such an AI-guided experience could be designed in accordance with the ethical principles of universalism and the psychological framework of self-transcendence.

What sets AI apart from traditional media – such as guidebooks, video series, or podcasts – is its ability to personalize content in real time based on each pilgrim's individual needs, pace, and spiritual orientation. By learning from walking patterns (e.g. via GPS), conversational interactions, and personal reflections, AI can tailor daily prompts, suggest appropriate rituals, and offer meaningful quotes aligned with the pilgrim's values and mood. Rather than providing generic guidance, it becomes an adaptive spiritual companion that walks alongside each individual, supporting their unique path of growth. This dynamic responsiveness enables AI to function not merely as an informational tool, but as a facilitator of lived, contextualized meaning-making.

To realize this potential, the AI system must be intentionally designed with a focus not on efficiency or entertainment, but on deepening the existential and spiritual quality of the pilgrimage. This requires aligning its functionalities with the core ethics of the Camino itself—simplicity, presence, inner work, and mutual respect. The following sections propose how AI can translate these values into practice, not by imposing a singular experience, but by gently adapting to each pilgrim's path while preserving the integrity and sacredness of the journey.

3.1 AI-Personalized itinerary planning based on pilgrimage ethics

AI could assist pilgrims in designing individualized itineraries grounded in the core values and ethics of pilgrimage by:

- encouraging the completion of the full Camino Francés or a significant uninterrupted segment, promoting continuity and depth of experience over fragmented touristic consumption;
- discouraging the use of buses or organized luggage transfer services, and instead emphasizing the symbolic and psychological significance

of carrying one's own backpack – a practice associated with the transformative process of letting go, as pilgrims confront both their physical and metaphorical burdens and come to recognize the value of simplicity and non-attachment (Brumec et al. 2023b);
- suggesting a walking rhythm that privileges solitude and introspection during the day, complemented by opportunities for communal interaction in the evenings – such as in albergues, churches, or spiritual circles;
- highlighting key symbolic and spiritual landmarks – such as Alto del Perdón, Cruz de Ferro, and O Cebreiro – while offering reflections on their interreligious significance and transformative potential.

Additionally, AI tools can promote a deeper appreciation of the religious meaning embedded in Christian symbols and sacred architecture along the Camino. Since these elements were originally created within the Christian tradition, pilgrims – regardless of their own affiliation, whether belonging to another religion, an esoteric group, or a secular spirituality – can be encouraged to explore their original symbolism. This fosters a respectful attitude toward Christian heritage and contributes to mutual understanding. When Christians participate in pilgrimages within other religious traditions, they likewise have the opportunity to encounter and appreciate the symbolic and spiritual meaning of those traditions. In this way, AI can nurture interspiritual sensitivity and reciprocity grounded in mutual respect.

3.2 AI-enhanced reflection and meaning-making

AI can act as a virtual reflective companion, supporting pilgrims' interior journey by:

- providing daily reflective prompts that encourage individuals to deepen their spirituality within the framework of their own tradition—be it religious, secular, or esoteric. Rather than promoting a universalized spiritual narrative, this approach respects the uniqueness of each path and invites pilgrims to explore the richness of their own worldview while remaining open to the experiences of others. Only through such grounded engagement can one cultivate a deeper respect for one's own spiritual journey and, by extension, for others'

as well. A respectful approach to spiritual diversity enables individuals to become more fully human in the deepest sense – by growing in authenticity, compassion, and inner maturity;
- suggesting rituals or symbolic actions at sacred sites – such as meditative silence at Cruz de Ferro or writing a personal letter at Alto del Perdón – that invite embodied meaning-making and personal transformation in ways aligned with the pilgrim's belief system;
- sharing testimonies, myths, and parables drawn from various traditions to stimulate introspection and emotional resonance, without dissolving the specific contours of each spiritual or religious identity.

This approach affirms the value of distinct spiritual frameworks and discourages homogenizing tendencies. It recognizes that respect for difference is not only possible but essential in nurturing authentic dialogue, mutual appreciation, and deep spiritual growth.

3.3 AI-facilitated exposure to spiritual pluralism

To support an integrative perspective on spirituality, the AI system could:

- curate stories, interviews, or video diaries of pilgrims from diverse spiritual backgrounds – religious, non-religious, and esoteric – thereby encouraging empathy, mutual respect and acceptance, dialogue with every person and worldview, as well as interreligious and intercultural understanding;
- invite pilgrims to journal or voice-record their responses to these perspectives, encouraging reflection on their own evolving worldview and spiritual identity;
- provide brief meditations on spiritual humility, shared values, and the ethics of coexistence, reinforcing the ethos of communitas as a bond among seekers.

3.4 Spiritually-aligned albergue discovery

Rather than defaulting to comfort or convenience, AI could guide pilgrims toward accommodation choices that enhance spiritual depth by:

- recommending municipal, parochial, and value-driven private albergues known for communal meals, evening reflections, and shared rituals;
- filtering out highly commercialized options and instead highlighting locations that preserve the Camino's simple, reflective, and community-oriented character;
- suggesting albergues that host interfaith dialogues or spiritual practices open to all traditions, thereby supporting interspiritual learning rooted in mutual respect. For example, shared moments of silence or contemplative stillness can create a common spiritual space, allowing each participant to connect inwardly in accordance with their own worldview or tradition.

3.5 Ethically coded AI: a values-based framework

At its foundation, the AI system must be guided by a transparent and ethically grounded architecture that:

- prioritizes self-transcendence values – especially universalism and benevolence – over self-enhancement values such as achievement and power, while respecting and nurturing their emergence within each individual's own spiritual framework. These values are present in every healthy spiritual tradition, though they are often overlooked. By supporting the growth of these values from within, rather than imposing them externally, the AI system encourages authentic personal development and deeper spiritual integration;
- upholds equal respect for all spiritual orientations, avoiding the privileging of any singular religious tradition while remaining sensitive to Christian heritage;
- rejects the commodification of the Camino, emphasizing its existential, moral, and communal dimensions as a sacred human journey.

In this vision, AI is not a replacement for spiritual experience, but an amplifier of awareness and connection. It neither directs nor dominates the pilgrimage but gently accompanies the pilgrim, offering resources, questions, and insights to nurture reflection, humility, and openness. It can serve as a gentle encourager toward deepening one's own spirituality, discovering the richness of other spiritual paths, and fostering respectful interconnectedness among all seekers. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that key aspects of this ethical design – such as transparency and value alignment – remain open challenges in current AI research and practice.[6]

Conclusion

The Camino de Santiago exemplifies how spirituality is evolving in late modernity – becoming more experiential, inclusive, and dialogical. It brings together pilgrims from diverse religious, spiritual, and secular backgrounds in a shared ritual and symbolic space, where both horizontal (communal) and vertical (transcendent) dimensions of the sacred can unfold. As empirical research has shown, this journey often catalyses deep personal transformation, fostering self-exploration, greater emotional and spiritual maturity, and a shift in values toward universalism, humility, and care for the common good.

What distinguishes the Camino from similar experience is its pluralistic and integrative character. It welcomes not only traditional religious expressions but also secular seekers and those drawn to esoteric or non-institutional forms of spirituality. Here, spirituality does not emerge solely from inherited doctrine but is co-created through lived experience, embodied rituals, and meaningful encounters. Even nonreligious pilgrims can engage deeply with symbols, silence, and shared practices, discovering spiritual resonance through authenticity and openness.

In this context, AI holds the potential to serve not as a replacement for spiritual experience but as a gentle companion—an amplifier of awareness, meaning-making, and interconnection. When guided by principles rooted in self-transcendence, respect for diversity, and ethical sensitivity, AI can support the interior journey of the pilgrim as much as it does the physical one. It can curate reflective content, foster interspiritual understanding,

6 While transparency and ethical grounding are essential goals in building trustworthy AI, they remain technically and normatively difficult to achieve. In the literature, these are often referred to as the *black box problem* (lack of model interpretability) and the *alignment problem* (difficulty in ensuring that AI systems act in accordance with human values). For a comprehensive overview, see: Brian Christian, *The Alignment Problem: Machine Learning and Human Values* (2020).

and preserve the Camino's character as a sacred, transformative path rather than a commodified, touristic product.

While AI has been used in religious and spiritual contexts – for example, in Arabic-language chatbots designed to support religious interaction and guidance (Alhumoud, Al Wazrah, and Aldamegh 2018), in AI-guided meditation apps like Replika that simulate human-like traits and values to function as emotionally supportive companions (Brown 2023), or in the growing phenomenon of online rituals such as virtual pilgrimage (Helland and Kienzl 2021) – these applications primarily focus on religious education, psychological support, or digitally mediated sacred experiences. To date, there are no known implementations or conceptual frameworks that use AI to accompany pilgrims in a pluralistic, ethically grounded, and spiritually supportive manner on physical pilgrimages such as the Camino de Santiago.

This opens new avenues for interdisciplinary research into how emerging technologies can enhance spiritually meaningful human experiences across diverse contexts. Ultimately, the true promise of integrating AI into the pilgrimage experience lies in its capacity to nurture deeper spiritual engagement, support the unique path of each pilgrim, and promote a spirit of mutual respect, dialogue, and shared humanity – on the Camino and beyond.

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No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.
Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.

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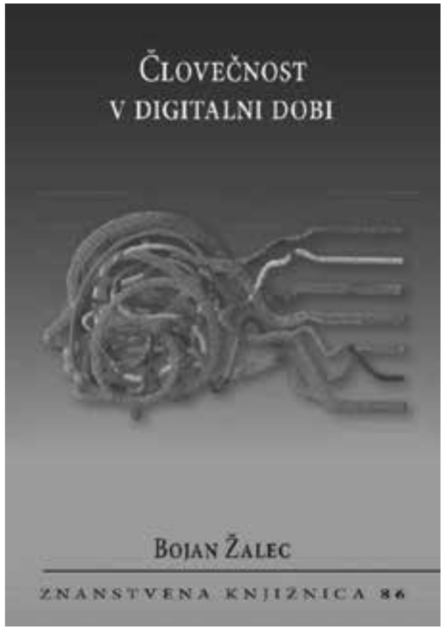

Znanstvena knjižnica 86
Bojan Žalec
Človečnost v digitalni dobi: Izzivi umetne inteligence, transhumanizma in genetike

Avtor na naslovnici zapiše: »Namen pričujoče knjige je prispevati k oblikovanju ustrezne filozofske in teološke antropologije za sodobno digitalno dobo. Izhajam iz stališča, da je naloga kritične (javne) humanistike, filozofije in teologije zaščita človeka in obramba človeškosti in človečnosti pred razvojnimi trendi, nauki in ideologijami, ki ju ogrožajo. To poslanstvo in potenciali kritične humanistike so še posebno pomembni v sedanji tehnološki dobi, ko je človeškost človeka ogrožena tako korenito, kot ni bila še nikoli. Humanistično razumevanje človeka vse bolj izpodriva scientistični pogled na človeka, ki ga razume kot proizvod algoritmov in podatkov. Scientistično podobo človeka je zato treba podvreči kritični raziskavi in jo utemeljeno zavreči ter obenem razvijati alternativno človekoslovje, ki je primerno sodobnemu času in v skladu z resničnimi znanstvenimi spoznanji.«

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Sebastijan Valentan

Diplomacy and Religion: The Role of Protocol Visits in Shaping the International Relations of the Republic of Slovenia

Diplomacija in religija: Vloga protokolarnih obiskov pri oblikovanju mednarodnih odnosov Republike Slovenije

Abstract: Based on original documents of the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia and offering a novel, comprehensive treatment of the subject, this contribution analyses the significance of protocol visits in shaping the international relations of the Republic of Slovenia. It emphasizes that such visits are not merely formal-diplomatic events but also instruments for strengthening bilateral and multilateral ties. Particular attention is given to the rarity and prestige of state visits and to the exceptional symbolic value of Pope John Paul II's visits, which transcended traditional protocol frameworks and reinforced Slovenia's bond with the Holy See. The analysis shows that religion in protocol visits remains an important element of soft diplomacy, complementing political dimensions and strengthening the country's identity in the global arena.

Keywords: diplomacy, religion, protocol, protocol visits, diplomatic law, international relations, state visits

Izvleček: *Prispevek, ki je nastal na podlagi originalnih dokumentov Protokola Republike Slovenije in predstavlja novost v smislu predstavitve celostne obravnavane tematike, analizira pomen protokolarnih obiskov pri oblikovanju mednarodnih odnosov Republike Slovenije. Poudarja, da ti obiski niso le formalno-diplomatski dogodki, temveč tudi instrumenti krepitve bilateralnih in multilateralnih vezi. Posebej izpostavlja redkost in prestižnost državniških obiskov ter izjemno simbolno vrednost obiskov papeža Janeza Pavla II., ki so presegli običajne protokolarne okvire ter utrdili vez med Slovenijo in Svetim sedežem. Analiza pokaže, da religija pri protokolarnih obiskih ostaja pomemben element mehke diplomacije, ki dopolnjuje politične razsežnosti in krepi identiteto države v globalnem prostoru.*

Ključne besede: *diplomacija, religija, protokol, protokolarni obiski, diplomatsko pravo, mednarodni odnosi, državniški obiski*

Introduction

Relations between states influence many aspects of life, including security, the economy, culture, and global development. Good relations between states help prevent conflicts and wars and foster cooperation in addressing international crises. States engage in trade, investment, and technological progress, which encourages economic growth and prosperity. International organizations such as the United Nations, the EU, and NATO (Šabič 2016, 33)[1] play an important role in tackling global challenges, while good relations between states also positively affect the exchange of ideas and the appreciation of art and traditions, enriching societies and fostering understanding among nations. Cooperation between states makes it possible to resolve humanitarian crises, fight poverty, and promote democracy and human rights. Precisely because the world faces problems that transcend the borders of individual states (climate change, terrorism, pandemics), international cooperation is essential to address them. Good relations between states therefore contribute to stability, development, and the prosperity of the entire world.

An important aspect of bilateral relations at the highest level between states and organizations is also ensuring and respecting religious freedom as one of the most fundamental human rights and basic liberties. Although this area is protected in all major declarations and conventions, the role of the Holy See in safeguarding and promoting religious freedom in the world is irreplaceable and unique. Even though the Holy See is not a state, it enjoys international legal personality (Brito de Macedo 2010, 35–43). As the representative of the Catholic Church, it is the only religious community with such a status in the world. In 2024, 184 states had established full diplomatic relations with the Holy See. To this number, the European Union and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta must be added. Ninety of these diplomatic missions are based in Rome, including that of the European Union (Baratta 2024) and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Offices accredited to the Holy See are also located in Rome, including

1 After the inauguration of the 47th President of the United States, one of Donald Trump's first executive orders was the withdrawal of the U.S. from the World Health Organization, which is one of the agencies of the United Nations. What impact this decision will have on other world leaders and on the work of the WHO itself remains to be seen in the future.

those of the Arab League, the International Organization for Migration, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Press Office of the Holy See 2025, 3).[2]

Established diplomatic relations between states represent the willingness of both sides to develop dialogue and resolve open issues. They are a sign of good cooperation and respect for international law. Such relations (though not necessarily) enable the visits of high state officials to another country, which manifest and confirm the goodwill of the host country toward the guest and vice versa. The preparation of each such visit requires exceptional precision and an excellent knowledge of the guest and the guest's country, while at the same time it is an opportunity for the host country to present itself in the best light, for example, by directing the guest's attention to important sacred buildings and other heritage of great cultural value to the nation. It is therefore not insignificant that the host country knows the guest's religious affiliation and worldview, as this can help avoid potential inconveniences that could affect the future of bilateral relations.[3]

1 Protocol visits of high officials in Slovenia

Diplomatic law pays special attention to state and other official visits. The legal act that defines state and other visits of high officials in the Republic of Slovenia is the Decree on the Determination of Protocol Rules (DDPR), adopted by the Slovenian government. According to the DDPR, state and other visits in Slovenia are defined as protocol events, organized by the

2 The Press Office of the Holy See further announced that in 2024 the Second Additional Protocol to the agreement between the Holy See and Burkina Faso on the legal status of the Catholic Church in Burkina Faso was signed. The Holy See and the People's Republic of China agreed last year to extend the validity of the Provisional Agreement on the appointment of bishops for another four-year period. This agreement was originally concluded on 22 September 2018 and subsequently renewed on 22 October 2020 and 22 October 2022. Most recently, on 24 October 2024, an agreement was signed between the Holy See and the Czech Republic on certain legal matters.

3 This is also confirmed by the protocol rules followed by the host country, Slovenia, during state or official visits of high-ranking representatives of foreign states. These rules stipulate, for example, that gifts presented to the guest are chosen according to the recipient's rank and interests. As a rule, the gifts should be made in the Republic of Slovenia and represent Slovenian cultural (sacred) heritage (DDPR 2020, Art. 26).

Protocol of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia (Protocol) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia.

State visits take place when our country is visited by the head of another state or government. These visits are not very frequent, but they are solemn, ceremonial, and the most important. On such occasions, the head of state may be accompanied by several ministers and his ambassador to the host country (Cerar 2021, 287). Members of the permanent entourage, designated by the host, include a minister of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the advisor to the President of the Republic of Slovenia, the Slovenian ambassador to the guest's country, the head of the Protocol, a diplomat responsible for the guest's country at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other persons designated by the host. A state visit also includes the formation of an official delegation consisting of the head of state with spouse or partner and members of the official entourage. The official delegation may have up to eight members. Such visits are not supposed to exceed three per year and usually last up to three working days. The hosts of such visits are either the President of the Republic or the Prime Minister, depending on the guest. The flags of the guest, the Republic of Slovenia, and the European Union are displayed at the place of arrival and departure, at the guest's residence, at the venues of official program events, in the premises of official talks and photo sessions, and on the car transporting the main guest.

A state visit includes a welcome ceremony with military honours, followed by a private meeting between the guest and the host, which may also be attended by the guest's spouse or partner. A particularly solemn part of such a visit is the exchange of gifts and decorations. The host organizes one formal lunch or dinner, at which the host and guest exchange toasts, and the Speaker of the National Assembly or the Prime Minister also hosts a meal. If the visiting head of state has executive powers, he also takes part in official talks with the Prime Minister of Slovenia. The visit includes delegation meetings led by the heads of state, the guest meets the Speaker of the National Assembly and the Prime Minister, and the program includes a guided walk through Ljubljana and a visit to the town hall, as well as tours of other historical, cultural, or natural landmarks of Slovenia. Press meetings and other activities, arranged with the host or at the guest's request, are also planned. The concluding event is a farewell ceremony with military honours. A state visit of a foreign head of state in Slovenia therefore differs from other types of visits in that it includes the exchange of decorations and a farewell ceremony with military honours – features absent from other visits.

Depending on the purpose, state visits are followed by official, working, and private visits of the head of state, the president of parliament and of the European Parliament, the prime minister, the president of the European Council, the president of the European Commission, and the heads of international organizations; the president of the National Council or Senate, the president of the Constitutional Court, the president of the Supreme Court, the Ombudsman, the president of the Court of Audit, the minister of foreign affairs, as well as heads of international organizations and specialized agencies at the rank of minister of foreign affairs. According to the DDPR, official, working, and private visits also occur when Slovenia is visited by delegations of federal states, provinces, and regions, when hosted by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Prime Minister, or the President of the National Council. Official, working, and private visits differ from state visits in that they are less ceremonial, more frequent, last up to two working days, have a smaller permanent entourage and a smaller official delegation, and involve fewer activities. As specified in the Instruction on the Implementation of the DDPR (Instruction), an official delegation in official visits consists of six persons, while in working visits the official delegation comprises four persons (2020, 5.7).[4]

2 From one private to only a few state visits

Research on visits of high officials to the Republic of Slovenia is based on official data provided by the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia to the author of this contribution upon request in accordance with the Access to Public Information Act.[5] These consist of programs of visits by heads

4 For further details, see Bohte and Sancin 2006, 176–177.

5 On 29 May 2025, the author received an official reply by email from the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia, stating that the Protocol keeps records of protocol events that it is assigned to prepare and carry out by the offices and cabinets of statesmen, for whom it organizes events in accordance

of states (prime ministers, presidents, and organizations) from 1991 to 2024. These programs include information about the nature of the visit, the persons involved, the date and locations, and a summary of the content of individual meetings. The types of protocol visits in Slovenia are defined by the DDPR, but from the transmitted programs it is not always possible to clearly identify what kind of visit it was, since the protocol programs often simply note: »Visit.«

This was the case not only in 1991, when the Republic of Slovenia was just beginning to establish itself as a new state in the international community, but such broadly defined visits appear almost every year. From the collected data, it is therefore not possible to assert with certainty whether, for example, the 1992 visit of Croatian President Franjo Tuđman was a state, official, or working visit, since the designation in the program was simply »visit«. Given that the guest was received with military honours upon arrival and departure at Brnik Airport, that he met with the Prime Minister, and that the President of the Presidency hosted a formal lunch, one might conclude it was a state visit, but the visit ended the same day and there was no exchange of gifts or decorations. The generic designation »visit« also appears in 2024, for example, when Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, visited Slovenia. That visit included no military honours, no exchange of gifts or decorations, but there was a meeting with the Prime Minister, and the Minister of the Environment hosted a lunch.

Based on the data collected, we can conclude that since independence there has only been one private visit in Slovenia: Croatian President Stjepan Mesić on June 25, 2010. He entered through the Obrežje border crossing, travelled in a motorcade to Cerklje ob Krki to attend the Cerklje 2000 Air Show, met with Slovenian President Milan Kučan, who hosted him for lunch in Kostanjevica na Krki, and left Slovenia in the evening. There have

with the Decree on the Determination of Protocol Rules. Some visits and protocol events in the offices or cabinets of the highest officials are prepared independently or carried out by protocol staff working directly in the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, which are not part of the records of the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia. The forwarded list therefore does not include all the visits hosted by the President of the Republic of Slovenia and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia. It is the host authorities themselves – the Office of the President of the Republic of Slovenia and the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia – that are responsible for informing the public about the visits, not the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia.

been 50 undefined visits (not classified as state, official, working, or private in the documents), 115 working visits, and 234 official visits. State visits – the highest-level ones – have taken place only three times in Slovenia, which will be presented hereinafter.

The most high-level protocol visits were conducted by representatives of the Republic of Croatia (26), followed by Hungary (23), North Macedonia (17), Austria and Montenegro (16 each), Slovakia (15), Bosnia and Herzegovina (13), Italy (12), and Serbia (11).[6] Slovenia has also been visited by presidents of the European Commission and Parliament, Secretaries-General of the UN, NATO, the European Council, the Arab League, and the OECD, and the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

High officials also visited Slovenia on the occasion of international events hosted here, such as the Bled Forum, Trilateral Meetings, the European Parks Day Meeting, the Meeting of Presidents of Neighbouring States and Germany on the occasion of Independence Day and the 25th anniversary of independence, the Brdo-Brijuni Meeting, the Formal Lunch of Neighbouring States, the Slovenia-Benelux Summit, the Informal Trilateral Meeting of Slovenia, Croatia, and Austria, the Three Seas Initiative, the Meeting of Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group, and the Meeting of Presidents of Neighbouring States marking the 20th anniversary of Slovenia's EU membership.

6 List of countries whose high representatives visited Slovenia between 1991 and 2024 on state, official, working, or private visits: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Montenegro, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Georgia, Croatia, India, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Canada, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Macedonia, Malaysia, Malta, Morocco, Moldova, Monaco, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republika Srpska, Romania, Rwanda, Russia, Slovakia, Serbia, Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Spain, Sweden, the Holy See, Swiss Confederation, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, United States of America, United Kingdom.

3 State visits: weak bridges of international cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia

State visits are intended to occur no more than three times per year. This limited number underlines their prestige, but is also due to the extraordinary demands of preparation and costs. If at least one such visit had taken place every year since Slovenia's independence, there would have been over 30 by now. Surprisingly, however, only three have occurred: the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh in 2008, King Harald V and Queen Sonja of Norway in 2011, and Italian President Giorgio Napolitano with his wife in 2012.[7]

The first state visit, understandably, attracted the greatest public interest, also because of the exceptional personality of the British Queen. We will therefore present it separately as illustrative. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, together with their entourage, arrived at Brnik Airport on 21 October 2008 at 1:45 p.m., followed by a photo opportunity. Upon their arrival in front of Brdo Castle, they were welcomed by the host, Slovenian President Danilo Türk with his wife, followed by a reception with military honours. After the official photo session, the guests, together with the host and his wife, engaged in a conversation in the Golden Salon of Brdo Castle, for which 30 minutes had been scheduled. This was followed by the most significant act of a state visit of the highest rank – the exchange of decorations. The Slovenian President decorated the British Queen with the Order for Exceptional Merits of the Republic of Slovenia, while she bestowed upon him the Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath.

The guests then proceeded to Ljubljana, to the Grand Hotel Union, where the Queen visited the workshop of the British school »Jungle Jangle« and met with organizers and children, while her husband attended the »Creative Cities« workshop. In the foyer of the Union Hall, the guests met with staff of the Embassy of the United Kingdom and members of the British

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7 That only three state visits had taken place in Slovenia up to 2025 was also confirmed to the author by the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia in an email on 4 August 2025.

Council, after which a reception followed in the mentioned hall. In the evening, the guests and hosts returned to Brdo Castle, where the Queen received the Prime Minister Janez Janša and the Speaker of Parliament Pavel Ganter. The Queen and her husband then signed the Golden Book of Brdo Castle, followed by the official presentation of the guests at the formal dinner hosted in their honour by the Slovenian President and his wife.

After spending the night at the Grand Hotel Union in Ljubljana, on the second day of the state visit the guests visited the Lipica Stud Farm, where, in the company of the presidential couple, they attended a presentation of the riding school program and of stands displaying local crafts and products of Karst women. In the Avgust Černigoj Gallery there, the Queen met with children who were award winners of the Lipica project, while her husband met with representatives of the stud farm. Upon departure, the guests and hosts signed the Guest Book of the stud farm, and the director of the stud farm symbolically presented the Queen with a Lipizzaner horse. At the Maestoso Hotel, within the stud farm complex, they participated in a reception for the participants of the UN Global Compact.

At Ljubljana Castle, the distinguished guests were received by the Mayor of Ljubljana, Zoran Janković, and in the Estates Hall of the castle, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom hosted a luncheon in their honour. Both guests and hosts signed the Golden Guest Book of the City of Ljubljana and took the funicular down to Krek Square. From there, in a motorcade, they proceeded to Tromostovje and walked, accompanied by crowds of people, to the Grand Hotel Union. In the evening, the guests viewed the exhibition »Slovenians in London« in the foyer of the Concert Hall of the Slovenian Philharmonic and attended the event of the »Duke of Edinburgh Awards« ceremony, where they met with representatives of the awards program. Upon returning to the hotel, after a brief rest in the Silver Salon, the distinguished guests bid farewell to the organizers of the visit and had a private dinner.

On the third day, Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh departed from the Union Hotel to Ljubljana Airport, where they were greeted by the hosts. An official farewell with military honours followed, and the guests departed from Slovenia with their official entourage by special aircraft.

The other two state visits followed a similar structure in their essential elements for such occasions, with certain adjustments. The Norwegian royal couple visited Slovenia between 9 and 11 May 2011. King Harald V and Slovenian President Türk, for example, attended the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 between the Republic of Slovenia and the Kingdom of Norway, and the King visited the National Assembly and the town of Radovljica.

The Italian President, together with his wife, arrived in Slovenia for a three-day visit on the evening of 9 July 2012, without receiving military honours at the airport. This official ceremonial was instead held the next day in front of Brdo Castle. President Napolitano, for example, addressed the deputies of the National Assembly and met with representatives of the Italian minority, but during this state visit no exchange of decorations took place.

4 The historic visits of Pope John Paul II to Slovenia

Although a state visit is considered the highest-ranking type of visit, nothing can compare with the two visits of Pope John Paul II to Slovenia. Firstly, because this was the visit of both a statesman and a world moral and religious authority in one person, and secondly, because he received such broad support from politics, the people, and the media. The visit of the head of the Catholic Church transcended the categories of state, official, or working visit.

The Pope first visited our country between 17 and 19 May 1996. In the records of the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia, this visit is listed as »Visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Republic of Slovenia«. Although the program of the visit does not specify that the Pope's arrival at Brnik Airport would be followed by a reception with military honours, this did in fact occur. Not only with military honours: at the airport, the Pope was welcomed by the highest representatives of the Slovenian state – the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the National Assembly – as well as by the diplomatic corps. Both the Slovenian and Vatican anthems were played, and the distinguished guest also greeted the Slovenian bishops. Afterwards, the President of the Republic, Milan Kučan, and Pope John Paul II both addressed those gathered.[8] The Pope then travelled in a motorcade to Slovenia's national shrine at Brezje, an event not mentioned in the official visit program. There he prayed before the image of Mary Help of Christians, and in front of the basilica he blessed the assembled crowd. He continued on to Brdo Castle, where he was welcomed by the President of the Republic. After the greeting, the host invited the guest into the castle, where they held a private conversation, after which the President of the Republic introduced the Pope to the senior representatives of the Slovenian state and their spouses. The host presented the guest with a silver oil lamp, while the guest presented the host with a relief image of the apostles Peter and Paul. From Brdo, the Pope travelled by popemobile to the capital, and from the courtyard of the Ljubljana Archdiocese walked to the Cathedral, where he blessed the main doors. In the Cathedral he led Vespers with priests, religious, and laity, and concluded the first day with a private dinner.

The Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia also recorded a full second day of the visit in its official program. The first event that day was the morning transfer of the Pope's entourage from the St. Stanislav Institute to the Ljubljana Archdiocese. Since that day was also the Pope's 76th birthday, a children's choir gave him a birthday serenade in the archdiocesan courtyard. At the Stožice Hippodrome the Pope then celebrated Holy Mass before approximately 105,000 faithful, after which he lunched with the Slovenian bishops at the St. Stanislav Institute. There followed a meeting with the Prime Minister, Janez Drnovšek, who presented the distinguished guest with a coloured lithograph of Ljubljana by an unknown author from 1840 (Krznar 1996, 91). The Pope also greeted the directors and staff of the St. Stanislav Institute. He then travelled to the Postojna sports airfield, where a meeting with young people took place, before returning to Ljubljana, where he dined with his entourage at the Archdiocesan headquarters.

8 All the speeches that Pope John Paul II delivered during his 1996 visit to Slovenia were published by Družina in the publication Church Documents (John Paul II 1996).

On the final, third day of the visit, the Pope departed from Brnik Airport for Maribor, where, before more than 100,000 faithful at the Maribor airfield, he celebrated Holy Mass.[9] From there he proceeded to the headquarters of the Maribor Diocese, where he lunched with Slovenian bishops and his entourage. He then visited Maribor Cathedral and prayed at the tomb of the Servant of God Bishop Anton Martin Slomšek, and met with representatives of culture and science in the presence of the Slovenian President of the Republic. In the square in front of the Cathedral, the Pope blessed the Fountain of Peace, accompanied by a written memorial, which still stands today. At the Maribor airfield, from where he departed for Rome, a farewell ceremony with military honours took place – something not noted in the program of the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia. The Pope was bid farewell by the Slovenian President and other senior dignitaries, with both guest and host giving closing addresses.

The second and, so far, last papal visit to Slovenia took place on 19 September 1999 and was devoted entirely to Maribor. In its program, the Slovenian Protocol titled the visit simply »Visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Republic of Slovenia«, without specifying whether it was a state, official, working, or private visit. Given that the Pope was received with military honours upon arrival at Maribor Airport, the visit certainly ranked at least as an official visit. The Pope celebrated Holy Mass before approximately 200,000 faithful at Betnava Field, during which he beatified the Servant of God Bishop Anton Martin Slomšek – the central purpose of the visit. He then travelled by popemobile to the Episcopal Palace in Maribor, where he lunched with Slovenian bishops, visiting cardinals, and bishops from his entourage. Afterwards, he visited the Cathedral, where he prayed at the tomb of the Blessed Slomšek. Before the altar, he was addressed by the Maribor Bishop Franc Kramberger, and then the Pope himself spoke to those gathered in the Cathedral. Upon his arrival at Maribor Airport, the distinguished guest was greeted with a handshake by the Mayor of the Municipality of Maribor, and the Pope also signed the Golden Book of the City. This was followed by a one-on-one conversation

9 Among the faithful, there was an expectation that during this Holy Mass the Pope would proclaim the first Maribor bishop, Anton Martin Slomšek, blessed, but this happened three years later.

with the President of Slovenia, who had also attended the Mass at Betnava. The last act of the visit was a farewell with military honours.

The visits of Pope John Paul II to Slovenia in 1996 and 1999 represented a peak in the history of relations between the Republic of Slovenia and the Holy See and an exceptional event in the collective memory of the Slovenian people. Although in diplomatic hierarchy a state visit is considered the highest form of official meeting, the papal visits, by their nature and symbolic weight, transcended protocol frameworks and became historical, spiritual, and political milestones. The Pope's presence symbolized recognition of Slovenian statehood, which had already been formalized through official recognition, since the Holy See was among the first to recognize the independent and sovereign state of Slovenia. At the same time, the visits reinforced the historical and cultural ties of the Slovenian people with the Holy See. In this context, both visits represent more than just an inter-state event – they became a sign of a historic moment that transcended ordinary forms of diplomatic protocol and rose to the level of lasting symbolic significance.

5 Protocol visits in Slovenia with regard to religious connotation

If we set aside the two visits of Pope John Paul II to Slovenia just described, which had a strong religious content, we can note that religion plays quite an important role in protocol visits in Slovenia. Of course, this is expressed differently depending on the nature of the event, the cultural and religious context of the host country, the wishes of the guest, and the very significance of the visit (Valentan 2019).

The most frequent point of contact of guests with our religious identity, which is predominantly Catholic, was in most cases a visit or tour of Ljubljana Cathedral. Slovenian protocol in official programs of visits also mentions that distinguished guests met with religious representatives in Slovenia. In 1992, for instance, the Italian President Francesco Cossiga, during an official visit, was welcomed in front of Ljubljana Cathedral by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Ljubljana, Alojzij Šuštar, with whom he also toured the Cathedral.[10] The following year, during an official visit, Austrian President Thomas Klestil likewise visited the Metropolitan Archbishop of Ljubljana. More often, official programs indicate that guests visited Bled Island, where in the past the only sight of note was the Church of the Assumption of Mary.

Among the cultural landmarks with a religious, Catholic foundation officially visited by statesmen in Slovenia are several others. In 2001, Queen Margrethe of Denmark, during an official visit, visited the Seminary Library in Ljubljana.[11] In the programs of the official visits of the Grand Duke of Luxembourg Henri and the President of Ireland Mary McAleese, who both visited Slovenia that same year, was the famous church in Hrastovlje. In 2003, Czech President Václav Klaus, on his official visit to our country, also visited Škofja Loka and the local Church of St. James. Since there are also members of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Islamic Community living in Slovenia, it is not surprising that the President of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, Svetozar Marović, during his official visit to Slovenia in 2003, visited the Serbian Orthodox Church in Ljubljana, where he was greeted by Parish Priest Peran Boškovič,[12] while the guest was also received in Ljubljana Cathedral by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Ljubljana, Franc Rode. A year later, Adnan Terzić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, visited Slovenia and met with Mufti Osman Đogić at the seat of the Mešihat – the Islamic Community in Slovenia. Representatives of the Association of Slovenian Catholic Guides and Scouts and the Scout Association of Slovenia met with King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden at Ljubljana Castle during his visit in 2004. When Romano Prodi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, came on an official visit in 2007, part of the program was also Holy Mass in the Church of St. Bartholomew, celebrated by the Apostolic Nuncio to the Republic of Slovenia, Santos Abril y Castello.

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10 During his official visit to Slovenia in 1998, the President of Romania, Emil Constantinescu, visited Maribor Cathedral.

11 The mentioned library was also visited in 2001 by the President of the Republic of Malta, Guido de Marco.

12 The same goes for the visit of Serbian President Boris Tadić in 2009, who also signed the guest book in the Serbian Orthodox Church and viewed the construction of the cultural and pastoral centre, which was visited the following year, during his official visit to Slovenia, by Serbian Prime Minister Mirko Cvetković.

Among the cultural landmarks included in official visits in Slovenia, in 2014 there was the Franciscan Monastery Kostanjevica in Nova Gorica. It was visited by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Joachim Gauck, who, under the guidance of the guardian of the monastery, toured the famous monastery library and signed the monastery guest book. He also visited the church. Sveta Gora above Nova Gorica is a well-known pilgrimage centre. In 2014, during the visit of Italian President Giorgio Napolitano, it was part of the program prepared by the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia. President Napolitano was welcomed there by a representative of the monastery, who presented Sveta Gora to him.

Much media attention in the past has been devoted to the annual commemorative ceremony at the Russian Chapel on Vršič. The higher the guest in rank, the more media attention they are given. Within the framework of his working visit to Slovenia in 2015, the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, visited the chapel, but this could not be compared in terms of security and logistics with 2016, when Slovenian protocol oversaw the participation of Russian President Vladimir Putin in the commemorative ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the Russian Chapel in Slovenia. This was a true state-religious manifestation, as the Police Orchestra performed the Russian and Slovenian anthems in front of the chapel, followed by a speech by the honorary patron of the commemorative ceremony, Slovenian President Borut Pahor, and then by Russian President Putin. The Presidents of both countries and the President of the Slovenia–Russia Association laid wreaths, and the gathering continued with an Orthodox church service (panikhida), led by the head of the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, Hilarion, Metropolitan of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

From autumn 2015 to spring 2016, the territory of our country was part of the extensive migration route across the Balkans. Since the Holy See under Pope Francis paid special attention to the migration issue (a policy that continues today), it is not surprising that Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Holy See, visited Slovenia on a three-day working visit between 2 and 4 February 2016. He met with the Prime Minister at the Presidential Palace, and the Prime Minister hosted a lunch for the guest at Vila Podrožnik. Part of the visit, organized by the Apostolic Nunciature, included Holy Mass in Ljubljana Cathedral and a dinner with Slovenian bishops. However, the official working visit also included the ceremonial opening of the new Apostolic Nunciature in Slovenia, where, in addition to the guest, the President of the Republic of Slovenia also addressed those gathered. Together they unveiled a commemorative plaque. As part of the visit, Cardinal Parolin, guided by a representative of the Ministry of the Interior, visited the refugee centre in Dobova and met with representatives of humanitarian organizations in the humanitarian block.

The official state protocol also adapts to the wishes and convictions of guests, which is evident, among other things, from the official visit of the Prince and Grand Master of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, between 14 and 17 June 2019. The guest first met with the Metropolitan Archbishop of Ljubljana, Stanislav Zore, and visited the SMOM Embassy. He participated in Holy Mass at Brezje during the national pilgrimage of the sick and disabled. He was also present at Holy Mass on Gora Oljka and visited Komenda Castle in Polzela, one of the oldest commanderies of the Order of St. John in Slovenia. The guest was received with military honours on Congress Square by the Slovenian President of the Republic, who also hosted a formal luncheon for him at Strmol Castle. This was followed by meetings with the Prime Minister and the Parliament.

Conclusion

The research has shown that protocol visits in the Republic of Slovenia are multifaceted phenomena that go beyond the purely formal-diplomatic dimension and function as an instrument for strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations. Their content and course demonstrate a high degree of alignment between diplomatic law and practice, as defined by the DDPR and the accompanying Guidelines. Empirical data obtained from the records of the Protocol of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia confirm that the number of state visits, ranked among the most prestigious forms of international meetings, is extremely limited.

A special chapter in this context is represented by the two visits of Pope John Paul II, which by their very nature and symbolic value transcend traditional protocol categorizations. These were events that simultaneously bore the characteristics of a state, religious, and cultural encounter, and which, in the collective memory of the Slovenian nation, strengthened the bond between the Republic of Slovenia and the Holy See. These visits testify that the religious dimension remains a relevant element of diplomacy, as it contributes to transcending the purely political discourse and opens space for dialogue on the level of values, identities, and cultural heritage.

The analysis likewise confirms that the Republic of Slovenia, through its protocol practices, positions itself among the states that know how to integrate their cultural and religious particularities into the diplomatic framework. In these cases, religion has shown itself to be a silent but important actor of soft diplomacy, enabling the establishment of more enduring symbolic bridges of cooperation. In this way, it is confirmed that protocol visits are not only a manifestation of sovereignty and international recognition, but also an opportunity for strengthening the normative and cultural identity of the state within the global environment.

Abbreviation

DDPR *Decree on the Determination of Protocol Rules* 2020

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Petovionske Nutrice in njihov potencialni vpliv na češčenje Marije

Nutrices from Poetovio and Their Potential Influence on the Veneration of the Virgin Mary

Izvleček: Nutrice, ki jim pripisujemo predrimski izvor, veljajo za najpomembnejši kult v Petovioni. Njihovega izrednega pomena ne potrjuje samo število spomenikov, kjer so ali epigrafsko ali ikonografsko (pogosto tudi oboje) izpričane, temveč tudi dejstvo, da so predrimski kult vzeli za svojega tudi italski priseljenci in da se je razširil med pripadniki vseh družbenih razredov; na votivnih spomenikih so namreč kot dedikanti dokumentirani tako člani municipalne elite kakor tudi osvobojenci, sužnji in peregrini. Tako antični kulti kakor tudi takratna filozofska misel so vplivali na oblikovanje krščanske misli, zato se zdi samoumevno, da je kult Nutric s svojim sporočilom in zakoreninjenostjo v okolje vplival na češčenje Marije, ko se je postopoma razširilo tudi na naš prostor. Ostaja pa vprašanje, kako ta vpliv dokazati.

Ključne besede: Petoviona (*Poetovio*), kult Nutric, začetki krščanstva, češčenje Marije, pozna antika, zgodnji srednji vek

Abstract: *The Nutrices, traditionally attributed a pre-Roman origin, are regarded as the most significant cult phenomenon in Poetovio. Their exceptional prominence is attested not only by the considerable number of monuments on which they appear – epigraphically, iconographically, or, in many cases, both – but also by the adoption of their cult by Italian settlers and its dissemination across all strata of society. Votive dedications identify dedicants ranging from members of the municipal elite to freedmen, slaves, and peregrini. Both ancient cults and contemporary philosophical thought significantly shaped the development of early Christian theology. In this context, it appears almost self-evident that the cult of the Nutrices, with its enduring presence and deeply rooted local significance, played a role in shaping the veneration of Mary as it gradually spread to this region. Nonetheless, the critical question remains: how can such an influence be substantiated?*

Keywords: *Poetovio, cult of Nutrices, beginnings of Christianity, veneration of Mary, late antiquity and the early middle age*

Petoviona (*Poetovio*) – rimski Ptuj

Petoviona (*Poetovio*) je sicer najmlajše rimsko avtonomno mesto na Slovenskem, ki ga je na začetku 2. stoletja po Kr. ustanovil cesar Trajan; po njem je kolonija tudi dobila svoje uradno ime: *colonia Ulpia Traiana Poetovio*. A romanizacija se je v tem najbolj vzhodnem rimskem mestu pri nas začela že mnogo prej; rimska vojska v obliki legij in legionarjev je bila na tem prostoru prisotna že približno stoletje. Najprej, od leta 9 po Kr. do 45 po Kr. (Ritterling 1925, 1642–1664; Reddé 2000, 119–126), je v bila v Petovioni stacionirana Osma legija (*legio VIII Augusta*), od leta 45 po Kr. do okoli 90 po Kr. (Ritterling 1925, 1710–1727; Wolff 2000, 203–204; Piso 2000, 220–225) pa še Trinajsta dvojna (*legio XIII Gemina*). Rimska vojska je na novo osvojeni prostor prinesla rimsko civilizacijo z vsem, kar jo je določalo: jezik, način življenja, način bojevanja, razne druge navade in običaji, oblačila in orožje, seveda tudi kultura in z njo povezana religija, razni kulti, obredje, način čaščenja bogov in nenazadnje tudi navado postavljanja spomenikov z napisi, t. i. *epigraphic habit*, ki je bila v takem obsegu in na tak način lastna prav rimski civilizaciji. V ta sklop spada tudi postavljanje kamnitih votivnih spomenikov (večinoma v obliki oltarjev) z napisi, ki nam omogočajo izjemen vpogled v svet bogov tako na lokalni kot tudi globalni ravni. O Petovioni je bilo napisanega že veliko, še posebej v zadnjih letih je nastalo kar nekaj ključnih del, ki se ukvarjajo z zgodovino tega pomembnega avtonomnega rimskega mesta pri nas.[1]

Petoviona je sicer večino časa pripadala provinci Zgornji Panoniji (*Pannonia Superior*), čeprav je bila prvotno del Norika (Noriškega kraljestva), a je bilo ob vzpostavitvi province Norik zaradi njegovega pravnega statusa mesto s svojim zaledjem izločeno iz te province. Kolonija velja za največje in najpomembnejše rimsko mesto na ozemlju današnje Slovenije, znotraj province jo je prekašalo le mesto Karnunt (*Carnuntum*). Mesto in njegovi avtohtoni prebivalci gotovo niso pozabili na povezanost in skupno zgodovino s sosednjo rimsko provinco. Prav to nam pogosto potrjujejo spomeniki z napisi, pa naj bodo to nagrobni, votivni ali morda počastitveni napisi, ki nam nudijo vpogled v tamkajšnje prebivalstvo (domačini imajo

1 Navajamo le izbor: Horvat 2024, 429–446; 2023; Ragolič 2023; Horvat in Nestorović 2022; Horvat idr. 2020; Horvat, Vičič 2010; Horvat idr. 2003, 153–189; Šašel Kos 2014, 139–165.

namreč podobna, sorodna ali celo ista imena). Jugovzhodni Norik so namreč poseljevali keltski Tavriski. Sorodnosti niso omejene samo na imena staroselskega prebivalstva; na podoben način namreč ugotavljamo skupen kulturni razvoj južnega Norika tudi na primeru domačih božanstev. V primeru Jupitra Depulsorja (*Iuppiter Depulsor* – Odvračalec zla) govorimo celo o vrhovnem božanstvu prebivalcev južnega Norika, torej prostora med Celejo in Petoviono, ki je svoj epitet najverjetneje pridobil v skladu z zakonitostjo t. i. *interpretatio Romana*. Vsekakor je predstavljal močno vojaško, administrativno in gospodarsko središče, ki je že v prvi polovici 1. stoletja postalo eno najpomembnejših upravnih središč rimske province Panonije in tudi sedež vojaškega poveljnika panonskega dela vojske (Horvat in Nestorović 2020, 4). Največji razcvet pa je mesto doživelo v 2. in 3. stoletju, ko so se tu nahajali različni uradi (davčni, carinski, finančni in arhivi); po markomanskih vojnah pa je postalo tudi cilj priseljencev z vzhoda. Staroselsko prebivalstvo, italski kolonisti, konstantna prisotnost vojske, številni uradniki, prišleki z vzhoda so pripomogli k temu, da je bila tukajšnja struktura prebivalstva zelo pisana. Tak pa je bil tudi svet bogov; srečamo namreč predrimske kulte, ki so se s pomočjo *interpretatio Romana* (del procesa romanizacije) sicer preoblikovali, a vseeno preživeli in živeli tudi v času rimske države. Italski kolonisti in rimski vojaki so častili grško-rimska božanstva, pogosto Jupitra (Najboljšega in Največjega) kot najvišje in nekakšno državno božanstvo. Državni aparat, h kateremu lahko prištevamo tudi rimske vojake, se je pogosto priporočal prav njemu. Rimski vojaki, ki predstavljajo enega izmed bolj mobilnih delov rimske družbe, so del svojega službovanja lahko opravili tudi na vzhodu, kjer so se srečali s tamkajšnjimi kulti. Nekateri med njimi so bili zanje zanimivi, zato so jih prevzeli in ob premestitvi »odnesli s seboj« na novo lokacijo delovanja. Na ta način je mogoče npr. razložiti priljubljenost in razširjenost mitraizma v Petovioni, saj so bili častilci le moški. Poleg misterijskega kulta sončnega boga Mitre je izpričana še Kibela, častili so egipčanska bogova Izido in Serapisa, že od druge polovice 3. stoletja pa je bila Petoviona sedež škofije in pomembno zgodnjekrščansko središče z več cerkvami (Šašel Kos 2020, 227.317.320). V začetke krščanske skupnosti v Petovioni se je poglobil Bratož (2014, 241–250), ki se je oprl predvsem na Viktorina Ptujskega in njegove spise. Isti avtor pa je opozoril tudi na pomanjkanje arheoloških virov (1986, 136). Do neke mere ostaja odprto vprašanje, od kod je krščanstvo prišlo v Petoviono. Zdi se namreč, da sta bila prisotna oba vpliva, tako tisti iz Ogleja kakor tudi tisti neposredno z vzhoda (Bratož 2014, 244; 1986, 138.141–142).

Nutrice v Petovioni

S kultom Nutric se je najbolj sistematično in tudi največkrat na različnih mestih v zadnjih tridesetih letih ukvarjala M. Šašel Kos (1999; 2001; 2016). Nazadnje leta 2016, kjer je v prispevku z naslovom *Nutrices: the most popular goddesses at Poetovio* najprej petovionske nutrice (božanske dojilje?) postavila v kontekst rimskih božanstev s podobno vsebino, torej dojilj, nadomestnih staršev in podobno. Ob bok »našim« Nutricam so tako postavljene *Bona Dea*, *Dea Nutrix*, *Nutrix Augusta*. Avtorica poudari tudi, da so nekatere od omenjenih boginj veljale obenem za device in matere. Predvsem pa je izpostavila, da so v antičnem svetu Grčije, Cipra, Egipta, Afrike, Italije, pa tudi drugod izpričane boginje, ki se častijo (tudi) v vlogi dojilj. Načeloma sicer gre za boginje rodovitnosti, a je ta vidik skrbi za otroke posebej izpostavljen (2016, 167–168).

Slika 1: Votivni spomenik (arhiv Pokrajinskega muzeja Ptuj - Ormož, Boris Farič)

O kultu Nutric v Petovioni tu ne bo mogoče dodati nič novega,[2] a za potrebe razprave v nadaljevanju naj na strnjen način predstavimo znana dejstva in splošno sprejete zaključke:

- *Nutrices* iz latinske besede *Nutrix* zaznamuje rojenice, dojilje, tudi varuhinje in zaščitnice dojenčkov in otrok. Ker je bila v antiki umrljivost otrok (dojenčkov ob samem porodu, pa tudi v prvih dneh in letih življenja) velika, ni nenavadno, da so pripadniki različnih slojev častili ženska božanstva, ki so jih povezovali s plodnostjo, rojevanjem, zdravjem in skrbjo za otroke. Na ta način razumemo tudi petovionske Nutrice – kot božanske dojilje ter zavetnice dojenčkov in otrok, ki so bile v Petovioni (pa tudi sicer) najbolj priljubljeno žensko božanstvo.
- Predrimski izvor petovionskih Nutric ni sporen, ni pa čisto jasno, kam jih natančneje umestiti. Ne gre zanemariti sorodnosti s sicer širšim keltskim kultom božanskih Mater ali Matron (*Matres*, *Matronae*),[3] ki so sicer bolj povezane z rodovitnostjo (a posledično tudi s skrbjo za otroke). V tem okviru npr. poznamo *Matres Noricae* in *Matres Pannoniorum*, kamor bi morda lahko umestili tudi Nutrice.[4] Nekateri so jih poskušali povezati z vzhodnjaškim kultom Velike matere bogov – torej s Kibelo, pa tudi z Izido. Sorodnosti je mogoče videti v nekaterih grško-rimskih boginjah, ki med drugim nastopajo tudi kot dojilje: Artemida, Afrodita, Nimfe, *Bona Dea* in druge. Prav vse naštete pa je vsaj ohlapno mogoče povezati s starodavnim kultom Matere Zemlje, ki je povezan z ustvarjalnostjo in rodovitnostjo narave. Torej s kultom, ki je bil prisoten v domala vseh starodavnih družbah.
- Do danes je znanih več kot 40 votivnih spomenikov, ki so tako ali drugače naslovljeni na Nutrice oziroma so jim posvečeni. Priljubljenost tega kulta je primerljiva celo s kultom Jupitra, Najboljšega

2 Na 18. simpoziju o rimski provincialni umetnosti, ki je bil leta 2024 v Beogradu, je sicer avstrijski arheolog Bernhard Schrettle predstavil zanimivo najdbo s Frauenberga pri Lipnici (avstrijska Štajerska), kjer so našli kar 17 kipov boginj, pri kateri bi lahko šlo za *Nutrices*. Svetišče na Frauenbergu upravno spada k Flaviji Solvi, mestu v provinci Norik, a obenem gre za Petovioni sosednje mesto (Schrettle 2024, 37).

3 Petovionske Nutrice bi najverjetneje lahko postavili v kontekst različnih keltskih Mater (*Matres*) oz. Matron (*Matronae*), ki jih je zelo natančno obravnavala in predstavila N. Beck v prvem poglavju svojega dela (2009, 35–106); še posebej izpoveden je del, ki je namenjen doječim materam oz. dojiljam (The Nursing Mothers or Nutrices; 2009, 72–77).

4 M. Hainzman je Nutrice poskusil identificirati s keltskimi boginjami z imenom *Alounae* (Hainzmann 2016, 39–48).

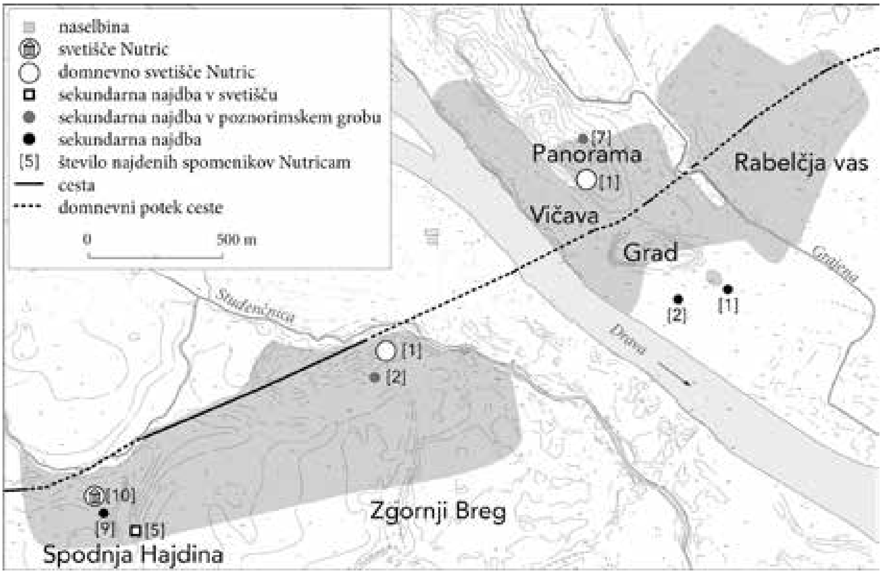
in Največjega – vrhovnega in državnega rimskega boga, ki je praviloma najpogosteje zastopan na votivnih spomenikih – ali pa s kultom Mitre, ki so mu v Petovioni posvetili neverjetnih 5 mitrejev, posledično pa je ohranjenih tudi precej njemu namenjenih votivnih spomenikov. Poudariti velja, da je kult Nutric v takšni obliki dokumentiran skoraj izključno v Petovioni (zaenkrat poznamo le dve izjemi: ena iz Maribora, druga iz avstrijskega Parndorfa) in nikjer drugje po rimskem imperiju ter velja za lokalni petovionski kult.

- Ikonografija na ohranjenih spomenikih ni povsem enotna. Ohranjene upodobitve lahko razdelimo v tri ikonografske skupine: upodobitev z eno samo Nutrico na desni strani reliefne plošče; upodobitev z dvema Nutricama – vsaka na svoji strani reliefa in z dojenčkom v naročju, ki ga dojita, med njima stoji še ena ženska figura; in tretja, kjer sta poleg sedeče Nutrice upodobljeni še ena ali dve ženski figuri, ki imata atribute, povezane z vodo (morda Nimfi?).[5]
- Vedno se nagovarjajo v množini, torej kot *Nutricibus*, kar pomeni, da je invokacija namenjena vsaj dvema, bolj verjetno trem boginjam,[6] ki nastopajo skupaj, kar potrjujejo tudi ohranjeni reliefi.
- Ohranjenih votivnih spomenikov sicer ni mogoče natančneje datirati, praviloma pa se umeščajo predvsem v 2. in prvo polovico 3. stoletja, proti koncu 3. stoletja pa čaščenja, ki bi ga dokazovali spomeniki z reliefi in napisi, ni več, kar pa seveda ne pomeni, da jih niso (predvsem v zasebni sferi) častili še naprej (Šašel Kos 2001, 345–346; 2016, 172–173; 2020, 319).
- Na podlagi opravljenih arheoloških izkopavanj in arheološke topografije je v Petovioni potrjeno eno svetišče, posvečeno Nutricam, na Spodnji Hajdini; dve sta zaenkrat samo domnevni: na Panorami in na Zgornjem Bregu.[7]

5 Omeniti velja odlično diplomsko nalogo Gaje Grižon z naslovom Kult Nutric v Petovioni (2023). Avtorica je zbrala relevantno literaturo v zvezi s petovionskimi Nutricami in jih postavila v kulturno-zgodovinski kontekst na zelo smiseln način.

6 Tu bi lahko potegnili vzporednico s kultom Matron (*Matronae*) ali Mater (*Matres*), ki vedno nastopajo kot triada.

7 Navedeni poudarki predstavljajo povzetek navedene literature; literatura je izrecno navedena le v primerih, kjer želimo neko trditev posebej izpostaviti.



Slika 2: Zemljevid s svetišči

Začetki češčenja Marije (mariologija)[8]

Mariologija je veda, ki preučuje življenje Marije, o kateri Sveto pismo ni pretirano zgovorno, čeprav je njena vloga v odrešenjski zgodovini nesporna. Na »zamik« češčenja Marije so tako vplivale tudi relativno skope omembe v Svetem pismu Nove zaveze (Kearns 2008, 115–196). Evangeliji, ki so bili napisani konec 1. stoletja po Kr., jo sicer omenjajo; med njimi največkrat in najbolj podrobno evangelij po Luku. Ne gre zanemariti niti apokrifnega Jakobovega protoevangelija iz 2. stoletja, kjer o Mariji dobimo več podatkov. Prav zaradi več ali dodatnih informacij o Mariji sta oba vira

8 Zelo okviren pregled zgodovinskega razvoja češčenja Marije je nastal s pomočjo izbora izjemnega opusa literature, ki se ukvarja s področjem mariologije: Rihar 1909; Pelikan 2021; Söll 1994, 596–599; Limberis 1994; Collona, Matraini in Marinella 2008; Geary 2006; Rubin 2009; Gentle in Fastiggi 2009; McNelly Kearns 2008; Nichols 2015; Schoemaker 2002; Brubaker in Cunningham 2011; Benko 2004. Ustavili smo se predvsem ob tistih poudarkih, ki so vezani na začetke Marijinega češčenja, torej že v sami antiki, ob njenem koncu ter v srednjem veku. Diskusije, ki so se pojavljale v novem veku vse do 20. stoletja, nas niso zanimale, saj za naš poskus ugotoviti vzročno-posledično povezavo med Nutricami in Marijo niso relevantne. Sežet pregled zgodovine Marijinega češčenja na Slovenskem nam poda Menaše (1994, 23–26). Avtor skozi celotno monografijo na sistematičen način predstavlja dogmatične upodobitve Marije na kronološki način, torej od srednjeveških tipov, predreformacijskih in poreformacijskih, kar pomeni, da so za našo problematiko vendarle nastale nekoliko prepozno.

tudi močneje vplivala na njeno čeṡčenje. Posamično referenco je mogoče najti tudi v Pismih Galačanov; sv. Irenej jo je v 2. stoletju označil za drugo Evo; njena prva znana molitev (*sub tuum praesidium*) je datirana v 3. oz. 4. stoletje, kar velja tudi za njene najzgodnejše upodobitve, ki jih poznamo iz Priscilinih katakomb v Rimu v 3. stoletju. Sv. Ambrož v 4. stoletju je Marijo razumel tudi kot Mater Cerkve, kar je bilo uradno sprejeto šele na drugem vatikanskem koncilu. V 5. stoletju so na tretjem ekumenskem koncilu[9] razpravljali o vprašanju, kako jo naslavljati; ali kot *Theotokos* (tista, ki nosi Boga) ali kot *Christotokos* (tista, ki nosi Kristusa). V tej zvezi je bilo treba najprej razrešiti vprašanje Kristusove narave. Je Marija rodila Jezusa, ki je res bil Bog in človek v eni osebi? Po dolgotrajnem razglabljanju in argumentiranju je koncil pritrdil uporabi naziva *Theotokos*,[10] s tem pa tudi razrešil dilemo o neločljivi povezanosti božanskosti in človeškosti v eni Kristusovi osebi. V tem je mogoče videti tudi prvi resen korak k institucionaliziranemu češčenju Marije kot Božje matere. In kot tak je gotovo pripomogel k pospešenemu širjenju njenega vpliva, češčenja, raznih z njo povezanih pobožnosti in tudi upodobitev.

Konec antike oz. na začetku srednjega veka (nekako od 6. stoletja naprej) se je razširilo tudi prepričanje o vnebovzetju Marije.[11] Ostale dogme, povezane z njenim pojmovanjem in češčenjem, so se razvijale postopoma, predvsem od 11. stoletja naprej pod vplivom monastičnih piscev (npr. sv. Bernarda).[12] Za velikega častilca Device Marije pri nas gotovo velja znameniti škof Tomaž Hren (1597–1630), ki jo v svojih pridigah pogosto omenja, daje za zgled, prosi in nagovarja (Dolinar 2007, 113–114).[13] V tem kontekstu lahko navedemo tudi J. L. Schönlebna kot velikega zagovornika Marijinega brezmadežnega spočetja (Ušeničnik 1904, 413–426; Smolik 1981, 417–418).

Kot močna priprošnjica se je v liturgiji pojavila v 8. stoletju; kot kraljica nebes, ki pogosto sedi na prestolu, pa v 13. stoletju. Italijanski termin

9 Leta 431 v Efezu.

10 Za pojem *Theotokos*, torej razumevanje Marije kot Mater Božjo, gl. Pelikan 2021, 75–89.

11 Marijino vnebovzetje se je praviloma povezovalo z njenim »zaspanjem« (*dormitio*), s čimer se je podrobneje ukvarjal Shoemaker (2002).

12 Npr. Paradoks: Devica in mati; da je brez vsakega greha; brezmadežno spočetje in drugo, gl. Pelikan 2021, passim.

13 Tekstno-kritična objava korpusa Hrenovih pridig je v pripravi.

»Madonna« (iz lat. *mea domina* – moja gospa) oz. francoska različica »Notre Dame« (naša Gospa) sta prav tako postopoma prehajala iz grške tradicije v latinsko in postopoma dobivala tudi ikonografske odmeve.

V teku stoletij se je izoblikovalo več tipov upodobitev Marije; navedimo najpomembnejše (oz. najstarejše):[14]

- Marija, ki stoji sama, v pozi molivke ali delivke blagoslova. Tovrstne upodobitve krasijo antične apsidne mozaike (*Maria Orans – Orante*: Lechner 1993, 11–15);
- pogosto je stoječa Marija upodobljena z detetom Jezusom, ki je obrnjeno proti opazovalcu slike in ima dvignjeno roko v blagoslov;
- Marija z detetom, ki je upodobljena na prestolu, izvira iz bizantinskega obdobja in je pogosta v srednjem veku in renesansi;
- *Virgo Lactans* ali *Madonna Lactans*: Marija, ki doji Jezusa;
- t. i. tip *Elëusa* (nežna) – upodobitev Device Marije na ikonah skupaj z Jezusom kot otrokom, ki se naslanja na njeno lice (Schmuck 1989, 318–321).

Kot že omenjeno, za najstarejšo (ali eno izmed najstarejših – 3. stoletje) velja upodobitev Marije z detetom iz Priscilinih katakomb v Rimu (Schmuck 1991, 523–526). Sedeča Marija doji dete, ki glavo obrača h gledalcu. Najstarejše stalne (tipske) oblike prikaza Marije z detetom pa so se razvile na vzhodu in spominjajo na ikone. Na vzhodu je Marija upodobljena na prestolu, nosi krono, v naročju pa ji sedi Jezus (še otrok). Omenjeni bizantinski modeli so vplivali na zahod v zgodnjem srednjem veku,[15] postopoma se je povečal pomen »kulta« Device, temu pa se je v 12. in 13. stoletju dodala cela paleta tipov upodobitve.

Ker nas zanimajo predvsem najbolj zgodnje upodobitve Marije, se bomo ustavili ob zgodovinskih okoliščinah, ki so pripomogle k širjenju samega češčenja in s tem povezanega nastajanja različnih upodobitev Marije. Kot je bilo že nakazano, predstavlja odločilni *stimulus* za širjenje kulta

14 Za uvod v marijansko ikonografijo gl. predvsem Lechner 1991, 285–287.

15 O pomenu Marije v bizantinski tradiciji gl. zbornik z naslovom *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium*, ki sta ga uredila Brubaker in Cunningham (2016).

Marije 3. ekumenski koncil v Efezu leta 431, kjer so potrdili, da je Marija *Theotokos* (torej tista, ki nosi Boga, oz. tista, ki je Boga rodila: Bogorodica). Omenjeno dejstvo je po eni strani zaključilo dlje časa trajajočo diskusijo o naravi Kristusa (človek ali Bog ali oboje) in s tem povezano vlogo Marije, po drugi pa je njen izid spodbudil češčenje in upodabljanje Marije (Pelikan 2021, 75–91).

V naslednjem stoletju se Devica Marija pojavi na prestolu z detetom Jezusom v naročju – najstarejši je primer iz samostana sv. Katarine na gori Sinaj. Devica Marija, ki je upodobljena kot kraljica, je znana iz cerkve, ki je posvečena sveti Mariji v Trasteveru (Rim) in jo je mogoče datirati (zaradi klečečega papeža Janeza VII.) na začetek 8. stoletja (705–707). Za obdobje med 6. in 8. stoletjem naj bi se do danes v Rimu ohranilo le nekaj (manj kot deset ?) upodobitev Device in deteta, kar si je, če gledamo z današnjimi očmi, razmeroma težko predstavljati, saj nas danes Marija spremlja tako rekoč na vsakem koraku. Nekako v tem obdobju se je oblikovala tudi ikonografija Jezusovega rojstva z Marijo v središču, ki se je ohranila vse do današnjih dni v pravoslavni cerkvi. Na vzhodu so se pod vplivov apokrifnih spisov, ki so vsebovali več podatkov o življenju Marije, oblikovale tudi druge podobe iz njenega življenja, ki so jih radi upodabljali. Latinska Cerkev na zahodu v času, ko je zahodno rimsko cesarstvo propadlo, tako politično kakor tudi gospodarstvo, in se je sama šele prav formirala (cerkvene strukture, hierarhija, organiziranost, liturgija in končno tudi teologija), ni razvijala lastne ikonografije, zato je dolgo časa temeljila na vzhodni tradiciji. Za prvo ohranjeno upodobitev Marije z detetom v zahodni rokopisni tradiciji velja znamenita *Book of Kells* iz časa okoli leta 800 v stilu inzularne umetnosti. Če jo primerjamo s sočasnimi in celo starejšimi izdelki bizantinskega kulturnega kroga, se izdelava zdi precej groba.

Nesporen je bizantinski vpliv na upodabljanje Marije v zahodnem krščanskem krogu. Bizantinske ikone, še posebej tiste iz samega Bizanca, so imele pomembno mesto v javnem življenju, pripisovali pa so jim tudi čudodelne moči. Bizantinska umetnost je že zelo zgodaj našla svojo pot v Italijo, ki je bila nekaj časa tudi del bizantinskega cesarstva, posledično in postopoma pa tudi drugam v osrednjo in zahodno Evropo. Marijo so v tem (vzhodnem) delu Evrope raje in pogosteje imenovali *Theotokos*, torej Božja mati (mati Boga), in le izjemoma devica Marija. Odrešenje je bilo vernikom podarjeno v trenutku Božjega utelešenja: koncept, ki se kaže v obliki upodobitve Marije, ki drži Jezusa kot otroka. Predvidoma najstarejšo upodobitev Device Marija na zahodu smo omenili že prej: v baziliki Santa Maria in Trastevere v Rimu. Za drugo velja podoba iz Panteona, ki so ga posvetili Mariji kot znamenje zmage krščanstva nad poganstvom. Pri obeh je mogoče opaziti in preučevati bizantinski vpliv, predvsem v ikonografskem pomenu. Obe poudarjata materinsko vlogo Marije, saj sta upodobljeni skupaj z detetom Jezusom, nastali pa naj ne bi pred sedmim oz. osmim stoletjem.[16]

Šele od 12. oz. 13. stoletja naprej je Marijina ikonografija postajala vedno bolj razvejena, predvsem pa se je širila tudi zunaj Rima, najprej v Toskani, postopoma pa tudi širše, predvsem s pomočjo ubožnih redov, torej frančiškanov in dominikancev. Češčenje Marije je dobivalo vedno več privržencev, častilcev, in posledično tudi vedno več upodobitev (slike, freske, oltarni kipi, razni reliefi ...). Začelo se je obdobje, ko je Marija vedno bolj pridobivala pomen, povečevalo se je zanimanje za njeno življenje, pripisovalo se ji je vedno več vlog, ki jih je bilo treba oživiti, pri čemer so se s pomočjo simbolike vzpostavile tipske upodobitve. A za to priložnost bi se ustavili le pri prvih korakih češčenja Marije, torej še v antiki in na začetku srednjega veka.

Poskusili smo vsaj nakazati začetke Marijinega češčenja, ki je povezano s samim širjenjem krščanstva, pri čemer pa že samo širjenje krščanstva predstavlja posebno problematiko in fenomen. Krščanstvo je namreč v takratno civilizacijsko in politično velesilo rimskega imperija vneslo novo revolucionarno paradigmo in je bilo na začetku zanimivo predvsem za nižje sloje. Monoteistična religija vsaj na začetku ni mogla povsem parirati zelo razdelanemu panteonu uveljavljenih poganskih božanstev, ki je bil podkrepljen s filozofijo, mitologijo in sploh klasično literaturo ter nedvomno zelo globoko ukoreninjen v vse pore življenja. Ustaljeni in uveljavljeni svet bogov je zadovoljil zelo različne potrebe častilcev: po spolu, po družbeni pripadnosti, po poklicni usmerjenosti itd. Nova religija, seveda brez ženskega božanstva, pa je prinesla drugačen pogled na ženski koncept. Tako se zdi logično, da je Marija, Božja mati, začela pridobivati pomen tudi

16 Gl. op. 14.

zaradi številnih obstoječih poganskih kultov, kjer so bile v ospredju boginje z izrazito ženskimi nalogami, ki jih je mogoče najti v vseh civilizacijah.[17]

Nutrice in Marija v Petovioni

V Petovioni se je izoblikovala svojstvena provincialna kultura, ki morda nekoliko odstopa od sosednjih mest, pa naj bo to v isti provinci, sosednjih ali v Italiji, kar je mogoče opazovati tudi na primeru religioznega življenja v pozni antiki, torej v obdobju, ki nas zanima (Bratož 2014, 42–52). V tem kontekstu lahko izpostavimo »samo« 5 mitrejev in okoli 40 votivnih spomenikov, posvečenih Nutricam, kar gotovo predstavlja unikum vsaj v bližnji, če ne širši okolici. Okoliščine, ki smo jih nakazali, pa so nedvomno vplivale tudi na začetke krščanstva v obravnavanem mestu (241–273). Kljub temu da iz Petovione izvira Viktorin Ptujski, škof in mučenec, predvsem pa prvi krščanski pisec z našega prostora, o krščanstvu v pozni antiki ne vemo toliko, kot bi si želeli. Še vedno namreč ne vemo, od kod se je krščanstvo v Petoviono razširilo (ali preko Akvileje ali neposredno z vzhoda), so pa vzhodni vplivi več kot očitni (244).

Če je krščanstvo res prišlo neposredno z vzhoda, bi to morda lahko predstavljalo tudi nekoliko drugačno izhodišče za češčenje Marije, saj se je tam razvilo hitreje, intenzivneje in sploh drugače kot na zahodu. Sploh če to postavimo v okolje, kjer je bilo žensko božanstvo v podobi Nutric ne le prisotno, temveč res ukoreninjeno v zavest tamkajšnjih prebivalcev vseh družbenih razredov. Kot taki bi lahko bili bolj naklonjeni Božji materi Mariji, ki je prevzela mnogo ženskih nalog, ki so jih prej opravljale poganske boginje: materinstvo, skrb za otroke, rodovitnost in plodnost. Škof Viktorin je v Petovioni deloval v 2. polovici 3. stoletja, ko je mesto očitno že bilo sedež škofije, je pa bil kult Nutric takrat gotovo še zelo živ, pa čeprav so njihovi votivni spomeniki postopoma izginjali in jih konec 3. in v 4. stoletju sploh več ni. Odsotnost spomenikov, ki sicer so neposreden dokaz obstoja, pa ne pomeni, da je izginilo tudi čaščenje Nutric. Če ne drugje, se je moralo ohraniti še v zavetjih domov (Šašel Kos 2016, 172). Petovionske

17 Za vplive poganskih boginj (grško-rimskih in vzhodnjaških) gl. predvsem delo *The Virgin Goddess: Studies in the Pagan and Christian Roots of Mariology* (Benko 2004, 1–82).

Nutrice so bile gotovo močno zakoreninjene v zavest prebivalcev, njihovo čaščenje se je najverjetneje prenašalo še naprej iz roda v rod, pa čeprav ji votivnih spomenikov niso več postavljali, saj se je ta navada počasi začela poslavljati in so spomeniki 4. stoletja bolj izjema kot pravilo.[18]

Na tem mestu lahko kot analogijo navedemo pridigo št. XIV Tomaža Hrena, ki jo je govoril na slovesnosti ob polaganju temeljnega kamna za kapucinski samostan v Ljubljani 25. aprila 1607 in v kateri je omenil slovanska poganska božanstva Lado, Plejna, Poberina. Pridigo z začetka 17. stoletja pogosto uporabljamo kot dokaz, da je kljub intenzivnemu pokristjanjevanju domače in uveljavljeno (pogansko ?) včasih v preobleki, včasih pa kar odkrito (vsaj v bolj odmaknjenih predelih) lahko živelo naprej še celo tisočletje (Visočnik 2010, 59–74).

Petovionske Nutrice in Marija bi se v Petovioni torej lahko srečale. Ker pa je vedenje o dogajanju ob izteku rimskega imperija na naših tleh precej omejeno,[19] težko sklepamo, kaj je to konkretno pomenilo. Ob tem se pojavi vprašanje, na kak način je mogoče (če sploh) oz. bi bilo mogoče dokazati, da je kult Nutric dejansko in konkretno vplival na češčenje Marije. Zgodnje upodobitve Marije, ki bi jih lahko primerjali z upodobitvami Nutric, se niso ohranile; tovrstno iskanje podobnosti tako ne bi obrodilo sadov.[20] Ostanki zgodnjekrščanske cerkve na Panorami so tako zelo skromni, da si z njimi ne moremo pomagati (Bratož 2014, 273). Ob upoštevanju znanega dejstva, da se uveljavljene navade, običaji, religiozne prakse, miselnost spreminjajo zelo počasi in na dolgi rok, se zdi vredno ubrati drugačno taktiko.

Če je bilo čaščenje Nutric v Petovioni tako zelo prisotno, kot se zdi, potem so gotovo še dolgo ostale v zavesti prebivalcev in v njihovem kolektivnem

18 Preseneča dejstvo, da je materialnih ostankov, ki bi jih lahko povezali s krščanstvom v Petovioni, presenetljivo malo. Nenavadna je tudi popolna odsotnost spomenikov z napisi, ki bi imeli krščanski značaj, prim. Ragolič 2023.

19 V Petovioni (pa tudi drugje) je namreč izredno malo arheoloških ostankov, ki jih lahko z gotovostjo postavimo v 5. stoletje; pri tem izstopa grob vojščaka, domnevno Huna, iz sredine 5. stoletja (Horvat in Dolenc Vičič 2010, 71.73–74).

20 Znane so upodobitve Izide in njenega sina (*Horusa*), ki so najverjetneje vplivale na ikonografijo upodobitev Marije z Jezusom, saj je podobnost očitna (Higgins 2012; Delray 2017). Morda je tu mogoče najti še eno analogijo; Horus je namreč bog. Izida za razliko od keltsko-germanskih mater in matron (ali nutric) ni upodobljena z naključnimi otroki, temveč ima v naročju lastnega sina, katerega božanska narava ni sporna.

spominu. Ob tem ostaja vprašanje, kaj se zgodi z življenjem v Petovioni ob koncu antike, ko na ta prostor pridejo Slovani, ki s seboj prinesejo svoja božanstva. Kaj se zgodi z že obstoječim antičnim krščanstvom oz. kaj se zgodi s pogansko kulturo in kulti, ki so gotovo še živeli vsaj v zavetju domov. Ob upoštevanju teh vprašanj, na katera natančnih odgovorov še nimamo, se sprašujemo naprej: na kak način torej potrditi konkreten vpliv kulta Nutric iz Petovione na češčenje Marije (če je ta dejansko obstajal). Pri tem je treba upoštevati nekaj vprašanj – na nekatera med njimi sploh še nimamo enoznačnih odgovorov, druga so morda bolj retorične narave:

- Kdaj se češčenje Marije sploh začne, na kak način ga prepoznamo in kdaj se razširi po rimskem imperiju (kdaj bi se torej lahko pojavilo tudi v Petovioni)? V kakšni obliki je Marijino češčenje prišlo v Petoviono, do kolikšne mere že izoblikovano?
- A je takrat kult Nutric v Petovioni sploh še obstajal (kje, na kak način in v kakšnem obsegu)?
- Kaj vemo o krščanstvu v Petovioni? Na kak način se življenje v antičnih mestih na Slovenskem zaključi, kaj se takrat zgodi z obstoječim krščanstvom in že vzpostavljeno cerkveno upravo?
- Kako se življenje na naših tleh spremeni s prihodom Slovanov? Kako veliko cezuro v življenju to dejansko predstavlja? Koliko duhovne kulture se ohrani, če sploh?
- S Slovani se je na obravnavani prostor vrnil politeizem; ali se je ob tem lahko ohranil spomin na krščanstvo in s tem na Marijino češčenje (kaj šele na v antiki zelo pomemben kult Nutric)?

Še vedno torej ostaja vprašanje, kako preseči splošne opredelitve in vendarle vsaj posredno dokazati, da je vpliv kulta Nutric na češčenje Marije otipljiv. Morda se zdi smiselno pogledati v strukturo pražupnij, ki so se oblikovale na širšem območju antične Petovione, in ugotoviti, kateri patrociniji so bili še posebej dobro zastopani (če kateri dejansko izstopajo). Pražupnije, ki pridejo v poštev, so: pražupnija sv. Jurija na Ptuju, radgonska pražupnija pa tudi kamniško-mariborska in jareninska župnija, na kateri je gotovo vplivala pražupnija v Lipnici (Leibnitz). Če pa govorimo o ozemlju južno od Drave, ne smemo pozabiti na pražupnijo sv. Jurija v Hočah, iz katere so izšle številne župnije na Dravskem polju (Höfler 2013, 74–90.306–316). Höfler je natančneje predstavil zgodovinski potek oblikovanja pražupnij in posledično tudi župnij na tem prostoru, izpostavil pa je tudi nejasnosti in dileme, ki še obstajajo. Proces je trajal daljše obdobje in je potekal postopoma, začel pa se je že v 9. stoletju (Ptuj, Radgona). A za potrebe te razprave nas zanimajo predvsem patrociniji tega prostora. Če najprej pogledamo samo ptujsko pražupnijo, ki je dobila ime po (proštijski) cerkvi sv. Jurija, ugotovimo, da sta bili na Ptuju v 9. stoletju postavljeni dve cerkvi: prva, ki je najverjetneje stala na arealu dominikanskega samostana, je bila morda posvečena Materi Božji, in druga, ki je najverjetneje identična z današnjo cerkvijo sv. Jurija. Na Ptuju se omenja še vikariatna cerkev sv. Ožbolta zunaj mesta, ki naj bi nekoč bila župnijska. Iz ptujske prafare so izšle župnije sv. Lovrenca v Slovenskih Goricah (Juršinci), sv. Marjete pod Ptujem (Sv. Marjeta niže Ptuja – Gorišnica), sv. Ruperta v Spodnji Voličini, kaplanija na Vurberku (z Marijino cerkvijo), župnija Sv. Trojice in Matere Božje v Veliki Nedelji (Höfler 2013, 86–90).

Iz radgonske pražupnije s prvotno cerkvijo sv. Ruperta (župnijska cerkev je danes posvečena Janezu Krstniku) so se razvile župnije in vikariati; v Ljutomeru, katere patrocinij je prav tako posvečen Janezu Krstniku, v Križevcih s cerkvijo sv. Križa, župnija Matere Božje v Apačah, župnija sv. Benedikta v Slovenskih goricah in sv. Jurija ob Ščavnici. V sami Radgoni pa je treba omeniti še cerkev sv. Petra zunaj mestnega obzidja, ki naj bi prav tako nekoč bila župnijska (Höfler 2013, 82–86).

Kamniško-mariborska in jareninska župnija sta vsaj deloma pokrivali petovionski ager – na njegovem severozahodnem delu. Začetki obeh in njuna povezanost s pražupnijo v Lipnici (Leibnitz) še morda niso povsem jasni. Na njunem prostoru pa srečamo naslednje patrocinije: sv. Martin v Kamnici, sv. Janez Krstnik v Mariboru, sv. Marjeta v Selnici, sv. Peter v Malečniku, Marijino vnebovzetje v Jarenini, sv. Andrej v Svečini, sv. Lenart v Slovenskih goricah in sv. Jurij ob Pesnici (Höfler 2013, 72–80).

Pražupnija sv. Jurija v Hočah je pokrivala ogromno ozemlje od Pohorja do madžarske meje. Njeno ustanovitev pa lahko postavimo v čas pred 985, ko je njeno središče morda predstavljala cerkev sv. Mihaela v sosednjem Razvanju, kjer se je oblikovalo tudi oblastno središče z gradom Hompoš. Že v drugi polovici 12. stoletja se je iz pražupnije izločila župnija v Lovrencu na Pohorju. Na začetku 15. stoletja pa se nahajajo vikarji na Bregu pri Mariboru (cerkev Marije Magdalene), na Hajdini (cerkev sv. Martina), v Vidmu pri Ptuju (sv. Vid), Žetalah (sv. Mihael) in Majšperku (sv. Nikolaj).

Za župnijo Lovrenc na Dravskem polju pa ni čisto jasno, ali se je izločila iz pražupnije Hoče ali sosednje pražupnije Slivnica, kar za nas niti ni tako zelo pomembno, saj nas bolj zanimajo zgodnji patrociniji v bližini Ptuja. V 15. stoletju je v mejah videmske župnije nastala kaplanija pri nekdanji cerkvi sv. Katarine v Cirkulanah (Höfler 2013, 306–316).

K temu lahko dodamo še podatke iz knjige o patrocinijih na Slovenskem (Škulj 2011), pri čemer se osredotočamo le na različne z Marijo povezane patrocinije, npr. sv. Marija, Tolažnica žalostnih, Vnebovzetje Device Marije, Žalostna Mati Božja … Ob njihovem natančnejšem pregledu ugotovimo, da Marijini patrociniji nikjer po Sloveniji ne prevladujejo, temveč da so precej enakomerno razporejeni po vseh slovenskih škofijah (Škulj 2011, 69.85–88). Podobna slika pa se pokaže tudi v Montagnanovem popisu cerkva na Štajerskem iz 1592/1596 (Höfler 1982, 73.81.85).

Dvomi o smiselnosti iskanja potrditve vpliva Nutric preko Marijinih patrocinijev na območju nekdanje Petovione ostajajo, a obenem je to zaenkrat ena izmed redkih konkretnih stvari, ki jih lahko naredimo. Intenzivno čaščenje Nutric na tem prostoru bi hipotetično lahko vplivalo na pogostnost Marijinih patrocinijev v okviru pražupnij, ki so nastale v srednjem veku. Za lažje razumevanje potencialne povezave je smiselno predstaviti sam pojem patrocinija. Pri patrociniju gre za svetniško zavezništvo posamezne cerkve. Patrocinij določene cerkve je praviloma patrocinij glavnega oz. velikega oltarja. Pozni patrocinij neke cerkve ni nujno tudi njegov prvotni, čeprav do sprememb patrocinijev ni prihajalo zelo pogosto. Obnovljene, na novo posvečene cerkve ali celo nove cerkvene zgradbe so običajno prevzele patrocinije prejšnjih. Prve cerkve v pozni antiki so postavljali na grobovih krajevnih mučencev ali zaslužnih cerkvenih voditeljev, škofov ali diakonov. Cerkve so bile sicer najprej posvečene Kristusu Odrešeniku, Mariji, Janezu Krstniku, Petru ter drugim apostolom in svetnikom. Se je pa ta splošni del patrocinija v njihovih naslovih sčasoma opustil in je prevladalo ime svetnika, ki se je v njej posebej častil. V novo pokristjanjenih predelih srednje Evrope so vlogo mučencev poznoantičnega sveta prevzeli zaslužni misijonarji in prvi škofje, v predelih s kontinuiteto romaniziranega staroselskega prebivalstva pa so se še ohranili svetniški kulti iz pozne antike. Takih primerov v našem prostoru praktično ni. Najstarejša cerkev, ki je navedena s patrocinijem, je Marijina pri Gospe Sveti (8. stoletje). Za najstarejše patrocinije v Panoniji pa veljajo Marija, Rupert, Adrijan, Janez Krstnik, Štefan, Mihael, Marjeta, Lovrenc in Peter (9. stoletje). Na Štajerskem in Koroškem severno od Drave se že v 9. stoletju pojavljajo naslednji patrociniji: Martin, Rupert, Lovrenc, Andrej, Mihael in Marija. Za ozemlje južno od Drave so podatki nekoliko bolj skopi oz. se začnejo nekoliko pozneje. Seznam najstarejših patrocinijev pa je naslednji: Marija, Peter Mihael, Martin, Mohor in Fortunat, Kancijan in tovariši, Danijel, Janez Krstnik, Štefan, Vid, Jurij in Klemen. Očiten je predvsem širši izbor svetnikov (Höfler 2013, 373–376).

Marijini patrociniji, torej Mariji posvečene cerkve, imajo svoj začetek v letu 431,[21] ko je bila Marija na tretjem ekumenskem koncilu v Efezu razglašena za Božjo mater oz. porodnico (*Theotokos*). Na tem koncilu so sprejeli tudi obhajanje Marijine smrti (zaspanja, *dormitio*) na 15. avgust, kar je na vzhodu postalo obvezno že okoli leta 600, na zahodu pa je do tega prišlo slabo stoletje pozneje. Težišče tega praznika se je postopoma preneslo na obhajanje Marijinega vnebovzetja (na zahodu). Že konec 5. stoletja naj bi bilo v Rimu izpričano praznovanje Marijinega oznanjenja, kmalu pa je sledilo še praznovanje Marijinega rojstva, čeprav datumi teh praznikov še niso bili stalni. Do sredine 8. stoletja pa so se štirje glavni Marijini prazniki ustalili na datume, kot jih poznamo še danes: Marijino očiščenje (2. februar), oznanjenje (25. marec), vnebovzetje (15. avgust) in rojstvo (8. september). Najstarejši med njimi je praznik Marijinega vnebovzetja (Höfler 2013, 376–377).

Najstarejše Marijine cerkve so bile torej posvečene Marijinemu vnebovzetju, kar velja tako za sam Rim kakor tudi za območje, ki je posredno ali neposredno povezano z našim prostorom (Furlanija: Oglej, Čedad in druge; stolnica v Kopru, stolnica v Freisingu in stolnica v Briksnu, Gospa Sveta ...). Na današnjem slovenskem prostoru pa naj omenimo nekaj najstarejših iz obdobja med 10. in 12. stoletjem: Leskovec pri Krškem, Grad, Turnišče, Lesce, Jarenina (Höfler 2013, 376–377).

Podatki o patrociniju Marijinega rojstva so veliko bolj skopi, zdi pa se verjetno, da se za marsikatero furlansko Marijino cerkvijo z drugim naslovom skriva ta prvotni patrocinij. Na sedanjem slovenskem ozemlju

21 Gl. predhodno besedilo.

je sicer cerkva Marijinega rojstva precej. Med najstarejše lahko postavimo župnijsko cerkev v Cerknici (druga polovica 10. oz. začetek 11. stoletja) in cerkev na Blejskem otoku, ki je bila prvotno posvečena Marijinemu rojstvu. V drugo polovico 11. stoletja spada župnijska cerkev v Slivnici pri Mariboru. Vse ostale so mlajšega datuma, kar velja tudi za cerkve z drugimi Marijinimi patrociniji (Höfler 2013, 377–379). Po pregledu Marijinih patrocinijev na Ptuju in v njegovi bližnji okolici ne moremo trditi, da bi jih bilo več (kot drugje), pa tudi ne, da bi bili starejši oz. da bi bile Marijine cerkve na tem prostoru starejše.

Zaključki

Nesporno je, da je bil kult Nutric v Petovioni nadvse pomemben, saj spada med epigrafsko najpogosteje izpričane kulte v mestu. Njegov pomen in vlogo potrjuje tudi dejstvo, da je imel pripadnike med vsemi družbenimi sloji in da ni bil omejen le na ozek krog častilcev. Za petovionske Nutrice sicer načeloma trdimo, da gre za predrimski lokalni fenomen, a ob podrobnejši analizi najdemo paralele tako v grško-rimskem panteonu kakor tudi v keltskem svetu bogov. Ob Nutricah, ki so velikokrat predstavljene kot dojilje, varuhinje in zaščitnice dojenčkov ter tudi večjih otrok, posledično pa tudi mater, kaj hitro pomislimo na Matrone (*Matronae*) in Matere (*Matres*), na *Alounae*, tudi na boginjo *Bona Dea*, na Kibelo (Velika mati bogov) in druge boginje, ki so v različnih kulturah v antičnem obdobju veljale za zaščitnice ženskih nalog ter skrbi za otroke.

Samoumevno se torej zdi, da je ob koncu »poganske antike« njihove naloge prevzela Marija, a je kljub temu treba upoštevati določene specifike. Predvsem ne smemo pozabiti, da je Marijina narava človeška in da projekcija božanskih moči s prej naštetih boginj na Marijo ni mogla potekati brez zadržkov, vsaj ne do razglasitve Marije za Božjo mater. S tem pa so se v prvi polovici 5. stoletja odprla vrata za (tudi institucionalizirano) Marijino češčenje; začeli so graditi njen posvečene cerkve, postopoma pa so se uveljavljali tudi njeni prazniki. Če razmišljamo naprej, se najprej vprašamo, kdaj se je krščanstvo pojavilo na naših tleh in s tem tudi v Petovioni. Glede na to, da je bila Petoviona sedež antične škofije, da je tukaj deloval znameniti Viktorin Ptujski, je to moralo biti že relativno zgodaj. Krščanstvo in poganski kulti so se tako gotovo srečali in nekaj časa tudi sobivali. Naslednje vprašanje je, kdaj se je Marijino češčenje pojavilo pri nas. Glede na predstavljeni zgodovinski in teološki razvoj ter pojavnost Marijinih cerkva in njenih upodobitev v Furlaniji je moralo preteči kar nekaj časa (stoletij?), da se je češčenje Marije uveljavilo tudi pri nas. V tem kontekstu ne gre pozabiti tudi na dilemo, od kod je krščanstvo v Petoviono sploh prišlo, saj je bil odnos do Marije na vzhodu v bizantinskem krogu nekoliko drugačen kot na zahodu in so jo hitreje in intenzivneje (drugače?) sprejeli ter se ji tudi prej začeli priporočati. V tej zvezi se je treba tudi vprašati, do kolikšne mere je bilo njeno češčenje že izoblikovano (ob prihodu na naš prostor) pod vplivom drugih vzhodnjaških in grško-rimskih ženskih božanstev ter kaj je k temu oz. bi k temu lahko dodal še domači kult Nutric.

Še bolj ključno pa je vprašanje: Če so petovionske Nutrice vplivale na češčenje Marije, kako ta njihov vpliv ugotoviti oz. potrditi? Govor je namreč o obdobju pozne antike in začetku srednjega veka, kjer bo verjetno treba preseči stereotipne razlage o grobi cezuri med starim in novim, a je zaenkrat zanesljivega vedenja še relativno malo, predvsem o tem, kako je potekalo preoblikovanje kultur, in o medsebojnih vplivih, gotovo pa je šlo za procese, katerih rezultati nikoli ne pridejo z danes na jutri. Nobenega dvoma sicer ni, da je kult Nutric živel še veliko dlje od njej posvečenih votivnih spomenikov (2. in 3. stoletje) in da je ustvaril klimo, ki je bila naklonjena ženskemu principu, ženskim boginjam in ženskim nalogam. Nastavki za češčenje Marije so na ta način gotovo bili idealni, težko pa bomo potrdili, da so se realizirali, ker za to nimamo pravih vzvodov. Ostankov antičnih cerkva je že tako malo, kaj šele tistih, ki bi bile posvečene Mariji; podobno je z manjkajočimi upodobitvami Marije, kjer bi lahko ugotavljali ikonografske vplive.

Za neke vrste izhod v sili še izkaže poskus povezati pojavnost Marijinih patrocinijev na nekdanjem petovionskem prostoru s prisotnostjo Nutric. Marijinih patrocinijev na obravnavanem območju ni več kot drugje po Sloveniji, kjer češčenja Nutric niso poznali. Vedno bolj se torej zdi, da je (vsaj zaenkrat) kult Nutric in češčenje Marije na območju današnjega Ptuja nemogoče postaviti v konkretno povezavo. Krščanstvo je seveda bilo prisotno, s tem pa tudi začetki marijanske zavesti, čeprav o sistematičnem češčenju Marije še ne moremo govoriti. Antične religije in ženski kulti (*Isis*, *Magna Mater*, *Bona Dea* ...) so pripravili prostor za lažji sprejem Marije kot Božje matere, in nekako v tem kontekstu lahko razumemo tudi vpliv domačih Nutric, pa čeprav ga konkretno ne moremo potrditi. Prispevek nas opominja, da je pri sklepanju o takšnih vzročnih povezavah potrebna določena mera previdnosti.

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No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.

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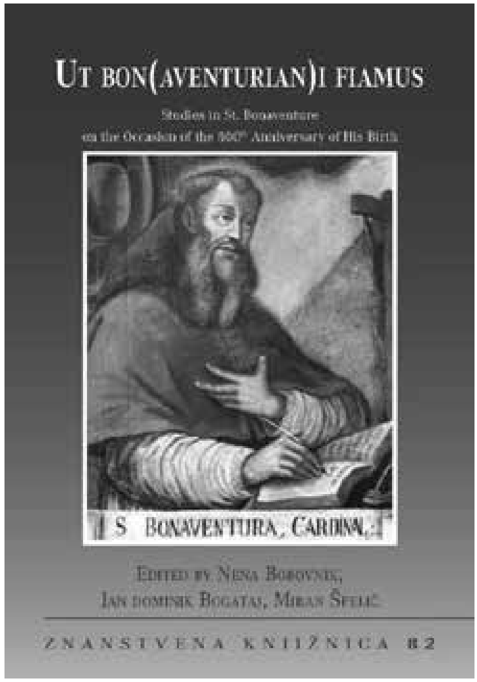

Znanstvena knjižnica 82

Nena Bobovnik, Jan Dominik Bogataj in Miran Špelič (ur.)

UT BON(AVENTURIAN)I FIAMUS:

Studies in St. Bonaventure on the Occasion of the 800th Anniversary of His Birth

»V tem zborniku avtorji osvetljujejo filozofske, teološke in druge vidike sodobnega razumevanja Bonaventurove misli. Zanimiv bo tako za znanstvene kot tudi za neznanstvene bralce, zlasti tiste, ki se ukvarjajo s študijem frančiškanstva in širšim področjem srednjeveške filozofije ter evropske kulturne zgodovine.«

doc. dr. Simon Malmenvall, recenzija zbornika

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Liliana Brožič, Stjepan Domjančić in Oliver Andonov

Možnosti vzpostavitve duhovne oskrbe v armadi Republike Severne Makedonije

Possibilities for Establishing Spiritual Care in the Army of the Republic of North Macedonia

Izvleček: Prispevek obravnava duhovno oskrbo v Armadi Republike Severne Makedonije (ARSM) kot doslej neurejeno, a pomembno področje vojaške organizacije z vidika celostne skrbi za pripadnike oboroženih sil in človekovih pravic. S pomočjo zgodovinske, deskriptivne in analitične metode ter deduktivnega pristopa je predstavljena analiza zgodovinskega razvoja, pravnega okvira in stališč pripadnikov ARSM do duhovne oskrbe. Posebna pozornost je namenjena primerjalni analizi ureditev v Republiki Hrvaški in Republiki Sloveniji, kjer duhovna oskrba že deluje na temelju ustavnih določb in mednarodnih sporazumov. Ugotovitve kažejo, da v Makedoniji obstaja pravna in družbena podlaga za uvedbo vojaške duhovne oskrbe, vendar primanjkuje politične volje in institucionalne pobude.

Ključne besede: vera, oborožene sile, duhovna oskrba, Armada Republike Severne Makedonije, Oborožene sile Republike Hrvaške, Slovenska vojska

Abstract: *The article deals with spiritual care in the Army of the Republic of North Macedonia (ARSM) as a hitherto unregulated but important area of military organisation in terms of holistic care for members of the armed forces and human rights. Using historical, descriptive and analytical methods, as well as a deductive approach, the paper presents an analysis of the historical development, the legal framework and the attitudes of ARSM members towards spiritual care. Particular attention is paid to a comparative analysis of the arrangements in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Slovenia, where spiritual care is already in place on the basis of constitutional provisions and international agreements. The findings show that there is a legal and societal basis for the introduction of military spiritual care in the Republic of Macedonia, but that there is a lack of political will and institutional initiative.*

Keywords: *religion, military, spiritual care, Army of the Republic of North Macedonia, Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, Slovenian Armed Forces*

Uvod

Pri zagotavljanju duhovne oskrbe v oboroženih silah gre za pomembno vprašanje sodobne družbe kot celote, in ne le za notranje vprašanje vojske ali obrambnega sektorja. Pripadniki oboroženih sil so namreč del širše družbe z večjo ali manjšo mero osebnih verskih potreb. Te potrebe, bodisi da gre za vsakodnevno versko prakso, osebni pogovor z Bogom ali občasno iskanje tolažbe v trenutkih tesnobe, so še posebej izražene prav pri vojaškem osebju (Plut 2002, 52; Muršič Klenar 2024).

Duhovna oskrba ni nadomestek za psihološko pomoč, ki jo nudijo vojaški psihologi. Nosilci duhovne oskrbe v vojaškem okolju predstavljajo posebno kategorijo častnikov, ločeno tako od psihologov kot od nekdanjih »moralistov«, torej naslednikov političnih komisarjev (Easton 2022). Njihova vloga v oboroženih silah je povsem drugačna, zlasti v okviru poveljevanja in nadzora nad delom enot, z osredotočenostjo na njihovo bojno uporabo in delovanje v okviru mirovnih ter bojnih operacij (Kocjančič 2021b, 175–176; Mesarič Jazbinšek 2012, 295–301).

Raziskovanje duhovne oskrbe v Armadi Republike Severne Makedonije (ARSM) predstavlja poseben izziv, saj je to področje slabo raziskano in ni predmet strokovnih, znanstvenih ali političnih razprav. Razlogi za to tičijo v globokih družbenih dejavnikih, povezanih z etnično in versko strukturo družbe, z njihovo družbeno vlogo ter s prevladujočimi stereotipi, ki spremljajo dojemanje oboroženih sil in vojaškega osebja. Ti stereotipi pa ne smejo biti razlog, da se vprašanje duhovne oskrbe v oboroženih silah zanemarja v državi, ki je članica mednarodnega zavezništva (Andonov 2023, 59).

Razprava o duhovni oskrbi vključuje tudi razmislek o razmerju med državo in verskimi skupnostmi ter med vero in sekularnim in o svobodi veroizpovedi kot temeljni človekovi pravici. Oborožene sile so del državne uprave, a v njih služijo posamezniki, ki opravljajo izjemno zahteven poklic, pri tem pa imajo pravico do duhovne podpore. Tu nastopi ključno presečišče – razmerje med vero in moralo, ki v teoriji in praksi ne bi smelo biti v nasprotju (Kocjančič 2021a, 104–105; Zrinščak idr. 2014, 5; Plut 2002, 135–137, Primc 2025, 97–118).

Vojaška moč temelji na treh ključnih, med seboj povezanih komponentah: moralni, fizični in konceptualni. To spoznanje je temeljno za vse, ki se teoretično ali praktično ukvarjajo z obrambo in oboroženimi silami kot sestavnim delom državne varnosti (Kotovcevski 2011, 30–31). Brez moralne in fizične komponente konceptualna izgubi svojo učinkovitost. Strategije in doktrine so lahko vrhunsko razvite, vojaška oprema najsodobnejša, a če ni ustrezne pripravljenosti ljudi – fizične, moralne in duhovne – ostajajo le na papirju. Ključni člen je moralna moč: volja, motivacija in prepričanje posameznikov in enot, da dosežejo zastavljene cilje, tudi v kontekstu reševanja konfliktov in obrambe države (Kotovcevski 2011, 34).

Na moralo vojaškega osebja vplivajo številni dejavniki, med katerimi ima pomembno vlogo moralna obveznost do družine, skupnosti in domovine – kar uči tudi vera. Tudi obramba lastne vere, čeprav se to morda zdi nenavadno, predstavlja enega izmed elementov, ki prispevajo k dvigu morale, telesne pripravljenosti in učinkoviti rabi konceptualnih komponent vojaške moči (Karapandžin 2012, 248–361).

Pozitivne izkušnje z duhovno oskrbo v oboroženih silah so že dolgo prisotne v številnih sodobnih državah, še posebej v državah članicah zveze Nato. Zato uvedba duhovne oskrbe v ARSM ni le pravica njenih pripadnikov do svobode veroizpovedi, temveč tudi interes oboroženih sil, saj te s tem krepijo in varujejo moralo svojega kadra, ki je sestavni del makedonskega Ministrstva za obrambo, in s tem tudi države (Andonov 2023, 54–59).

Glavni namen raziskave, ki je bila izvedena v ARSM, je bil ugotoviti, ali njeni pripadniki menijo, da je treba za njihove potrebe uvesti duhovno oskrbo. Poleg deduktivnega pristopa so bile uporabljene tudi zgodovinska, deskriptivna in analitična metoda. V okviru raziskave je bila izvedena primerjalna analiza ureditev duhovne oskrbe v izbranih državah članicah Nata, zlasti v Republiki Sloveniji in Republiki Hrvaški. Ti državi sta bili izbrani zaradi skupne zgodovinske izkušnje v okviru večnacionalnih držav, kot sta bili Avstro-Ogrska in Kraljevina SHS/Jugoslavija, kjer je bila duhovna oskrba pomemben in tradicionalni sestavni del organiziranosti oboroženih sil. V nekdanji Socialistični federativni republiki Jugoslaviji, ki kot totalitarna država verskih svoboščin v oboroženih silah ni omogočala, pa duhovna oskrba ni bila zagotovljena.

1 Zgodovinska retrospektiva vojaške duhovne oskrbe v Makedoniji

Če retrospektivno obravnavamo vprašanje duhovne oskrbe skozi makedonsko prizmo, ugotovimo, da v zgodovinskem okviru z njo ni bilo neposredne institucionalne izkušnje. Makedonska samostojna država in oborožene sile so bile ustanovljene šele v letih 1991 oziroma 1992. Zgodovinsko gledano, so Makedonci, skupaj s celotnim prebivalstvom današnje Republike Severne Makedonije, večinoma služili v tujih vojskah – najpogosteje v vojskah sosednjih držav – ali pa sploh niso služili vojaškega roka, zlasti v času osmanske oblasti pred letom 1908, ko krščansko prebivalstvo praviloma ni bilo vpoklicano v vojaško službo. To dejstvo ne pomeni, da je bilo prebivalstvo brez verske pripadnosti ali da pravoslavna Cerkev ni delovala kot družbeno pomemben dejavnik. Pomeni pa, da ni bilo povezave med verskim življenjem in vojaško službo vsaj do obdobja po balkanskih vojnah. Po Bukareškem mirovnem sporazumu leta 1913 se je velik del makedonskega prebivalstva znašel pod oblastjo sosednjih monarhij – Grčije, Srbije in Bolgarije – in je bil dolžan služiti v njihovih vojskah. Istočasno se je makedonsko ljudstvo že več kot stoletje borilo za obnovitev Ohridske nadškofije kot avtohtone cerkvene avtoritete znotraj Pravoslavne cerkve. V tem okviru narodno-cerkvenega boja, ki je bil med balkanskimi vojnami in letom 1944 različno intenziven, se je jurisdikcija nad pravoslavnimi verniki v Makedoniji večkrat spreminjala – od Carigrajske patriarhije do Srbske in Bolgarske pravoslavne cerkve (Ilievski 2011, 12).

Carigrajska patriarhija je leta 1922 z aktom, imenovanim tomos, Srbski pravoslavni cerkvi prepustila upravljanje škofij na ozemlju današnje Severne Makedonije (t. i. Vardarske Makedonije), s čimer so te prešle pod jurisdikcijo Srbske cerkve kot sestavnega dela Kraljevine SHS/Jugoslavije (Snegarov 2023, 230).

Pomemben mejnik v razvoju verske prisotnosti znotraj oboroženih struktur predstavlja leto 1943. Po italijanski kapitulaciji 8. septembra 1943 je na osvobojenem ozemlju v zahodni Makedoniji Glavni štab Narodnoosvobodilne vojske in Partizanskih odredov Makedonije (NOV POM) 11. oktobra 1943 v vasi Crvena Voda sprejel odločitev o oblikovanju posebnih oddelkov, med katerimi so bili nekateri zadolženi tudi za verska vprašanja (Ilievski 2011, 21). Ti oddelki so nastali na pobudo pravoslavnih duhovnikov, ki so želeli, da bi makedonska duhovščina postala odgovorna za cerkvena vprašanja na osvobojenem ozemlju. Tudi v času druge svetovne vojne je cerkvena jurisdikcija na ozemlju Makedonije večkrat prehajala med Srbsko, Bolgarsko in Carigrajsko pravoslavno cerkvijo, na zahodu države pa deloma tudi pod jurisdikcijo Albanske pravoslavne cerkve. Duhovnik Veljo Mančevski (1905–1962) je bil 15. oktobra 1943 imenovan za verskega referenta pri Glavnem štabu Narodnoosvobodilne vojske in Partizanskih odredov Makedonije. Odlok Glavnega štaba je določal, da se vse odločitve verskega oddelka nanašajo izključno na administrativna vprašanja, in ne na dogmatska. Med prvimi navodili, ki so jih izdali za delovanje duhovnikov, so bila: ukinitev zakonov okupatorskih oblasti, prekinitev stikov z zunanjimi verskimi institucijami, podreditev milic Glavnemu štabu, spoštovanje pravil vzhodnega pravoslavja ter vodenje matičnih knjig v makedonskem jeziku (Ilievski 2011, 22).

V drugi polovici oktobra 1943 je v vasi Izdeglavlje potekalo prvo srečanje duhovniškega zbora, ki je skupaj z enajstimi duhovniki in petindvajsetimi predstavniki ljudstva razpravljal o cerkveno-upravni organizaciji in uvedbi stalne mašniške službe (Popovski 1961, 10). Čeprav je bila ta cerkvena struktura ustanovljena pod okriljem partizanskega gibanja, ne moremo govoriti o formalizirani vojaški duhovni oskrbi. Kljub temu obstajajo dokumentirani primeri verskih obredov, ki so jih duhovniki izvajali za potrebe partizanskih enot. Tako je ob formiranju Prve makedonske udarne brigade 8. junija 1944 pravoslavni duhovnik Kiril I. Stojanovski (1909–1971) iz vasi Lokov pri Strugi opravil bogoslužje in posvetil brigadno zastavo (Popovski 1961, 12).

Takšni dogodki kažejo, da je bila prisotnost duhovnikov v partizanskih enotah tolerirana zaradi politično-pragmatičnih razlogov, povezanih s cerkveno-narodnim ciljem po obnovi Ohridske nadškofije. Prisotnost duhovščine v strukturah partizanskega gibanja je bila torej administrativne in simbolne narave, ne pa institucionalno-verske v okviru vojaške službe.

Na prvem zasedanju Antifašističnega zbora narodne osvoboditve Makedonije (ASNOM) v samostanu sv. Prohorja Pčinjskega so bili med 116 delegati tudi štirje pravoslavni duhovniki. Do konca leta 1945 so bile v makedonskih oboroženih silah in družbi še vedno prisotne verske liturgije in procesije, ki so jih spremljali visoki civilni in vojaški funkcionarji. Med drugim poroča časnik *Nova Makedonija* o dveh pomembnih verskih dogodkih: praznovanju dneva sv. Klementa Ohridskega 8. decembra 1944 ter prazniku Gospodovega razglašenja 19. januarja 1945, ki sta se ju udeležila tudi predsednik predsedstva Antifašističnega zbora narodne osvoboditve Makedonije Metodija Andonov-Cento (1902–1957) in generalmajor Pavle Ilić (1910–1964) (*Nova Makedonija* 1944, 11; 1945, 34).

Po letu 1945 je oblast v vsej Jugoslaviji, vključno z Makedonijo, uvedla strogo ločitev vere in vojske. Vsaka oblika duhovne oskrbe je bila prepovedana, kar je pomenilo popoln prelom med vojsko in verskimi skupnostmi.

2 Primerjalna analiza med izvajanjem vojaške duhovne oskrbe v Republiki Hrvaški in v Republiki Sloveniji

Primerjalno analizo med Republiko Hrvaško in Republiko Slovenijo smo izvedli zaradi skupne zgodovine, ki jo imata obe državi (vključno z Makedonijo) na področju duhovne oskrbe iz nekdanje skupne države in izkušenj, povezanih s tem področjem, iz nekdanje Jugoslovanske vojske. Kljub temu ali pa ravno zaradi tega sta obe našli pot za uvedbo duhovne oskrbe v svoje oborožene sile.

2.1 Duhovna oskrba v Oboroženih silah Republike Hrvaške

Ustava Republike Hrvaške zagotavlja svobodo vesti in veroizpovedi ter svobodno javnega izražanja vere ali drugih prepričanj pa tudi položaj verskih skupnosti v družbi. Te določbe zagotavljajo izhodiščni pogoj ne le za delovanje verskih skupnosti v družbi, temveč tudi za urejanje njihovega pravnega statusa, odnosov z drugimi organizacijami in družbenimi subjekti ter političnimi institucijami (*Ustav Republike Hrvatske* 1990).

Leta 2002 je hrvaški parlament sprejel *Zakon o pravnem statusu verskih skupnosti*, ki ureja njihov pravni status, okvir za izvajanje njihovih dejavnosti, vpis v register, premoženje itd. Isti zakon določa izvajanje duhovne oskrbe za pripadnike oboroženih sil policije (*Zakon o pravnom položaju vjerskih zajednica* 2002).

Iz dokumentov Vojaškega ordinariata Republike Hrvaške izhaja, da sta Sveti sedež in Republika Hrvaška 19. decembra 1996 v Zagrebu podpisala *Sporazum o pastoralni oskrbi katoliških vernikov, pripadnikov oboroženih sil in policijskih služb Republike Hrvaške* (*Narodne novine*, br. 2/1997). Sveti sedež je nato (po končanem postopku ratifikacije mednarodne pogodbe) leta 1997 ustanovil Vojaški ordinariat v Republiki Hrvaški. Juraj Jezerinac je bil leta 1998 imenovan za prvega vojaškega ordinarija (škofa). Hkrati je Vojaški ordinariat pripravil *Pravilnik o organizaciji in dejavnosti Vojaškega ordinariata v Republiki Hrvaški*, ki so ga 3. decembra 1998 v Zagrebu podpisali predsednik Hrvaške škofovske konference ter ministra za obrambo in notranje zadeve (Vojni ordinarijat u Republici Hrvatskoj 1998). S tem se je končal pravni postopek ustanovitve vojaške škofije in ordinariata v Republiki Hrvaški.

Vojaški ordinariat Republike Hrvaške ima status škofije, njegova pastoralna jurisdikcija pa zajema pripadnike oboroženih sil in policije, njihove družinske člane, kadete vojaških in policijskih šol ter druge, ki trajno opravljajo službo v ordinariatu ali sodelujejo z njim. Pravna ureditev ordinariata ne temelji zgolj na nacionalni zakonodaji, temveč predvsem na mednarodnem sporazumu s Svetim sedežem iz leta 1996, ki po hrvaški ustavi velja kot del notranjega pravnega reda in ima višjo pravno moč od zakona. Duhovna oskrba za vojake se je začela že v času vojne za neodvisnost, še pred formalno ureditvijo. Na pobudo predsednika Franja Tuđmana je Hrvaška škofovska konferenca 24. septembra 1991 imenovala msgr. Jezerinca za odgovornega za duhovno oskrbo vojakov. V tem kontekstu institucionalizacija duhovne oskrbe ni bila zgolj izraz državne suverenosti, temveč odziv na izredne razmere, v katerih so se znašli pretežno neprofesionalni in neizkušeni vojaki. Vojna realnost je terjala celostno podporo, pri čemer je bila duhovna oskrba ključna za psihološko stabilnost vojakov (Šućurović idr. 2017; Brlas in Križić 2024).

Uvedba duhovne oskrbe v oboroženih silah med vojno je bila logičen korak, ki je bil poleg tega na splošno dobro sprejet. Vendar je treba omeniti, da je bila duhovna oskrba za vse novost in da je bilo že v prvem obdobju njenega uvajanja (preden je bila institucionalizirana prek vojaškega ordinariata, tj. urejena s pogodbami in predpisi) opaziti nerodnosti, predvsem na strani vojaške organizacije, ki je duhovno oskrbo obravnavala kot element oblikovanja zaželenega profila vojakov. V teh poskusih so na nosilce duhovne oskrbe preprosto gledali kot na moralno-politične delavce (kakršni so obstajali v komunističnih oboroženih silah) (Easton 2022). Z institucionalizacijo duhovne oskrbe, z njeno pravno ureditvijo in ustanovitvijo vojaške škofije so bile preprečene zlorabe (Domjančić 2015).

Vsi pripadniki oboroženih sil Republike Hrvaške iz vrst manjšinskih etničnih in verskih skupin imajo enake pravice do svobodnega uveljavljanja verskih svoboščin. Muslimani pripadniki oboroženih sil Republike Hrvaške imajo v skladu z ustavo pravico do opravljanja svojih verskih potreb. Institucionalizacija skrbi za pripadnike oboroženih sil muslimane je bila omogočena s podpisom Protokola o duhovni oskrbi pripadnikov oboroženih sil Republike Hrvaške za pripadnike islamske vere, ki sta ga leta 2005 podpisala minister za obrambo in predsednik Mešihata na Hrvaškem, mufti (Ministarstvo obrane Republike Hrvatske 2005).

Kar zadeva vojake pravoslavne vere v oboroženih silah Republike Hrvaške, njihovo duhovno oskrbo omogoča sporazum med Srbsko pravoslavno cerkvijo in Vlado Republike Hrvaške. (*Narodne novine*, br. 196/2003).

2.2 Vojaška duhovna oskrba v Slovenski vojski

V Republiki Sloveniji *Ustava* (1991) zagotavlja celovito uresničevanje človekovih pravic, med katere spadata tudi svoboda vesti in veroizpovedi (41. člen) ter njeno neposredno uresničevanje (15. člen). Po *Ustavi* imajo verske skupnosti možnost svobodnega delovanja (7. člen).

Prvi poskusi za uresničevanje pogodb in konvencij v slovenski zakonodaji, povezanih z vojaško službo, so bili urejeni dokaj kmalu s pomočjo *Zakona o obrambi* (1994), kasneje z *Zakonom o vojaški dolžnosti* (2007) in *Zakonom o spremembah in dopolnitvah zakona o vojaški dolžnosti* (2021). Na podlagi prvih dveh zakonov je stopil v veljavo *Pravilnik o realizaciji religiozne duhovne oskrbe v Slovenski vojski* (*Uradni list RS*, št. 58/03, 2003). Z njegovo uveljavitvijo je prenehalo veljati *Navodilo o ureničevanju pravic vojaških obveznikov med opravljanjem vojaške službe do izpovedovanja vere* iz leta 1992, o katerem Plut pravi, da je bil to prvi pravni akt, ki je uresničeval te pravice po letu 1945 na slovenskem ozemlju (2002, 300). Kot izhaja iz naziva obeh dokumentov, je po dolgem času nastala pomembna sprememba, namreč navodilo je urejalo pravice do duhovne oskrbe zgolj za vojaške obveznike, medtem ko pravilnik to ureja za vse pripadnike Slovenske vojske. Navedena sprememba je bila povezana s prehodom iz naborništva v poklicno sestavo Slovenske vojske, dopolnjeno s pogodbeno rezervo.

Sporazum med Slovensko škofovsko konferenco in Vlado Republike Slovenije o duhovni oskrbi vojaških oseb in *Sporazum med Evangeličansko cerkvijo v Republiki Sloveniji in Vlado Republike Slovenije o duhovni oskrbi vojaških oseb*, ki sta bila podpisana leta 2000, sta temeljna pravna akta za delovanje Vojaškega vikariata v Slovenski vojski. Omogočila sta zaposlitev katoliških in evangeličanskih duhovnikov znotraj Slovenske vojske, kasneje pa tudi pastoralnih asistentov. Vojaškega vikarja in namestnika vojaškega vikarja imenuje in odpokliče Slovenska škofovska konferenca ali Zbor duhovnikov, pomočnika vojaškega vikarja, vojaške kaplane in druge pastoralne delavce pa imenuje in odpokliče vojaški vikar v soglasju s pristojnimi cerkvenimi oblastmi. Vsi navedeni postopki potekajo s soglasjem Ministrstva za obrambo (3. člen *Sporazuma s Slovensko škofovsko konferenco* oziroma 2. člen *Sporazuma z Evangeličansko cerkvijo*).

Dimenzije duhovne oskrbe so pred ustanovitvijo Vojaškega vikariata glede načina izvajanja zavzemale predvsem duhovno oskrbo v mirnodobnem stanju, ki je vključevala tudi pogodbeno rezervo. Ta se je izvajala na vojaških vajah in v multinacionalnih enotah ter v enotah za podporo miru. Vključevala je tudi dimenzijo delovanja v izrednem stanju ali vojni. Primarno je duhovna oskrba po vsebini skrbela za pouk o življenju, vrednotah in svobodi, sekundarno pa za družine vojaških oseb ter za ekumenski in dialoški pomen navzočnosti (vojaškega) duhovnika (Plut 2002).

Po ustanovitvi Vojaškega vikariata lahko ugotovimo, da je njegova vloga prepoznana kot obsežna (ne le) duhovna oskrba tako z zgodovinskega kot tudi mednarodnega vidika. V tej razširjeni vlogi je moč prepoznati zaposlene v vikariatu kot izvajalce nalog apologetov in učiteljev, izvajalce medicinsko-psihološke skrbi, povezovalce, branitelje reda in prava, ki se zagotavljajo tudi za vojaške družine in veterane, ter izvajalce naloge glasnikov miru (Kocjančič 2021b).

Vojaški duhovniki so dodeljeni vojašnicam Slovenske vojske po teritorialnem principu, kjer primarno opravljajo duhovno oskrbo vojaških oseb, tj. spremljajo vojaške osebe v njihovem delovnem in družinskem okolju, jih spodbujajo, opogumljajo, delijo zakramente in oznanjajo evangelij ter s svojim zgledom, prisotnostjo in usposabljanjem vojaških oseb krepijo vrednote, po katerih se vojaška oseba lahko ravna v miru in vojni. Pripadnikom Slovenske vojske so tako na voljo pogovor, nasvet in podpora osebja vojaškega vikariata, organizacija in vodenje bogoslužnih obredov in shodov za dotične osebe lastne veroizpovedi, odprava posledic izrednega dogodka ali pomoč prizadetim v primeru nesreč, samomorov, bolezni ali smrti pripadnika Slovenske vojske, izvedba razgovorov ali predavanj z versko vsebino pa tudi vnos verske literature in tiska ter seznanitev vojaških in civilnih oseb glede prisotnosti verskih objektov na območju, na katerem se nahajajo (Kocjančič 2021a, 171).

Vse prej navedene naloge zaposleni v Vojaškem vikariatu opravljajo po predhodnem dogovoru s poveljujočimi v Slovenski vojski, ki so dolžni podpreti njihovo delovanje (*Uradni list RS*, št. 58/03, 2003).

3 Rezultati raziskovanja o uvedbi duhovne oskrbe v Armadi Republike Severne Makedonije

Ministrstvo za obrambo Republike Severne Makedonije je sodelovanje v kvalitativni raziskavi zavrnilo, zaradi česar rezultati, predstavljeni v nadaljevanju, vključujejo samo podatke, pridobljene v ARSM.

Raziskava je bila izvedena v obdobju petnajstih dni v marcu 2023 med 450 pripadniki ARSM z uporabo vprašalnika kot raziskovalnega instrumenta, kar predstavlja 5 % ARSM. Pri pregledu in interpretaciji pridobljenih podatkov je bilo ugotovljeno, da je 422 vprašalnikov mogoče šteti za relevantne pri ugotavljanju stališč sodelujočih.

Med 422 vprašanimi je bilo 350 moških in 72 žensk, po veroizpovedi je sodelovalo 279 pripadnikov pravoslavne vere, 132 jih je bilo islamske veroizpovedi, trije drugih veroizpovedi, šest se jih je izreklo za ateiste in dva za agnostika. Po činu in statusu je sodelovalo 45 častnikov, 81 podčastnikov, 289 poklicnih vojakov in šest civilnih oseb, zaposlenih v ARSM. Starost sodelujočih je bila razdeljena v pet skupin: v skupini od 18 do 24 let jih je sodelovalo 37, od 25 do 34 let 124, od 35 do 44 let 197, od 45 do 54 let 61 in v skupini starejših od 55 let trije pripadniki.

Za potrebe našega znanstvenega dela smo uporabili spremenljivo porazdelitev sodelujočih po spolu, versko porazdelitev in njihov status v vojski oziroma poklicu. Vendar to ne pomeni, da celotna raziskava ni pokazala zanimive razpršenosti odgovorov glede na starost vprašanih, še posebej na vprašanje: »Ali se imate za vernika?« V okviru tega dela se bomo osredotočili le na poglede vprašanih in znanstvene podatke, povezane s temeljnim znanstvenim vprašanjem, ki je sprožilo to raziskavo.

Pri statistični obdelavi podatkov smo uporabili metodo povprečne vrednosti porazdelitve dobljenih odgovorov, ki jih bomo prikazali v absolutnih številkah oziroma odstotkih dobljenih odgovorov in spremenljivk, ki pripadajo sodelujočim.

3.1 Prikaz podatkov raziskovanja in komentarji rezultatov

Temeljno znanstveno vprašanje, s katerim se je začela ta raziskava, je bilo: Ali pripadniki ARSM menijo, da bi bilo treba v vojski uvesti duhovno oskrbo? Da bi dobili neposreden odgovor, smo zastavili vprašanje: »Ali menite, da je treba v enote in poveljstva vojske uvesti duhovno oskrbo?«

Pridobljeni podatki so prikazani v tabelah od 1 do 3.

	Zagotovo	Morali bi	Ne vem	Ni potrebe	Sploh ne	Skupaj
Moški	59	81	74	63	73	350
Ženske	3	10	22	15	22	72
Skupaj	62	91	96	78	85	422

Tabela 1: Rezultati v vzorcu glede na spol sodelujočih (v absolutnih številkah)

Glede na zbrane odgovore in njihovo porazdelitev sklepamo, da večina sodelujočih o vprašanju uvedbe duhovne oskrbe v ARSM nima izoblikovanega stališča. Razlogi za to niso bili posebej raziskani, saj približno četrtina vprašanih na to vprašanje ni podala odgovora. Zato smo poskušali dodatna pojasnila poiskati s pomočjo drugih odgovorov v vprašalniku.

Zanimiv je podatek, da je med vprašanimi več tistih, ki menijo, da uvedba duhovne oskrbe ni potrebna – tako je odgovorilo 85 sodelujočih – kot tistih, ki se opredeljujejo za obvezno uvedbo duhovne oskrbe – tako je odgovorilo le 62 vprašanih, kar predstavlja približno osmino vseh sodelujočih. Na podlagi kumulativnih podatkov ugotavljamo, da 153 oseb (nekaj več kot tretjina vseh vprašanih) podpira uvedbo duhovne oskrbe v ARSM, medtem ko jih 163 meni, da za to ni potrebe.

Z vidika razlik po spolu je mogoče opaziti, da je uvedbi duhovne oskrbe izraziteje nenaklonjen ženski del vprašanih: od 72 sodelujočih žensk jih je bilo 37 proti uvedbi, kar predstavlja nekaj več kot polovico, medtem ko jih je le 13 (približno šestina) podprlo njeno uvedbo.

Nesorazmerje v odzivih med ženskami in moškimi nakazuje pomembne spremembe v odnosu do religije znotraj ARSM, kar odraža preoblikovanje tradicionalnega vzorca v makedonski družbi, v kateri so bile ženske v preteklosti osrednje nosilke religioznega izražanja in prakse.

	Zagotovo	**Morali bi**	**Ne vem**	**Ni potrebe**	**Sploh ne**	**Skupaj**
Častniki	8,89	28,89	15,56	24,44	22,22	100
Podčastniki	8,64	20,99	19,75	22,22	28,39	100
Vojaki	17,65	20,41	24,57	16,26	28,03	100
Civilne osebe	0	33,33	16,67	33,33	16,67	100
Skupaj	14,69	21,56	22,75	18,48	22,75	100

Tabela 2: Rezultati v vzorcu glede na status sodelujočih (v odstotkih)

Analiza odgovorov sodelujočih glede na njihov položaj v ARSM potrjuje pričakovane vzorce in ne odstopa bistveno od predpostavljenih trendov. Skoraj polovica sodelujočih častnikov (46,66 %) meni, da ni potrebe po uvedbi duhovne oskrbe v enote in poveljstva ARSM. Takšno stališče je razumljivo, saj kaže, da se večina častnikov na svoji poklicni poti ni srečala z duhovno oskrbo in verjetno tudi ni razvila refleksije o vlogi nosilcev duhovne oskrbe v strukturi oboroženih sil. Kljub temu 37,78 % častnikov – torej več kot tretjina – podpira uvedbo duhovne oskrbe, kar lahko kaže na njihovo osebno religiozno angažiranost. To potrjujejo tudi odgovori na pomožno vprašanje »Ali se imate za vernika?«, na katero je večina častnikov odgovorila pritrdilno. Vendar med tema dvema sklopoma vprašanj ni bilo ugotovljene neposredne korelacije.

Podoben vzorec je zaznati tudi pri pripadnikih vojaške policije, kjer se je kar 80 % vprašanih izreklo za vernike. Ta visoka številka pa verjetno bolj odraža nominalno identifikacijo z določeno versko skupnostjo kot pa globlje razumevanje ali prakticiranje vere, kar se kaže tudi v pomanjkanju podpore institucionalni duhovni oskrbi. Takšno razhajanje med izraženo versko opredelitvijo in odnosom do verske oskrbe znotraj ARSM opozarja na širši fenomen religiozne identitete v sodobni makedonski družbi.

Posebno pozornost smo namenili stališčem častnikov, saj ti – skupaj s podčastniki – nosijo odgovornost za izvajanje potencialne uvedbe duhovne oskrbe v strukturi ARSM.

Stališča podčastnikov so bila še bolj razpršena. Na vprašanje »Ali menite, da je treba v enote in poveljstva ARSM uvesti duhovno oskrbo?« je pritrdilno odgovorilo 29,63 % vprašanih, torej manj kot tretjina, medtem ko jih je 50,61 % – več kot polovica – to možnost zavrnilo. Kljub temu se je kar 94 % podčastnikov opredelilo kot verniki. Tudi tukaj ni zaznati neposredne povezave med deklarirano vero in podporo duhovni oskrbi.

Tudi med poklicnimi vojaki so bili odgovori podobno raznoliki: 38,06 % jih podpira uvedbo duhovne oskrbe, medtem ko jih 44,29 % temu nasprotuje. Ob tem se jih kar 93,77 % izreka za vernike.

Takšna porazdelitev odgovorov in izražena stališča sodelujočih razkrivajo notranje napetosti in nedoslednosti, ki odpirajo pomembna vprašanja o vlogi religije v javnem prostoru in vlogi verskih skupnosti v sodobni makedonski družbi. Obenem pa se postavlja vprašanje, kakšen naj bi bil odnos med oboroženimi silami in religijo v institucionalnem okvirju, kjer so oborožene sile nedvomno eden ključnih državnih podsistemov.

	Zagotovo	**Morali bi**	**Ne vem**	**Ni potrebe**	**Sploh ne**	**Skupaj**
Pravoslavni kristjani	19 6,81 %	58 20,79 %	67 24,01 %	57 20,43 %	77 27,60 %	279 66,13| %
Muslimani	41 31,06 %	32 24,24 %	28 21,21 %	19 14,39 %	12 9,09 %	132 31,28 %
Katoliški kristjani	0	0	0	1 100 %	0	1 0,24 %
Judje	1 100 %	0	0	0	0	1 0,24 %
Ateisti	0	0	1 16,66 %	0	5 83,33 %	6 1,42 %
Agnostiki	1 50 %	0	0	1 50 %	0	2 0,48 %
Drugo	0	0	0	0	1 100 %	1 0,24 %
Skupaj	62 14,69 %	91 21,56 %	96 22,75 %	78 18,48 %	85 20,14 %	422 100 %

Tabela 3: Rezultati v vzorcu glede na versko pripadnost sodelujočih (v absolutnih številkah in v odstotkih)

Analiza porazdelitve odgovorov na glavno raziskovalno vprašanje glede uvedbe duhovne oskrbe, obravnavano skozi spremenljivko verske pripadnosti, kaže na jasno povezavo med religijsko identiteto in stališči do duhovne oskrbe v vojaškem okolju. Iz podatkov izhaja, da verska pripadnost pomembno vpliva na odnos do vprašanja »Ali menite, da je treba uvesti duhovno oskrbo v enotah in poveljstvih ARSM?«.

Med pripadniki pravoslavne veroizpovedi se jih 27,6 % strinja z uvedbo duhovne oskrbe, 48,03 % jih temu nasprotuje, 24 % pa ostaja neopredeljenih. Povsem drugačen odziv je bil zaznan med pripadniki islamske veroizpovedi, kjer uvedbo tovrstne oskrbe podpira 55,3 % vprašanih, nasprotuje ji 23,48 %, medtem ko jih je 21,21 % neopredeljenih.

Tako izrazita razlika v stališčih med pripadniki dveh glavnih monoteističnih skupnosti v makedonski družbi kaže na globlje kulturne in verske razlike, ki oblikujejo odnos posameznikov do prisotnosti religije v institucionalnih okvirih, kot so oborožene sile. Te razlike je mogoče razlagati kot posledico delovanja in vpliva verskih skupnosti v javnem prostoru ter njihovega dolgotrajnega in pogosto subtilnega vpliva znotraj družinskih in širših družbenih struktur.

Zaključek

Analiza duhovne oskrbe v kontekstu Republike Severne Makedonije razkriva izrazito vrzel med mednarodnimi zavezami, ki jih država prevzema kot članica Nata, in dejanskim stanjem na tem področju. Čeprav večina sodobnih oboroženih sil držav članic Nata sistematično vključuje duhovno oskrbo kot del skrbi za vojaško osebje, Republika Severna Makedonija tega še ni implementirala v institucionalni obliki.

Zgodovinski pregled, primerjalna analiza z Republiko Hrvaško in Republiko Slovenijo ter izvedena raziskava v ARSM jasno kažejo, da obstaja tako pravna kot tudi organizacijska osnova za vzpostavitev ustreznega modela duhovne oskrbe. Ugotovitve raziskave obenem odražajo kompleksno razmerje med izraženo versko identiteto pripadnikov in njihovim stališčem do institucionalne prisotnosti duhovne oskrbe v oboroženih silah.

Dejstvo, da se velik delež pripadnikov ARSM identificira kot verniki, a hkrati izraža nizko podporo uvedbi duhovne oskrbe v oboroženih silah, opozarja na širšo družbeno in kulturno dinamiko v sodobni makedonski družbi. K temu prispeva tudi dolgotrajna odsotnost sistematičnega dialoga med oboroženimi silami in verskimi skupnostmi pa tudi pasivna vloga državnih institucij, zlasti Ministrstva za obrambo Republike Severne Makedonije, ki kljub relevantnim pobudam ni pokazalo strateškega interesa za to področje.

Duhovna oskrba ni le vprašanje verske svobode, ampak tudi vprašanje morale, povezanosti in psihološke stabilnosti v ekstremnih razmerah, ki jih vojaška služba neizogibno prinaša. Primeri iz Republike Hrvaške in Republike Slovenije kažejo, da je mogoče tak model vzpostaviti v sozvočju z načeli sekularnosti, medverskega dialoga in profesionalnosti.

Zato na podlagi izvedene raziskave, zgodovinskega pregleda in primerjalne analize priporočamo naslednje konkretne korake za vzpostavitev in razvoj sistema vojaške duhovne oskrbe v Republiki Severni Makedoniji:

- *Vzpostavitev pravnega okvirja* (priprava in sprejem posebnega zakonskega ali podzakonskega akta, ki bo uredil status duhovne oskrbe v oboroženih silah v skladu z ustavo, mednarodnimi zavezami in človekovimi pravicami).
- *Vzpostavitev stalnega dialoga z verskimi skupnostmi* (oblikovanje posvetovalnega telesa pri Ministrstvu za obrambo z vključitvijo predstavnikov tradicionalnih verskih skupnosti, ki bodo sodelovali pri oblikovanju smernic in kadrovskih rešitev).
- *Ustanovitev organizacijske enote znotraj strukture vojske* (organizacijsko vključevanje duhovne oskrbe kot posebne enote znotraj ARSM, kot je vojaški vikariat, ki ne posega v hierarhijo poveljevanja).
- *Upoštevanje modelov dobre prakse* (prilagoditev modela glede na dobre izkušnje iz držav članic Nata, zlasti Republike Hrvaške in Republike Slovenije, ob upoštevanju verske raznolikosti in kulturnih posebnosti makedonske družbe).
- *Skrb za pluralnost in profesionalnost* (zaposlovanje in usposabljanje nosilcev duhovne oskrbe različnih veroizpovedi na način, ki zagotavlja enako dostopnost vsem pripadnikom ne glede na versko pripadnost ali osebna prepričanja).
- *Dolgoročna integracija v sistem vojaške podpore* (vključevanje duhovne oskrbe v programe psihosocialne podpore, vojaške vzgoje in mednarodnih mirovnih misij z jasno določenimi pristojnostmi in nalogami).

Z upoštevanjem teh korakov bo Republika Severna Makedonija ne le sledila standardom zavezništva, temveč tudi prispevala k celostni skrbi za dobrobit svojega vojaškega osebja v duhu spoštovanja človekovega dostojanstva, verske svobode in profesionalne integritete.

Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.
No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.

Kratica

ARSM Armada Republike Severne Makedonije

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Negotiating Scriptural Intertextuality: Al-Biqāʿī's Engagement with Biblical Sources in Qurʾānic Exegesis

Obravnavanje svetopisemskih medbesedilnih povezav: Al-Biqāʿījevo vključevanje svetopisemskih virov v koransko eksegezo

Abstract: The interpretive tradition of Qurʾānic exegesis (*tafsīr*) has historically engaged with Biblical literature as well as Talmudic and Midrashic sources in varied ways. While scholarly attitudes toward these texts have differed, their influence on Islamic commentary is discernible across multiple generations of exegetes. Some scholars incorporated Biblical narratives after adapting them to Islamic frameworks, whereas others, like the 15th-century commentator al-Biqāʿī, engaged more directly with Biblical material, at times quoting extended passages verbatim. This study examines al-Biqāʿī's distinctive methodological approach to Biblical intertextuality, analyzing how his explicit citations function within his Qurʾānic commentary. By comparing al-Biqāʿī's exegetical strategies with broader trends in tafsīr literature, the paper explores the dynamic interplay between Islamic and Judeo-Christian textual traditions. Rather than focusing solely on theological divergences, it highlights how scriptural interpretation often occurred through nuanced textual dialogue across religious boundaries. The analysis pays particular attention to how al-Biqāʿī's commentary negotiates between maintaining Islamic theological positions while actively engaging Biblical sources. Central to this investigation is understanding how al-Biqāʿī's direct use of Biblical texts influenced his interpretive framework, and what his methodology reveals about the broader reception of Biblical material in Islamic exegesis. The study suggests that examining such cross-textual engagements can enrich our understanding of how Qurʾānic interpretation developed in conversation with earlier scriptural traditions. Ultimately, it invites reconsideration of the complex ways Islamic exegetical tradition has historically interacted with, and drawn upon, the broader landscape of monotheistic scripture.

Keywords: The Bible, the Qurʾān, Islamic exegesis, al-Biqāʿī, Midrash

Izvleček: *Razlagalna tradicija koranske eksegeze (*tafsīr*) se je skozi zgodovino na različne načine ukvarjala s svetopisemsko literaturo ter s talmudsko in midraško dediščino. Čeprav so bila stališča učenjakov do teh besedil različna, je njihov vpliv na islamske komentarje razviden skozi več generacij eksegetov. Nekateri učenjaki so svetopisemske pripovedi vključili tako, da so jih predhodno prilagodili islamskemu okvirju, medtem ko so se drugi – kot* *komentator al-Biqāʿī iz 15. stoletja – s svetopisemskim gradivom ukvarjali veliko bolj neposredno in občasno navajali tudi daljše odlomke dobesedno. Ta študija preučuje al-Biqāʿījev značilni metodološki pristop k svetopisemski medbesedilnosti ter analizira, kako delujejo njegove eksplicitne svetopisemske navedbe v okviru njegove koranske razlage. S primerjavo al-Biqāʿījevih eksegetskih pristopov s širšimi tokovi v tafsirski literaturi članek raziskuje dinamično prepletanje islamske ter judovsko-krščanske besedilne tradicije. Namesto da bi se osredotočala izključno na teološke razlike, študija poudarja, da se je razlaga svetih spisov pogosto odvijala v obliki subtilnega besedilnega dialoga prek verskih meja. Analiza se posebej posveča temu, kako al-Biqāʿī v svojem komentiranju vzpostavlja ravnotežje med ohranjanjem islamskih teoloških izhodišč in hkratnim aktivnim vključevanjem svetopisemskih virov. Osrednji del raziskave predstavlja vprašanje, kako je neposredna raba svetopisemskih besedil oblikovala njegov interpretativni okvir ter kaj njegova metoda razkriva o širšem sprejemanju svetopisemske snovi v islamski eksegezi. Študija nakazuje, da lahko preučevanje takšnih medbesedilnih povezav pomembno obogati naše razumevanje razvoja koranske interpretacije v dialogu s starejšimi svetopisemskimi tradicijami. Nazadnje nas spodbuja k ponovnemu razmisleku o kompleksnih načinih, na katere se je islamska eksegetska tradicija skozi zgodovino soočala s širšo krajino monoteističnih svetih besedil in črpala iz nje.*

Ključne besede: *Sveto pismo, Koran, islamska eksegeza, al-Biqāʿī, midraš*

Introduction: The reception of Biblical material in Islamic literature

The Qurʾānic text demonstrates a meaningful engagement with Biblical tradition through various forms of textual interaction. These range from direct parallels – such as Q 5:45’s resonance with Exodus 21:23, Q 21:105 with Psalms 37:9, and Q 7:40 with Matthew 19:24 – to more adapted references that recontextualize Biblical material within the Qurʾān’s distinctive theological framework.[1] Many prophetic narratives appear in this reinterpreted form, reflecting what scholars have termed a »Qurʾānic reframing« of earlier scriptural traditions (Rippin 2019, 23; Saleh 2016, 415).[2]

1 Biblical material takes a new shape within the Qurʾānic sense, obtaining new content with a fresh vision. It rephrases the stories with its own metaphorical and moral language, and at times summarizes them to directly convey its message, e.g. the stories of Solomon, David, Adam, Jesus, Joseph etc. Qurʾānic versions of these stories are broadly compliant with that of Bible, though they are distinguished from it with their peculiar phraseology.

2 The stories about Adam, Moses, Solomon, David, Joseph, and etc. were reshaped and retold in the Qurʾānic sense (see Q 38:30-40; 38:21-30; 12:1-30; 26:32; Gen 39:1-23; Exod 32:5-22; 4:3), e.g. the Sūrah al-Yūsuf which relates the story about a Biblical character, Joseph, in the Qurʾānic guise. Some passages of the story were transmitted directly from the Biblical version, some from Talmud, Mishnah and Midrash, and others were reformed and rephrased in a way that they are compatible with Qurʾānic sense. Although the stories were retold with some redactions / modifications in the Qurʾān, its plotline still remained unchanged.

This intertextual relationship suggests that the Qurʾān positions itself in conscious dialogue with Biblical tradition, as noted in Q 48:29. Andrew Rippin emphasizes the importance of reading Qurʾānic narratives alongside their Biblical counterparts to fully appreciate their historical and literary dimensions. As he observes:

> To grasp these passages within a coherent narrative structure, it is often essential to situate Qurʾānic accounts within the broader framework of Biblical tradition. This necessity highlights the importance of considering a geographic and cultural context extending well beyond Central Arabia when reflecting on Islam's formative milieu.

Walid Saleh similarly highlights the Qurʾān's narrative connections to earlier scriptures, noting that »The Qurʾān at no point hides or belittles the connection to its Jewish paradigm. Ultimately, the Qurʾān saw itself as the continuation of the history of Judaism and Christianity« (Saleh 2016, 410). This perspective is further developed by Soomro (2023), who approaches such textual relationships through the lens of intertextual theory. For instance, Qurʾān 10:98's reference to the »people of Jonah« gains deeper significance when read alongside the Biblical Book of Jonah.

Rather than diminishing the Qurʾān's theological independence, this intertextual dynamic may be understood as reflecting the complex ways in which religious traditions develop through engagement with their textual environments. Such analysis requires careful attention to both the continuities and transformations that occur when material crosses interpretative traditions. The present study explores these dynamics through the particular lens of how Islamic exegesis has historically negotiated its relationship to Biblical sources, focusing especially on the methodological approaches developed within the tafsīr tradition.

Beyond direct textual correspondences, the Qurʾān shares significant thematic and structural similarities with Biblical tradition across several dimensions. These include core theological concepts – such as strict monotheism, eschatological belief in resurrection and divine judgment – as well as ritual practices like animal sacrifice, pilgrimage observances, and fasting periods. Such parallels suggest a shared religious milieu rather than simple borrowing, reflecting what Rippin (2019, 107) characterizes as »contextual connections« between the scriptural traditions.

The Qurʾān engages with Biblical narratives through a distinctive interpretive process, often reformulating stories with its own linguistic and theological emphases. While maintaining the essential narrative framework, it frequently employs metaphorical language, condensed retellings, and moral focal points that align with its revelatory perspective.[3] Such variations in narrative presentation are not unique to Qurʾānic-Biblical relationships, but rather reflect common patterns across scriptural traditions. Islamic ḥadīth collections, for instance, preserve multiple versions of the same events with differing details (Buḫārī 2002, 5:65, no. 4485; Abū Dāwūd 2009, 24:2, no. 3644).[4] Similarly, Jewish textual tradition shows narrative flexibility between the Tanakh, Midrashic literature, and Talmudic discussions. The Christian Gospels likewise present complementary yet distinct accounts of shared events.[5] These cross-traditional parallels suggest that narrative variation, while affecting stylistic and thematic emphasis, typically preserves core story elements across different religious texts.

Muslim scholars, particularly Qurʾānic commentators, frequently engaged with Midrashic literature – Jewish interpretive expansions of Biblical narratives – incorporating them into Islamic exegetical works. This cross-textual interaction allowed Biblical stories to be reinterpreted within an Islamic theological framework, enriching the tradition's narrative and hermeneutical dimensions. A notable example is the story of Solomon and his ring, which appears in Midrashic sources (Ginzberg 1968, 4:168–169) and was

3 See e.g. Q 12:7.

4 E.g. the *ḥadīth* that occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḫārī* »The people of the Scripture (Jews) used to recite the Torah in Hebrew and they used to explain it in Arabic to the Muslims. On that Allah's Messenger said: Do not believe the people of the Scripture or disbelieve them, but say: We believe in Allah and what is revealed to us.« (Buḫārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḫārī*, 5:65:11, no: 4485) Abū Dāwūd transmitted the same *ḥadīth* with a different context and slight variation of wording »When a Jew was with Muḥammad, a funeral passed by him. He (the Jew) asked (Him): Muhammad, does this funeral speak? The Prophet said: Allah has more knowledge. The Jew said: It speaks. The Messenger of Allah said: Whatever the people of the Book tell you, do not verify them, nor falsify them, but say: We believe in Allah and His Apostle. If it is false, do not confirm it, and if it is right, do not falsify it.« (Abū Dāwūd, *al-Sunan*, 24:2, no: 3644) As is seen, despite the variation of the context and wording with transmission of the narrative, main features of the narrative is invariable.

5 The Gospel of John differs from other three Gospels to some extent in the way that it relates the accounts; nonetheless, it coincides with the others with its relating outlines of the stories. See e.g. John 27:45-66, and Matthew 19:28-42.

later adapted by Muslim exegetes such as Ibn Kathīr (1999, 5:67–69) and al-Qurṭubī (2006, 17:199–200) to explain Qurʾānic passages (Q 38:34-35). Similarly, accounts of Solomon's encounters with animals – such as the ant's warning to its colony in Q 27:18 – reflect narrative elements drawn from Jewish interpretive traditions (Ginzberg 1968, 4:163; Ibn Kathīr 1999, 6:182–183).

As Saleh (2016, 415) observes, this represents more than simple borrowing; it constitutes a process of narrative integration where Jewish textual traditions were substantially incorporated into Islamic exegesis. The adaptation of these materials was not merely selective, but rather involved a comprehensive adoption that made them an inseparable part of Islamic interpretive tradition. This phenomenon illustrates how early Muslim scholars engaged with existing scriptural knowledge, transforming it to serve within an Islamic theological framework while maintaining continuity with the broader Abrahamic narrative tradition.

Rather than viewing this as mere borrowing, it may be more accurate to consider it part of a broader intertextual exchange, in which early Muslim scholars engaged with existing scriptural lore while reshaping it to align with Islamic teachings. This process reflects a dynamic interaction between religious traditions rather than a unilateral adoption. The incorporation of such narratives into tafsīr literature demonstrates how Islamic exegesis developed through dialogue with earlier textual traditions, integrating and recontextualizing them in ways that reinforced Qurʾānic themes while maintaining theological coherence.

It is important to recognize that once the substantial body of Biblical and Midrashic material had been transmitted to Muslim scholars and subsequently integrated into Islamic literature by early Muslim thinkers, attempts to later dismiss these elements as fabrications became untenable. As Walid Saleh has observed (Saleh 2016, 415):

> This material, as might be expected, has had a checkered history of reception, oscillating on the one hand between complete acceptance and attempts on the other at purging it from the tradition. Yet, because of its intimate connection to a central genre in Islam, it has proved impossible to uproot *isrāʾiliyyāt* from the tradition.

The Qurʾān reflects not only canonical Biblical texts (the Torah, Gospels, and Psalms) but also Midrashic, Talmudic, and Mishnaic literature, along with living Jewish and Christian traditions, as Andrew Rippin has demonstrated (Rippin 2019, 23):

> Elements in the Qurʾānic versions of these stories are sometimes found in works such as the Jewish Talmud or Midrash, for example. Thus, the context within which the Qurʾān must be read is far more than the framework provided by the text of the Bible alone; rather, the living traditions of Judaism and Christianity, and all the other faiths and folk-lore of the area, are reflected in the Qurʾān and provide the necessary background for its comprehension.

Another evidence regarding the influence of Jewish lore like Midrash on the Quranic exegesis is the statement of R. Michael McCoy's:

> In the *Story of Adam and Eve*, for example, the description of Iblīs (Satan) maraud-ing in the garden appears in al-Ṭabarī's treatment of the subject in his tafsīr; but this found its way into his interpretation through the previous traditions in Jewish midrash rather than directly from the Bible. Thus the general contours of canonical stories are present in *qiṣaṣ* narratives of the Qurʾān, but the contexts and substance of the dialogues have been reshaped for particular Muslim interests, and, more importantly, they rely heavily upon the »processed version« of the Biblical story, as transmitted through other Islamic genres. (2021, 37)

Claude Gilliot likewise recognized the influence of Biblical traditions on Qurʾānic exegesis, drawing attention to Muqātil's engagement with Jewish source material: »he extensively employed Biblical narratives. The *qiṣaṣ* and Jewish traditions likewise form fundamental components of his exegesis.« (Gilliot 1990, 132) This suggests that Midrashic, Talmudic, and Mishnaic literature – alongside Biblical texts such as the Torah, Gospels, and Psalms – contributed meaningfully to the intellectual and religious environment in which the Qurʾān emerged and Islamic religious thought developed. In this context, exploring Biblical and Midrashic sources may offer valuable insights for deepening our understanding of both Qurʾānic revelation and Islamic traditions (*ḥadīth*). During the medieval period, it appears that Christian elements were present within *ḥadīth* literature. Scholarly analysis has identified numerous Biblical quotations and ascetic maxims embedded in *ḥadīth* collections, which may have been transmitted orally by Syrian-Palestinian monks (Cook 2006, 203). These materials were often edited and paraphrased to align more closely with the stylistic and thematic character of *ḥadīth* literature, and in some cases, additional non-Biblical elements were incorporated through these adaptations (Cook 2006, 201–204).

In this context, Gobillot illustrates the depth of intertextuality between the Bible and the Qurʾān, stating: »For a long time, the historical precedence of the Bible vis-à-vis the Qurʾān polarized discussions of their relationship, reducing it to mere questions of influence and borrowing – or, in extreme polemics, to accusations of plagiarism and parody.« (Gobillot 2014, 611)

The incorporation of Biblical and midrashic materials into Islamic scholarship reflects a complex and longstanding process of hermeneutical adaptation. From the earliest period of Qurʾānic exegesis, a wide range of Muslim scholars engaged with this body of lore. The Prophet's disciples – such as Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū Hurayra, and ʿAbdullah b. Salām – and their successors, including figures like Kaʿb al-Aḥbār, Wahb b. Munabbih, and Mukātil b. Sulaymān, frequently utilised biblical and post-biblical knowledge to elucidate scriptural narratives. Rather than direct quotation, Muslim exegetes typically recontextualized these narratives – such as the midrashic accounts of Solomon's ring (Ibn Kathīr 1999, 5:67–69) – within distinct Islamic theological frameworks. This interpretive approach, while often preserving the core moral and spiritual significance of the narratives, rendered their explicit connections to Jewish textual sources less immediately recognizable, seamlessly integrating them into the Islamic exegetical corpus.

This tradition of engagement was not confined to Sunni scholarship but was also a significant feature in other Islamic sects, such as the Ibāḍī school, where exegetes like al-Huwārī and al-Itfayyish liberally incorporated *Isrāʾīliyyāt* (al-Huwārī 1990, 225–226; Q 10:40, 24; 38:24). As noted by Claude Gilliot, for commentators like Muqātil, Biblical narratives and Jewish traditions formed fundamental components of his tafsīr (Gilliot 1990, 132). Prominent classical exegetes, including Ibn

Kathīr, al-Ṭabarī, al-Ālūsī and al-Qurṭubī, continued this practice, often drawing on these sources to expand upon concise Qurʾānic accounts (Qurṭubī 2006, 2:118; Ṭabarī 1955, 2:101; Q 2:57; 7:160). A common method was to attribute explanatory details derived ultimately from the Bible to early Muslim authorities like the Companions (*al-Ṣaḥāba*) or their Successors (al-*Tābiʿūn*), thereby Islamizing the material and obscuring its direct textual lineage.

However, the Islamic exegetical tradition never exhibited a uniform approach to *Isrāʾīliyyāt*. Alongside this pervasive incorporation, a strong counter-tradition of methodological caution and theological resistance emerged. Figures such as al-Māturīdī, al-Māwardī, Ibn ʿAṭiyya, and Ibn Taymiyya advocated for a critical sifting of these narratives, insisting they be evaluated in light of the Qurʾān and authentic *ḥadīth* (Ibn Taymiyya 1995, 18:376; al-Māturīdī 2005, 8:107–108; Q 27:20). Yet, a sophisticated analysis reveals that even these critics often engaged with *Isrāʾīliyyāt*, albeit with a distinct hermeneutic of recontextualization. Their approach was not one of outright rejection but of critical adaptation, whereby Biblically-derived narratives were reinterpreted to align with Islamic theological and ethical sensibilities. A prime example is al-Māturīdī's handling of the David and Bathsheba narrative in his commentary on Q 38:24. While he transmits the core story known from the Bible – involving David, Uriah, and Bathsheba – he meticulously reframes it to safeguard prophetic impeccability. He suggests that David's initial glance at the woman was not intentional but accidental, occurring as he was distracted by birds flying to a high window. Furthermore, al-Māturīdī justifies David's growing affection for her by drawing an analogy to the inclination of the Prophet Muhammad's heart towards Zayd's wife, Zaynab bint Jaḥsh. Most significantly, he argues that David sent Uriah to battle not with the intent to have him killed, but to fulfill the obligatory duty of fighting God's enemies, thus attributing David's action to a noble, rather than a personal, motive (al-Māturīdī 2005, 8:616). This case demonstrates that the practice among cautious scholars was not merely to use or reject *Isrāʾīliyyāt*, but to actively recontextulize, reinterpret and Islamize it, softening its ethically challenging edges and presenting the prophets in a manner deemed appropriate within an Islamic framework.

Exegetes who liberally utilized such material, like Ibn Kathīr, simultaneously inherited and systematized the tradition of methodological caution. While he vehemently criticized *Isrāʾīliyyāt*, labeling some of it as »fabrications by their heretics to confuse people in their religion« and rejecting claims of the Bible's complete preservation, a position notably associated with Wahb b. Munabbih (Ibn Kathīr 1998, 2:56; 7:368; Q 3:78; 50:1-5; Ibn Kathīr 1939, 1:78), he nonetheless conceded its utility for specific, limited purposes. He explicitly stated that he would cite those Isrāʾīliyyāt *»for illustration rather than for substantiation« (li al-istishhād lā li al-iʿtiḍād)* – not as legal proof, nor as a relied-upon source, nor as evidence from which a binding argument could be derived (*lā ʿalā sabīl al-iḥtijāj wa li iʿtimād, wa li al-ʿitiḍād*) – but merely to elucidate narratives that were mentioned succinctly or ambiguously in the Islamic scripture, thereby »adorning« the commentary (Ibn Kathīr 1939, 1:6; 1998, 1:4). This practice is crystallized in his famous tripartite classification of *Isrāʾīliyyāt* into acceptable, rejectable, and indeterminate categories (Ibn Kathīr 1998, 1:10). This very classification exemplifies the inherent and persistent tension within Islamic scholarship. This tension reflects a continuous balancing act between engaging with the intertextual environment of revelation and maintaining theological purity, a dynamic that forms the essential backdrop for understanding the audacity of al-Biqāʿī's project.

It appears that Ibn Kathīr established a three-fold classification for *Isrāʿīliyyāt*. The first category consists of »acceptable« reports – those not contradicted by the Qurʾān and Sunnah. The second encompasses narratives that can be neither verified nor falsified, while the third comprises rejectable ones. From his commentary on Q 6:103, which deals with the theme that God cannot be seen with human eyes in this world, we observe that he utilizes reports from the first category in his exegesis, even making reference to the Bible in this context (Ibn Kathīr 1998, 3:277–279).[6] He also employs narratives from the second category, but accompanies them with a disclaimer such as, »these are from the Israelites, and God knows best concerning their authenticity« (Ibn Kathīr 1998, 3:359; Q 7:24-25). As for the third category, he cites them as well, yet he appends a stronger note:

6 Ibn Kathīr references the Bible without any criticism, stating »And in the earlier scriptures: Indeed, Allah the Exalted said to Moses when he asked for vision: O Moses, no living being sees Me except that it dies, and no solid [thing] sees Me except that it crumbles to dust.«

»this is from the fables (hurāfāt) of the Israelites, we cannot ascertain their authenticity.« (Ibn Kathīr 1998, 7:368; 8:386; Q 50:1-5; 89:7).

A distinctive and audacious figure within this complex exegetical landscape is the Mamluk-era scholar Ibrāhīm b. ʿUmar al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480) (Brockelmann 1943, 2:142; Goudie 2020, 203; Guo 2001, 28). His commentary, *Naẓm al-durar*, is remarkable for its extensive and direct quotation of Biblical texts to illuminate Qurʾānic passages, a methodology that drew criticism from his contemporaries. In response, al-Biqāʿī composed an apologetic treatise, *al-Aqwāl al-qawīmah fī ḥukm al-naql min al-kutub al-qadīmah*, to justify his approach. As elucidated in Walid Saleh's 2008 critical edition of this work, al-Biqāʿī navigated the contentious issue of *taḥrīf* (textual corruption) by proposing a four-fold categorization of scholarly opinion (Saleh, 2008). He positioned himself close to the view that the Bible's corruption was minimal, arguing that its core text remained largely reliable (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:16). This theological foundation allowed him to treat the Bible as a hermeneutically valuable source, whose *muḥkam* (clear) verses could be used to interpret *mutashābih* (ambiguous) Qurʾānic passages (Sonn 2006, 14; Heath 2003, 386),[7] thereby seeking to harmonize Biblical and Qurʾānic material while respecting their distinct canonical statuses (Eickelman 2003, 5:73).

Al-Biqāʿī's application of this methodology was systematic and direct, setting him apart from exegetes who paraphrased Biblical material or hid it behind the generic label of *Isrāʾīliyyāt*. He employed the Bible in three primary ways: to supplement concise Qurʾānic narratives with detailed Biblical accounts (e.g., the Exodus story), to clarify obscure Qurʾānic terms and concepts (such as the »burdens and shackles« in Q 7:157 by referencing Levitical law), and to apply a Qurʾānic hermeneutic – specifically the *muḥkam/mutashābih* framework – to interpret the Bible itself, using it to challenge Christian doctrines like Jesus's divinity. This approach, particularly his lengthy verbatim quotations from the Gospels, demonstrates his conviction that the Bible he cited was authentic. Therefore, al-Biqāʿī's project represents more than a mere intertextual exercise; it is a bold intervention

7 It means 'accurate', 'solid', 'reinforced' or 'well-planned'. The *muḥkam* verses are perceived of as clear, accurate and decisive.

in ongoing Islamic debates about revelation and interpretive authority, championing a direct and declared dialogue with the earlier scriptures that was both remarkable and controversial within the tradition.

The Authenticity of the Bible

Al-Biqāʿī developed a refined approach to Biblical texts, recognizing their revelatory status when their content harmonized with Qurʾānic teachings (Guo 2005, 101–121; al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:477). He distinguished between Biblical passages that remained uncorrupted – which he designated as »the truth« (*al-ḥaqq*) (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 1:116) – and those he believed had undergone alteration. This careful discernment allowed him to incorporate Biblically-derived material into his exegesis while maintaining Islamic theological parameters. His commentary frequently referenced Biblical sources directly to elucidate Qurʾānic narratives (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:603),[8] demonstrating both his scholarly methodology and his respect for what he considered authentic elements of earlier revelation.

As Walid Saleh conclusively states: »To him, it is a divine book, scripture worthy of respect, and a reliable source for Israelite history.« (Saleh 2012, 85) This balanced approach reflects al-Biqāʿī's attempt to navigate the complex relationship between Islamic and Biblical textual traditions while upholding core Islamic theological principles.

When examining differences between Qurʾānic and Biblical narratives, al-Biqāʿī suggests two possible explanations for such variations: either the Biblical account has been *mansūkh* (abrogated) as part of the Qurʾān's role as the final revelation in the Abrahamic tradition (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:477), or it reflects *tahrīf* (textual alteration) where the original meaning was distorted (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 1:213–216).

8 Moreover, quoting Islamic-Biblical material – elements transmitted from the Tanakh, Midrash, and Talmud to Islamic literature in a new shape, quise and reframed manner – contrasts with Biblical lore, al-Biqāʿī advocates for the Bible. For example, after citing the names of twelve disciples of Jesus, quoting from Ibn Hishām and Ibn Isḥāq, he found the Biblical version regarding their names more authentic, saying »That I composed from the Gospels are different from it (the narrative about the names Ibn Hishām mentioned), and truer than it«.

A notable example is the differing accounts of Abraham's sacrifice. The Torah states: »Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love…« (Genesis 22:2), while the Qurʾān indicates Ishmael as the intended son: »So We gave him tidings of a gentle son (Ishmael)…« (Q 37:102) Al-Biqāʿī, along with many classical (*mutaqaddimūn*) and later (*mutaʾakhkhirūn*) scholars, maintains that this represents a case where the Biblical narrative was altered over time, with the Qurʾān restoring the original account (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 6:331–332).

Thus, rather than dismissing Biblical material entirely, al-Biqāʿī's approach deals with specific scriptural divergences (such as determining the identity of the sacrificed son in the Abrahamic narrative) through nuanced textual analysis. His methodology seeks to reconcile such differences by applying established Islamic hermeneutical principles (*naskh* and *tahrīf*) while acknowledging the complex transmission history of Biblical revelations. This interpretive framework allowed him to critically engage with Biblical texts – particularly in cases like the Isaac/Ishmael discrepancy – while consistently upholding the theological integrity of Qurʾānic narratives, thereby exemplifying his distinctive approach within Islamic exegetical tradition.

Al-Biqāʿī's examination of Biblical narratives extended beyond apparent divergences with the Qurʾān to include careful scrutiny of internal textual coherence within the Torah. His approach sought to identify what he viewed as potential transmission anomalies through detailed comparative analysis.

A central focus was the Abrahamic sacrifice narrative. Regarding Genesis 22:2 »Take your son, your only son, whom you love – Isaac«, al-Biqāʿī noted the theological difficulty of describing Isaac as the »only son« given the clear Biblical account of Ishmael's prior birth (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 6:332). He further examined the covenantal promise in Genesis 22:17-18 that »through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed«, suggesting this better aligned with Ishmael's lineage, which expanded across numerous nations, compared to Isaac's descendants who remained more geographically concentrated (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 6:332).

His textual analysis extended to other narrative elements, including the incomplete account of Hagar's story in Genesis 16:6-9, which mentions her flight but omits her eventual return. Similarly, he questioned the historical plausibility of Genesis 21:12's declaration that »through Isaac your offspring will be reckoned«, given Abraham's stronger ancestral connections to Arab lineages (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 6:333).

These observations led al-Biqāʿī to cautiously suggest certain Torah passages may have undergone modification during transmission (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 6:333). His methodology reflects a nuanced engagement with scripture--raising thoughtful questions about specific passages while maintaining respect for the Biblical text's overall status as containing elements of preserved revelation. This balanced approach allowed him to uphold Qurʾānic theological positions while seriously engaging Biblical material through careful textual and historical analysis.

Al-Biqāʿī suggested that some Jewish interpreters may have modified specific Torah passages, particularly those addressing moral prohibitions like bribery, usury, and adultery (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 4:545). He viewed as particularly significant the potential omission of references to Muhammad's prophethood, despite Biblical anticipation of future messengers (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:464). Regarding these textual considerations, he carefully noted (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:461–464):

> According to a report transmitted from ʿAbdullāh b. ʿUmar, a group of Jews approached the Prophet of Islam and informed him that a man and a woman from among them had committed unlawful sexual intercourse. The Prophet asked what ruling the Torah prescribed in such a case. They replied that they typically announced the offense publicly and administered lashes. At this point, ʿAbdullāh b. Salām intervened, stating that the Torah in fact contained a command for stoning (*al-rajm*). When they brought the Torah, one of them covered the relevant verse with his hand and read the surrounding verses. Upon being asked to move his hand, the verse of stoning became visible. The Prophet then ordered the prescribed punishment to be carried out.

The exegete noted that some Jewish interpreters appear to have substituted the Biblical penalty of stoning with alternative punishments like public exposure and flogging (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 1:213–214; 2:461–464). This led him to cautiously suggest possible adjustments to certain divine ordinances within their textual tradition.

Al-Biqāʿī expressed concerns about the preservation of earlier scriptures, suggesting that some religious scholars may not have fully maintained their custodial responsibilities (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:477). In his commentary on Q 2:79,[9] he proposed that certain textual passages might reflect a blending of divine revelation with human interpretation, potentially involving modifications over time (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 1:177). His analysis of Q 2:42[10] distinguished between preserved elements (*al-ḥaqq*) and potentially altered sections (*al-bāṭil*) of earlier revelations (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 1:116). He further observed that some scholars might have been selective in their scriptural citations, particularly regarding passages he believed contained references to Muḥammad's prophethood (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 1:116). This nuanced approach reflects his careful engagement with textual transmission issues while maintaining respect for the concept of divine revelation.

In his commentary on Q 4:46,[11] al-Biqāʿī cautiously suggested that some interpreters may have modified certain scriptural references to Muḥammad and Islam, potentially affecting both textual meanings and pronunciations (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:263). He proposed that such changes could have been influenced by various factors, including social pressures or material considerations (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:262).

Despite these criticisms, al-Biqāʿī continued to consult Biblical material to support his Qurʾānic exegesis, especially concerning the authenticity of Muḥammad's prophethood and the divine origin of the Qurʾān. He argued that certain verses in the Bible (e.g., Genesis 18:19; 22:1-10;

9 »Woe to those who write (*yaktubūna*) revelation (*al-kitāb*) with their hands and then say, 'This is from God'.« (See Q 2:79)

10 »Do not cover up (*talbisū*; Q 3:71) the truth with falsehood and conceal (*taktumū*; cf. Q 2:140, 146, 159, 174; 3:71, 187) the truth, while you know it.«

11 »Among the Jews are those who shift (*yuḥarrifūna al-kalima 'an mawāḍıʿihī*; cf. Q 2:75; 5:13, 41) words out of their contexts.«

Exodus 6:3) alluded to Muḥammad's advent and had not been subject to distortion (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:125).[12] Additionally, he cited Genesis 18:20, Deuteronomy 2:2-4, 18:15,[13] and 33:1–3 in relation to Q 7:157,[14] viewing them as prophetic indicators. In his commentary on Deuteronomy 18:15, he elaborated further:

> If one construed the phrase »raising up a prophet from among your brothers« to refer to Israelite prophets, he would have understood it metaphorically, since Israelites were not biologically brothers – they were not coming from the same parents – rather were in-directly brothers, because they came from the same ancestor, Abraham. However, if one understood the phrase to refer to Ishamel's offspring, he would have understood it literally, since Ishamel was real brother of Isaac. (1995, 3:124–125)[15]

So the prophet to be raised up must be Muḥammad, since he is from Ishmael's offspring, brother of Isaac.

Accordingly, he concluded that the prophet mentioned in the verse must be Muḥammad, as a descendant of Ishmael, the brother of Isaac.

This dialectical approach – critically examining Biblical texts while simultaneously relying on them as authoritative sources – powerfully demonstrates al-Biqāʿī's intertextual methodology. His willingness to engage deeply with Biblical literature, despite his reservations about certain passages, ultimately affirms the interconnected nature of Abrahamic revelations and underscores his commitment to textual analysis across religious traditions.

12 He explicitly mentioned not Genesis 18:19, 22:1-10, and Exodus 6:3, rather alluded to them citing the Qurʾānic verses Q 2:124; 3:33. To see his exegetical trajectory, see al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar,* 3:125.

13 »The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers. You must listen to him.«

14 »Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel.«

15 Additionally, there is a rule, al-Biqāʿī mentioned, that metaphorical phrases should be attribute to the closest reality. In this sense, the closest reality that the metaphorical phrase could be attributed is Ishmael and his lineage; since only Isaac and Ishmael were brothers in real sense. If the prophets coming after Moses were meant, metaphorical phrase would have been attributed to the farthest reality.

In his exegesis, al-Biqāʿī focused on the term »like« in Deuteronomy 18:15, suggesting it denotes similarity to Moses in establishing an independent legal system (*sharīʿa*). He observed that while Jesus reaffirmed Mosaic law, Muḥammad introduced a new legislative framework, making him, in al--Biqāʿī's view, the more fitting fulfillment of this prophecy. This interpretation was supported by his reference to Rabbi Samuel b. Yaḥyā's account (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:125), which he understood as corroborating this reading.

According to this narrative, certain Jewish scholars associated the prophesied figure in Deuteronomy 18:15 with Samuel, a post-Mosaic prophet from the Levite lineage. Al-Biqāʿī references an account attributed to Rabbi Samuel b. Yaḥyā, wherein the rabbi describes a visionary encounter with the prophet Samuel. In this dream, Samuel presents a book containing messianic prophecies, prompting the rabbi's exclamation: »Congratulations, O prophet of God! What a great message you were given!« Samuel, however, responds with apparent dissatisfaction: »God did not mean me, O discerning one!« When pressed for clarification, Samuel cryptically references »the coasts of Mount Paran« (חופי מהר פארן) – a phrase al-Biqāʿī interprets as pointing toward Mecca and, by extension, Muḥammad's prophethood (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:125).

The dream narrative continues with Samuel distinguishing his own mission – »God did not send me to abrogate any part of the Torah but to revive and purify it among the people of Palestine« – from that of the ultimate foretold prophet. This distinction leads al-Biqāʿī to argue that the Deuteronomy prophecy must concern a law-giving prophet unlike previous messengers, including Samuel, Daniel, Jeremiah, or Hezekiel, who operated within the existing Mosaic framework. His analysis suggests that Jewish interpretive traditions themselves preserved clues indicating a prophet who would transcend the Torah's legal structure – a role he identifies with Muḥammad and the Qurʾānic revelation.

Al-Biqāʿī proposed that the Biblical command to heed the coming prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15) specifically addressed the Israelites' anticipated resistance, as this prophet would introduce a new legal framework distinct from Mosaic law (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:124). He observed that earlier prophets like Samuel and Jeremiah – who operated within the Torah's existing structure – did not require such emphasis, as their communities accepted them without comparable divine injunction. This led him to conclude that the prophesied figure must bring a novel legislative revelation, distinguishing him from previous messengers. Within this interpretive framework, al-Biqāʿī identified Muḥammad as the logical fulfillment, given the Qurʾān's independent legal system and the early Muslim community's historical experiences with Jewish interlocutors.

Another piece of evidence al-Biqāʿī drew from the Torah to support the claim that the foretold prophet is Muḥammad is Genesis 17:2, 20, which states, »I will multiply you exceedingly« (בִּמְאֹד). He argued that by applying the gematria method to count the numerical value of the word בִּמְאֹד (*bimʿod*), the result is 290, which corresponds to the numerical value of the name Muḥammad. In his view, this verse serves as a hidden reference to Muḥammad, suggesting that God concealed his name within the Torah, making him an enigmatic figure in order to prevent tampering by the Jews (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:125–126).

The final evidence he found in the Torah to affirm the prophecy regarding Muḥammad is found in Deuteronomy 18:15:

> The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of holy ones from the south, from his mountain slopes. Surely it is you who love the people; all the holy ones are in your hand. At your feet they all bow down, and from you receive instruction/word.

He suggested that he who shone forth from Mount Paran is Muḥammad, because, as they acknowledged, the mount Paran is present in Mecca where Muḥammad was born (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:126–127).

When addressing the Gospel, al-Biqāʿī reaffirmed his stance, offering numerous analogies from it, as drawn by Jesus (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:127). While he did not explicitly define the analogies' connections, he left it to the reader to interpret them. He refrained from directly linking these analogies to a new religion (Islam), a new community (Muslims), or a new prophet (Muḥammad), preferring instead to guide the audience to make that connection themselves. The analogies he presented, however, seem to centre on the chosen prophet (Muḥammad) and his revered community (Muslims).

The first analogy involves a landowner who hired workers for his vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16; al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:127). The key aspects of this analogy are that the last workers became first, and the landowner treated all workers equally by paying them one denarius, regardless of when they began their work. In his exegesis of the Biblical parable (Matthew 20:1-16), al-Biqāʿī interprets the »last workers« as symbolizing the Muslim community that emerged after the People of the Book (the »first workers«). His reading suggests that divine reward operates beyond temporal precedence where later-coming believers who perform righteous deeds may attain equal, if not greater, spiritual standing before God. This interpretation reflects his view of Islamic tradition as both continuing and perfecting earlier revelations.

The second analogy concerns a landowner who planted a vineyard and rented it out to tenants before going on a journey. The tenants, however, refused to give the landowner his share of the fruit at harvest time, leading to their destruction and the vineyard being leased to new tenants who would fulfill their duties (Matthew 21:33-46; al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:127–128). Al-Biqāʿī seems to compare the new tenants to the Muslim community. He suggests that only Muslims could be faithful to the covenant with God, which commands them to practice His law on Earth,[16] as mere servants to Him.[17]

The third analogy depicts a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son, but those invited refused to attend. The king, enraged, destroyed the murderers and burned their cities, then invited both good and bad people to fill the banquet hall (Matthew 22:1-14; al-Biqāʿī, *Naẓm al-durar*, 3:128). Al-Biqāʿī seems to liken those chosen and gathered from the streets represent the Muslim community.

16 The vineyard in the analogy denotes the land God gave to the servants.

17 The tenants in the analogy denote the servants of God, watching his property on the earth temporally.

The fourth example concerns a man who instructed his two sons to work in the vineyard. The first son initially refused, saying, »I will not,« but later changed his mind and went. In contrast, the second son agreed, saying, »I will, sir,« yet failed to go (Matthew 21:28-32). Jesus used this parable to highlight the people's unjust attitude toward John – specifically, their refusal to believe in and follow him – despite having pledged to obey the prophets sent by God, much like the second son in the story (Matthew 21:32). In this context, it is as though al-Biqāʿī implicitly likens John, who came in righteousness, to Muḥammad, and likens the Jews' rejection of John to the rejection of Muḥammad's prophethood by other communities in his own time.

One of the most frequently cited Biblical passages in Islamic prophetic proofs is Jesus' reference to a future »Advocate« or »Comforter« in John 15:26: »When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father – He will testify about Me.« Muslim scholars, including al-Biqāʿī, have long noted the linguistic parallels between the Greek *paráklētos* (παράκλητος), the Assyrian *manḥamanā*, and the Hebrew *mənaḥḥēm* (מְנַחֵם), interpreting these terms as references to Muḥammad. Early authorities like Ibn Isḥaq recorded traditions suggesting Jesus himself had inscribed Muḥammad's epithets – including »Comforter« and »Helper« – within the Gospel of John (Ibn Hishām 1990, 1:262).

Al-Biqāʿī's approach to such Biblical material reveals a nuanced hermeneutic. While he acknowledged potential textual alterations in the Bible's transmission, he nevertheless found value in its preserved revelations. His willingness to engage deeply with Biblical texts – particularly those he believed contained authentic prophecies of Muḥammad – demonstrates his intertextual methodology. Rather than dismissing the Bible entirely due to its perceived inconsistencies, he carefully sifted its contents, distinguishing between what he considered corrupted passages and those retaining elements of divine truth. This selective yet serious engagement underscores his view that the Bible, when properly interpreted, could substantiate Qurʾānic teachings and Muḥammad's prophetic mission.

Thus, al-Biqāʿī's exegetical practice reflects a sophisticated balance between critical scrutiny and constructive appropriation of Biblical material.

His simultaneous caution toward and reliance on the Bible highlights the complex relationship between Islamic and Biblical textual traditions in medieval scholarship.

Al-Biqāʿī's Integration of Biblical Texts in Qurʾānic Commentary

Al-Biqāʿī often turned to Biblical lore to clarify and expound upon Qurʾānic verses, positioning himself as a notable figure in the integration of earlier scriptures within Qurʾānic exegesis. While this approach was somewhat unique, it became apparent that al-Biqāʿī's extensive use of Biblical references was uncommon in the broader tradition of Qurʾānic interpretation. Many Muslim scholars have not considered earlier scriptures as reliable sources for understanding the Qurʾān, given the belief that these texts had been altered by human intervention – especially in terms of removing prophecies related to Muḥammad, as well as the precept of stoning and other significant matters. In contrast to this view, al-Biqāʿī seemed to regard such distortions as rare exceptions, confined to only a few passages. He, therefore, felt it appropriate to incorporate Biblical lore into his commentary, considering it as part of a religious discourse that could aid in understanding the Qurʾān. At times, he included long quotations from the Bible to provide in-depth explanations of the Qurʾānic verses, while at other times, he offered more concise summaries of the same scriptures to support his arguments.

Al-Biqāʿī frequently included long excerpts from the Bible to clarify Qurʾānic verses. On occasion, he merely summarized Biblical ideas, blending them with the Qurʾānic context. A notable example is found in Q 7:157, which refers to »the Messenger, the unlettered prophet« and mentions »the burden and the shackles« placed upon the followers. The terms »burden« and »shackles« are not explicitly explained in the Qurʾān, which led al-Biqāʿī to look to the Bible for clarification. He drew upon various Biblical verses that referenced the burdens placed on the Jewish community but refrained from directly specifying what those burdens were. Instead, he implied them through scriptural references, such as Leviticus 17:1-4 (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:131).

> Then the LORD said to Moses, speak to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites and tell them this is what the LORD has commanded: Anyone from the house of Israel who slaughters an ox, a lamb, or a goat in the camp or outside of it instead of bringing it to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting to present it as an offering to the LORD before His tabernacle – that man shall incur bloodguilt. He has shed blood and must be cut off from among his people.

He seems to draw attention, here, to the difficulty of the task, with the phrase »those who slaughtered an animal to offer it to God shall bring it to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting« and to the severity of the punishment, »man shall be cut off from among his people«. To al-Biqāʿī, this act of forcing the Israelite people to bring offerings before the tabernacle, and punishing those who did not fulfill this order, is a kind of burden imposed upon them. These elements, according to al-Biqāʿī, serve as the rationale for why Muḥammad called upon the people to follow the Qurʾānic law, which lifts such heavy burdens from them.

The second example he gave of burdens in the Bible is Leviticus 21:17-23 (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:131):

> Then the LORD said to Moses, say to Aaron, for the generations to come, none of your descendants who has a physical defect may approach to offer the food of his God. No man who has any defect may approach – no man who is blind, lame, disfigured, or deformed; no man who has a broken foot or hand, or who is a hunchback or dwarf, or who has an eye defect, a festering rash, scabs, or a crushed testicle. No descendant of Aaron the priest who has a defect shall approach to present the offerings made by fire to the LORD. Since he has a defect, he is not to come near to offer the food of his God. He may eat the most holy food of his God as well as the holy food, but because he has a defect, he must not go near the veil or approach the altar, so as not to desecrate My sanctuaries. For I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

This verse clearly presents challenges for some believers who wish to offer sacrifices to the Lord, simply because of physical defects. Recognizing these burdens in the Bible, al-Biqāʿī wrote, »Had they converted to Islam, these burdens would have been alleviated« (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:130).

Other commands imposing burdens and restrictions upon the people of the book include: Deuteronomy 25:5-9, which discusses the obligation of a widow to marry her husband's brother; Deuteronomy 23:10, which instructs men who have become ritually impure due to a nocturnal emission to stay outside the camp until evening; Deuteronomy 23:2, which prohibits those born of a forbidden union from entering the assembly of the Lord, even for ten generations; Deuteronomy 22:28-29, which mandates that a man who violates an unmarried virgin must marry her and remain with her for life; and so on. In light of these, al-Biqāʿī drew on many Biblical citations to clarify the meaning of the Qurʾānic verse, Q 7:157.

Another example of his use of the Bible to paraphrase Qurʾānic verses is Q 7:133, which states, »So We sent upon them the flood and locusts and lice and frogs and blood as distinct signs«. al-Biqāʿī explained this verse by referencing several passages from Exodus: Exodus 8:2, where God tells Moses, »Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'If you refuse to let them go, I will send a plague of frogs on your whole country'«; Exodus 8:16, »Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Tell Aaron, *Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground,*' and throughout the land of Egypt, the dust will become gnats«; Exodus 7:17, »Let my people go...with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood«; and Exodus 9:18, »Let my people go, so that they may worship me, or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you... I will send the worst hailstorm that has ever fallen on Egypt, from the day it was founded till now.« (Al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:95)

It seems that al-Biqāʿī was influenced by the detailed accounts in the Bible, which clearly describe the plagues that God sent against Pharaoh's Egypt for his refusal to release the Israelites. As seen in Q 7:133, the Qurʾān mentions the plagues briefly, without providing the extensive historical context. This brevity makes it difficult for readers to fully grasp the meaning of the verse. For instance, the Qurʾān says, »We sent upon them the blood,« but it does not explain how this plague of blood affected them, leaving some aspects of the narrative unclear. In contrast, the Bible elaborates on these events, offering a clearer understanding of how the plagues unfolded.[18] Acknowledging this ambiguity, al-Biqāʿī incorporated long Biblical passages to shed light on the more obscure elements of the Qurʾānic account of the plagues.

Similarly, al-Biqāʿī used the same approach to clarify Q 7:134[19] and 135.[20] He referenced Exodus 8:8[21] and 9:27 to explain Q 7:134 (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:97),[22] and for Q 7:135, he referred to Exodus 8:15[23] and 9:33 (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 3:95).[24]

The Qurʾān recounts the story of the Israelites fleeing from Pharaoh and the drowning of his army in the sea. It tells that God parted the sea to allow the Israelites to pass through, then drowned Pharaoh's army as they pursued in enmity and tyranny (Q 7:136; 2:50; 10:90; 8:54). However, the Qurʾān offers a more concise version of the story compared to the Bible. It omits several details, such as the exact location where the Israelites camped, why Pharaoh broke his word and pursued them, how he overtook them, the reaction of the Israelites upon seeing Pharaoh's army, and how Moses reassured the people. The Bible, in contrast, provides a detailed narrative that answers these questions. For instance, it specifies the location of the Israelites' camp: »Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea,

18 »This is what the LORD says: 'By this you will know that I am the LORD: With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood. The fish in the Nile will die, and the river will stink; the Egyptians will not be able to drink its water.' The LORD said to Moses, tell Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt – over the streams and canals, over the ponds and all the reservoirs – and they will turn to blood.' Blood will be everywhere in Egypt, even in vessels of wood and stone... He struck the water of the Nile, and all the water was changed into blood. The fish in the Nile died, and the river smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink its water. Blood was everywhere in Egypt.« (Exodus 7:17-22)

19 »O Moses, invoke for us your Lord by what He has promised you. If you (can) remove the punishment from us, we will surely believe you, and we will send with you the Children of Israel.«

20 »But when We removed the punishment from them, then at once they broke their word.«

21 »Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, pray to the LORD to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD.«

22 »Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. This time I have sinned, he said to them. The LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. Pray to the LORD, for we have had enough thunder and hail. I will let you go; you don't have to stay any longer.«

23 »The frogs died in the houses... when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.«

24 »When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and thunder had stopped, he sinned again: He and his officials hardened their hearts.«

directly opposite Baal Zephon.« (Exodus 14:2) It also explains why Pharaoh broke his promise: »When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services.« (Exodus 14:5) Furthermore, the Bible narrates how Pharaoh pursued them, »He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them, and he pursued the people of Israel while they were going out defiantly« (Exodus 14:7-8). It also describes the Israelites' reaction: »As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them. They cried out to the LORD, and they said to Moses, Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Leave us alone! Let us be slaves to the Egyptians. It's better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness.« (Exodus 14:10) Finally, Moses' words of comfort are recorded: »Moses answered the people, do not be afraid, stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.« (Exodus 14:13)

The Bible provides an abundance of detail about the Israelites' deliverance from Egyptian persecution, giving its readers a fuller understanding of the context. Acknowledging these extensive Biblical descriptions, some Qurʾānic exegetes, such as al-Biqāʿī, quoted these passages directly from the Bible, while others, like al-Qurṭubī and al-Ṭabarī, paraphrased some of these Biblical elements without explicitly referencing them. For example, in his commentary on »manna«, al-Qurṭubī writes (Qurṭubī 2006, 2:118):

> They reported that »al-manna«, resembling snow or dew in its appearance, fell like rain from dawn until sunrise. Each person would gather only as much as they needed for the day, and if anyone kept some for the following day, it would spoil. However, on Friday they were allowed to keep some for Saturday, the Sabbath day, and it would not spoil. On that day, no manna fell from the sky.

This explanatory narration of the Qurʾānic verse was clearly transmitted from the Bible (Exodus 16:20, 27), yet al-Qurṭubī made no explicit reference to it, instead reporting it anonymously (Qurṭubī 2006, 2:118).[25] Similarly, in his commentary on the same verse, al-Ṭabarī conveyed a similar elucidatory narration through Ibn Jurayj, stating, »when anyone took more than they needed for the day, it went bad, except when they took it on Friday to save for Saturday (the Sabbath day), and it remained intact« (Ṭabarī 1955, 2:101). Here, al-Ṭabarī also refrains from referencing the Bible directly, opting instead to attribute the explanation to Ibn Jurayj, a follower of the Prophet's companions (*al-Tābiʿūn*), rather than an authoritative figure from the Biblical tradition.

This pattern indicates that Biblical lore played a notable role in shaping Islamic exegetical literature. Some scholars, such as al-Biqāʿī, openly recognized this influence, directly referencing the Bible in their works. Others, like al-Qurṭubī and al-Ṭabarī, approached it more cautiously, often attributing similar interpretations to early Muslim authorities – such as the Prophet's companions (*al-Ṣaḥāba*) and their successors (*al-Tābiʿūn*) – rather than explicitly acknowledging external sources.

Unlike al-Ṭabarī, many commentators – including al-Biqāʿī, Ibn Barrajān, and Ibn Kathīr – freely cited Biblical, Midrashic, and Talmudic material under the broader category of *Isrāʾīliyyāt*. For example, in his commentary on Q 38:34, Ibn Kathīr recounts the story of Solomon's seal falling into the hands of Asmodeus (Āṣaf) and observes, »This appears to me as part of the *Isrāʾīliyyāt*«. He then presents another version of the story traced back to Ibn ʿAbbās, noting, »While the chain of transmission to Ibn ʿAbbās is reliable, it is evident that he received this from the People of the Book… much of what the early scholars (*mutaqaddimūn/salaf*) narrated on this matter derives from the literature of the People of the Book.« (Ibn Kathīr 1999, 69) This suggests that Qurʾānic exegesis engaged thoughtfully with *Isrāʾīliyyāt* – including Talmudic and Midrashic sources – to provide context for certain Qurʾānic passages (Ross 2019, 150–200).

25 He used the verb *ruwiya* (»reported«).

Al-Biqāʿī's Use of Biblical Texts to Support His Theological Interpretations

In his exegesis, al-Biqāʿī frequently referenced Biblical passages to support his theological interpretations. He extensively quoted the Gospels to argue that descriptions of Jesus as »Lord« and »Son of God« should be understood metaphorically (*al-majāz* or *al-mutashābih*), not literally (Heath 2003, 3:385; Stowasser 2003, 3:294; Iṣlāḥī 2005, 39).[26] He maintained that such figurative expressions must be interpreted in light of the Gospel's clear and decisive verses (*al-muḥkam*), which provide a foundational understanding.

For instance, he cited Luke 1:30, where the angel tells Mary that she will bear a son, Jesus, who will inherit David's throne – a passage emphasizing Jesus' human lineage and prophetic role. Al-Biqāʿī viewed this as a *muḥkam* text, offering a straightforward framework for understanding more ambiguous phrases. By comparing such clear revelations with metaphorical ones, he sought to demonstrate that Jesus' divine titles reflect honorific or symbolic language rather than literal divinity. This approach allowed him to reconcile seemingly conflicting descriptions while upholding a coherent theological perspective.

Al-Biqāʿī presented several additional Biblical passages as examples of clear, decisive verses (*muḥkam*) that establish Jesus' human and prophetic nature. These texts, he argued, provide the necessary context for interpreting more ambiguous references to Jesus' divinity. Among the key examples he cited was Matthew 4:5-7, where Jesus resists Satan's temptation by affirming »Do not put the Lord your God to the test,« thereby distinguishing himself from the divine. Similarly, in Matthew 4:8-10, Jesus rejects

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26 In fact, it is not certain whether *mutashābih* verses import metaphorical meaning (*majāz)* or not, even they are controversial among Muslim theologians (e.g. *Muʿtazila* and *Ḥanbalīs*). Hence, they may or may not be deemed as metaphorical, depending on the theological stance or persuasion of the commentator. Prominent examples of *mutashābih* verses on which there is no consensus that they import literal or metaphorical meaning, are Qurʾānic expressions attributing physical attributes or mental or emotional operations to God. The former group (*Muʿtazila*) argued that God transcended physical representation; hence, references in the Qurʾān to God's possession of physical attributes and human emotions were »metaphorical« – they should be interpreted – whereas the latter group (*Ḥanbalīs/ahl-hadīth*) held that the Qurʾānic verses of God's possession of physical and human attributes import literal meaning, and they should be upheld as true – they should not be interpreted. It seems that al-Biqāʿī takes the side of the first group by placing the verses about the deity and sonship of Jesus in the category of the Qurān's obscure (*mutashābih*) teachings which are deemed metaphorical and to be interpreted.

worship, commanding Satan to »Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only« – a passage that clearly subordinates Jesus to God's authority.

Further supporting his interpretation, al-Biqāʿī referenced Mark 7:8, where Jesus criticizes those who follow human traditions over divine commandments, emphasizing his role as a messenger rather than the object of worship. The passage from Luke 4:16-21 was particularly significant in his analysis, as it presents Jesus declaring: »The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor…« This statement, according to al-Biqāʿī, clearly frames Jesus' mission as one authorized by God rather than asserting divine status.

Additional important texts included Luke 10:16 (»whoever rejects me rejects Him who sent me«), John 3:34 (»for he is sent by God«), and John 12:44-50, where Jesus states: »whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me… For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken.« These passages collectively demonstrate, in al-Biqāʿī's reading, Jesus' consistent self-presentation as God's messenger rather than as divine in essence. By carefully analyzing these *muḥkam* texts, he sought to establish an interpretive framework that would clarify the metaphorical nature of other, more ambiguous Biblical statements about Jesus' nature and status.

These clear scriptural passages (*muḥkam*) collectively portray Jesus as one who consistently worshipped and served the God who sent him, fulfilling his divinely appointed mission to proclaim sacred messages. The texts depict him referring to himself as the »Son of Man« (Luke 12:8-10) – a term emphasizing his human nature – while directing prayer and devotion to God in heaven (Luke 11:2). Such accounts suggest Jesus understood himself as distinct from the divine essence, consistently emphasizing his subordinate role as God's messenger. The Biblical narrative presents him as speaking only what God commanded, while acknowledging God's supreme attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. This perspective emerges particularly in passages where Jesus differentiates himself from the ultimate divine authority, consistently directing worship toward God rather than claiming it for himself. The cumulative testimony of these verses indicates Jesus' self-understanding as God's servant and prophet, sent to deliver specific revelations while maintaining a clear distinction between his human nature and God's transcendent reality.

Al-Biqāʿī's methodological approach to Biblical interpretation maintained that these revelatory passages constitute carefully structured and unambiguous *muḥkam* verses that warrant a literal reading (Kinberg 2001, 1:73; Qāḍī 1969, 1:6–36; Māwardī 1992, 1:369; Baghawī 1989, 2:7; Wāḥidī 1994, 1:413–414). However, his exegetical framework recognized another category of Biblical verses containing metaphorical language concerning Jesus' divine attributes - including references to his sonship (»You say that I am« in Luke 22:70), lordship (»You call me Lord« in John 13:13), and the paternal characterization of God (»Our Father in heaven« in Matthew 6:9).

In his analytical process, al-Biqāʿī argued that such metaphorical expressions should not be understood literally but rather interpreted through the clarifying lens of the aforementioned *muḥkam* verses (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:18–19). This hermeneutical principle led him to systematically examine potentially ambiguous Christological statements in light of the more definitive scriptural passages. His interpretive strategy involved careful textual juxtaposition, whereby he would first establish the clear, literal meaning of *muḥkam* verses before addressing more figurative expressions.

When approaching verses concerning Jesus' lordship specifically, al--Biqāʿī's methodology becomes particularly evident in his commentary (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:17). Here he demonstrates how the unambiguous declarations of Jesus' servanthood and prophetic mission provide the necessary context for understanding honorific titles that might otherwise suggest divine status. This approach reflects his broader exegetical commitment to maintaining textual coherence while accounting for the Bible's varied linguistic registers – from direct commandments to symbolic representations of spiritual truths:

> The title »lord« attributed to Jesus does not denote divine equality with God, but rather reflects his elevated spiritual status as evidenced by his extraordinary miracles. This interpretation aligns with the term's broader semantic usage in scriptural texts, where it can refer to earthly authorities as well. The Qurʾānic example in 12:40 demonstrates this linguistic flexibility, as Joseph

> uses the same honorific (»lord«) when addressing the Egyptian Pharaoh's subordinate: »Joseph said to the one he knew would be saved, mention me before your lord.«

Ultimately, this interpretive framework underscores how Christological titles demand careful contextual examination – considering both their linguistic particularities and cultural embeddedness – rather than default attributions of divinity. Al-Biqāʿī's approach thus invites readers to discern between honorific language and ontological claims through rigorous textual engagement.

In the second stage of his analysis, al-Biqāʿī examines Biblical passages referring to Jesus as the »son of God«. He interprets this designation metaphorically, explaining that it signifies God's special care and favor toward Jesus, much like a father's affectionate treatment of his cherished son (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:17–18). This relational language, in his view, emphasizes divine benevolence rather than biological or ontological sonship.

Finally, al-Biqāʿī turns to Gospel verses describing God as »Father«, such as Matthew 5:16 (»your Father in heaven«) and Matthew 6:9 (»Our Father in heaven«). He argues that this paternal imagery serves to illustrate God's merciful and protective relationship with His servants – similar to how an earthly father cares for his children. This interpretation finds support in passages like Luke 6:35 and Matthew 5:45, where believers are called »children of God« to emphasize their call to emulate divine mercy.

The Qurʾānic perspective on this matter appears in Q 18, which acknowledges how some Jewish and Christian communities perceived their special relationship with God in familial terms. Al-Biqāʿī's analysis suggests that such metaphorical language – whether referring to Jesus as God's »son« or believers as God's »children« – primarily serves to communicate spiritual truths about God's compassionate nature and humanity's dependent relationship with the divine, rather than making literal claims about God's nature or human ontology.

Al-Biqāʿī's exegetical approach presents a nuanced reading of Biblical texts that seeks to reconcile their content with Islamic theological principles. His analysis suggests the metaphorical nature of certain Christological titles, proposing that terms like »son of God« and divine »fatherhood« might be better understood as figurative expressions rather than literal descriptions. This perspective emerges from his careful examination of how similar terminology functions across scriptural traditions.

When considering passages where Jesus is called »son of God,« al-Biqāʿī offers an interpretation that emphasizes God's special favor and protection toward Jesus as His chosen messenger, rather than indicating any biological or ontological relationship. The instances where individuals prostrate before Jesus (Luke 8:47; Matthew 15:25) are viewed through the lens of cultural practices showing respect to spiritual figures, comparable to honorific gestures found in other religious traditions.

The exegete's methodology draws attention to the importance of contextual interpretation, particularly when dealing with potentially ambiguous passages. He notes that some Christian interpretations of these metaphorical titles eventually contributed to the development of Trinitarian theology (Saleh 2012, 87; al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:16–19). While respectfully acknowledging this theological trajectory, al-Biqāʿī expresses concerns about how such interpretations might intersect with strict monotheistic principles, particularly regarding concepts like homoousion (consubstantiality).

Al-Biqāʿī's approach mirrors classical Islamic methods of dealing with ambiguous Quranic passages (*mutashābih*) by interpreting them through clearer contextual verses (*muḥkam*). His commentary suggests that applying similar interpretive principles to Biblical texts could yield readings compatible with Islamic monotheism while maintaining respect for the textual integrity of Christian scriptures. As he observes, »They diverged from the path by asserting Jesus' divinity based on metaphorical titles, rather than interpreting these through decisive verses« (al-Biqāʿī 1995, 2:19–22).

This interpretive framework extends to discussions of divine attributes, where al-Biqāʿī advocates for understandings that preserve God's transcendence while accounting for anthropomorphic language in scripture. His analysis reflects a broader Islamic scholarly tradition that seeks to maintain theological consistency without dismissing the textual complexity of sacred writings.

Ultimately, Al-Biqāʿī's Biblical exegesis represents a significant attempt within Islamic scholarship to engage thoughtfully with Christian scriptures while upholding core Islamic theological principles. His methodology demonstrates how comparative textual analysis can be conducted with both academic rigor and interreligious sensitivity. By examining Christological titles through linguistic, cultural and theological lenses, he provides an alternative reading that maintains the possibility of scriptural harmony while respecting doctrinal differences. This approach not only contributes to Islamic exegetical tradition but also offers potential avenues for constructive interfaith dialogue regarding scriptural interpretation and theological concepts shared across Abrahamic traditions.

Conclusion

The relationship between Islamic exegesis and Biblical sources has long been characterized by complex scholarly attitudes. Traditional perspectives often approached earlier scriptures with caution, influenced by theological concerns about textual preservation. Yet historical examination reveals that many Islamic scholars, including prominent exegetes, engaged extensively with Biblical narratives, adapting them within Islamic interpretive frameworks. Among these scholars, al-Biqāʿī stands out for his distinctive methodology – one that neither rejected Biblical sources outright nor accepted them uncritically, but rather approached them as potentially valuable resources when carefully contextualized.

Al-Biqāʿī's exegetical work demonstrates how Biblical material, when approached discerningly, could enrich Qurʾānic interpretation without compromising Islamic theological principles. His willingness to incorporate explicit Biblical citations, while maintaining critical awareness of textual considerations, represents a noteworthy middle path between complete rejection and uncritical acceptance. This approach allowed him to utilize Biblical and midrashic materials to illuminate Qurʾānic passages while articulating his theological perspectives.

The substantial influence of Judeo-Christian textual traditions on Islamic exegesis is evident throughout classical commentaries, suggesting these sources played a more integral role in shaping Qurʾānic interpretation than sometimes acknowledged. This historical reality invites reflection on contemporary exegetical practices, where such cross-textual engagement has become less common. The gradual distancing from these sources in modern times may reflect evolving methodological preferences rather than inherent textual incompatibilities.

This study highlights the potential benefits of re-examining the intertextual relationships between Islamic and Biblical traditions. Rather than viewing these textual worlds as fundamentally opposed, future scholarship might explore them as complementary interpretive resources – each offering valuable insights when approached with appropriate methodological awareness. Such an approach could yield richer historical understanding while respecting theological distinctions. Al-Biqāʿī's example suggests possibilities for contemporary scholars to engage Biblical and midrashic materials as contextual references for understanding the Qurʾān's historical milieu, without necessarily compromising Islamic theological positions. This balanced approach could open new dimensions in Qurʾānic studies, particularly in exploring the scripture's dynamic interaction with its religious environment.

Ultimately, this investigation points toward promising directions for future research in Islamic studies. By carefully examining historical intertextual relationships while maintaining methodological rigor, scholars may develop more sophisticated frameworks for understanding the Qurʾān's engagement with preceding traditions. Such approaches could foster more comprehensive interpretations while contributing to constructive interfaith scholarly dialogue about shared textual heritage and distinct theological developments.

No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.
Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.

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Vinko Škafar

Katoličani in pravoslavni skupaj razmišljali o človeški identiteti v kontekstu tehnološke inovacije: Sedemnajsti medkrščanski simpozij v italijanskem mestu Trani v duhu sv. Nikolaja Romarja

Catholics and Orthodox Christians Reflect Together on Human Identity in the Context of Technological Innovation: Seventeenth Inter-Christian Symposium in Trani, Italy, in the Spirit of St. Nicholas the Pilgrim

V reviji *Edinost in dialog* (78/1: 303–312) smo leta 2023 na kratko predstavili šestnajst medkrščanskih (ekumenskih) simpozijev, ki sta jih v letih 1992–2022, vsaki dve leti izmenično, organizirala Inštitut duhovnosti na Papeški univerzi Antonianum v Rimu in samostojna pravoslavna Teološka fakulteta na Aristotelovi univerzi v Solunu. Šestnajsti simpozij, leta 2022, je organizirala pravoslavna Teološka fakulteta v metropoliji Peristeri v predmestju glavnega grškega mesta Atene, zato je leta 2024 spet bil na vrsti gostitelj Inštitut duhovnosti Papeške univerze Antonianum v Rimu, ki je organiziral sedemnajsti simpozij od 28. do 30. avgusta 2024 v manjšem italijanskem mestu Trani v Apuliji.

1 Kraj Trani, začetek in tema simpozija: *»Kaj je človek?« (Ps 8,5) … v času antropološke preobrazbe*

Kako je prišlo leta 2024 do izbire za medkrščanski simpozij v manjšem italijanskem mestu Trani blizu Barija, kamor pravoslavni in katoličani radi romajo na grob sv. škofa Nikolaja iz Mire? Leta 2018 se je medkrščanskega simpozija v Assisiju udeležila tudi delegacija nadškofije Trani iz Apulije, ki je izrazila željo, da bi eden od prihodnjih simpozijev potekal v njihovem mestu, poklicanem k ekumenizmu zaradi zavetnika, saj je njihov stolni zavetnik Grk sv. Nikolaj Romar, ki pri nas ni poznan. Sv. Nikolaj Romar, rojen leta 1075 v kraju Stira v Grčiji, je že kot otrok in pastirček med pašo imel videnje Jezusa in je od tistega trenutka postal njegov goreči prijatelj. Pozneje se je kot fant podal na romarsko pot, nosil leseni križ in neprestano glasno vzklikal »Kyrie eleison« tako pogosto, da je postal znan kot »sv. Nikolaj Kyrie eleison«. S tem je pritegnil naklonjenost otrok, hkrati pa tudi začudenje in celo nasprotovanje odraslih, tudi cerkvenih mož. Leta 1091 se je odpravil v Italijo z namenom, da bi prišel v Rim, in med romanjem je prehodil celo Apulijo, dokler ni prišel v manjše mesto Trani v Apuliji, kjer je od izčrpanosti kmalu umrl, star komaj 18 let. Sloves njegove svetosti in ponavljajoče se ozdravitve po njegovem posredovanju so spodbudile tamkajšnjega nadškofa Bizanca (1063–1099), da je opravil preiskavo in nato zaprosil papeža Urbana II. – naj spomnimo, da sta se leta 1054 ločili Zahodna (Rimska) in Vzhodna (Konstantinopelska) cerkev – za potrditveno bulo, s katero je Nikolaja Romarja razglasil za svetnika. Pet let pozneje so začeli graditi mogočno in čudovito katedralo, v katere kripti so danes shranjeni njegovi telesni ostanki.

Sedemnajsti simpozij se je začel v nadškofijskem mestu Trani 28. avgusta 2024 s slovesno evharistijo v kripti stolnice, ki jo je vodil tamkajšnji nadškof Leonardo D'Ascenzio. Ta se je ravno pripravljal na uradni obisk krajev v Grčiji, kjer se je sv. Nikolaj Romar rodil in živel do šestnajstega leta starosti. Pri sveti maši je sodeloval tudi msgr. Natale Albino, duhovnik iz mesta Trani in sedanji tajnik apostolske nunciature v Jeruzalemu, ki je napisal najnovejši življenjepis tega svetnika z naslovom *Ob vsakem koraku, ob vsakem utripu*.

Po kratkem ogledu mesta Trani so se udeleženci zbrali v veliki dvorani središča *Sanguis Christi*, kjer so najprej prebrali sporočilo papeža Frančiška, lastnoročno podpisano, v katerem papež izraža svoje priznanje medkrščanskemu simpoziju kot obliki »konkretnega sodelovanja, ki je postalo lepa tradicija«. Papež je pohvalil tudi pomembno simpozijsko temo, kjer bodo katoličani in pravoslavni bratje skupaj obravnavali pojmovanje človeka v času resnične »antropološke revolucije«. Papež je ob tem spodbudil tudi k priznavanju dostojanstva vsakega človeškega bitja.

Nato so prebrali še sporočilo carigrajskega patriarha Bartolomeja, ki je kot temelj za varovanje človekovega dostojanstva navedel skrivnost učlovečenja Božje Besede, kakor je bila izpovedana na kalcedonskem koncilu leta 451.

Yannis Spiteris, upokojeni nadškof s Krfa, ki je bil pobudnik teh simpozijev, je zaradi starosti ostal v Atenah in je udeležence nagovoril po spletu. Spomnil je na Blaisa Pascala in njegovo razodetje z dne 23. novembra 1654 o veličini in bedi človeka ter poudaril, da je človek na Vzhodu cenjen kot tisti, ki je poklican, da bi postal nosilec Svetega Duha.

Tokratna tema medkrščanskega simpozija: *»Kaj je človek?« (Ps 8,5) ... v času antropološke preobrazbe* je bila sodobna in izzivalna, predavanja bodo kot običajno objavljena v zborniku.

2 Predavanja

Simpozij je potekal v petih tematskih sklopih, vsak z dvema referatoma – enim katoliškim in enim pravoslavnim.

2.1 Sodobni človek

Vincenzo Di Pilato, apulijski duhovnik in teolog, ter Petros Panagiotopoulos, fizik, sta razmišljala o »sodobnem človeku«. Di Pilato je opozoril, da naš čas, ki je nasledil obdobje totalitarizmov in ideologij, zdaj zaznamuje šibka miselnost in krhka identiteta, ki se brani pred drugačnostjo iz strahu pred izgubo samega sebe. Povabil je k temu, da bi znali dati pomen tako svobodi kot omejitvam, ki so lahko vir rasti, in da bi postali gostoljubni – kakor so bili očaki Izraela – ter se učili iskrenega dialoga z drugačnimi po Kristusovem zgledu.

Panagiotopoulos je opozoril na posledice »božanstvenja individualne želje«, ki zaznamuje našo dobo: vse večja duhovna in materialna revščina, ki slabi duha in demokracijo ter odpira bioetične in tehnološke izzive. Na te je treba odgovarjati s solidarnostjo in upanjem, v sodelovanju s Kristusovim Duhom.

2.2 Sveto pismo in sodobne vrednote

Raffaele Ogliari, menih iz samostana Bose, in Timoleon Galanis, docent Stare zaveze v Solunu, sta razpravljala o vlogi Svetega pisma v današnji zavesti. Ogliari je najprej analiziral tri vrednote, ki so bile v preteklosti pretirano poudarjene: zakon kot nedotakljiva avtoriteta, žrtev kot predvsem materialna daritev in odrešenje kot lastno zasluženje zaradi spokornosti. Nato je predstavil tri resničnosti, ki bi jih danes morali bolje vključiti: naše stvarne meje, možnost padca (in pomen kazni kot poti k resničnosti) ter dialog, ki mora ostati odprt – po zgledu Jezusovega pogovora z bogatim mladeničem ali po vzoru prilike o usmiljenem očetu.

Galanis je predstavil lik preroka Jona kot podobo Cerkve: ta sprva beži pred poslanstvom, a iz »trebuha ribe« – torej iz Cerkve – se znova rodi in odide v svet oznanjat Božje sporočilo.

2.3 Očetovstvo in materinstvo danes

Psihoterapevtka Maria Beatrice Toro in teolog Nikos Koios sta razpravljala o sodobnem starševstvu. M. B. Toro je materinstvo in očetovstvo označila za neizrekljivo izkušnjo skrbi za drugega, ki jo današnja družba zanemarja zaradi kultiviranja samouveljavitve in individualizma. Opozorila je na čustveno odvisnost staršev od otrok in na zanemarjanje očetove vloge, ki spodbuja samostojnost. Poudarila je, da zgolj finančne spodbude ne zadostujejo za spodbujanje starševstva, ampak je potreben moralni in družbeni pogum. Posebej je kritizirala pretirano izpostavljenost otrok elektronskim medijem in poudarila pomen osebne prisotnosti in zgleda.

Koios je s teološkega vidika razmišljal o tem, kako se od sredine 20. stoletja povečuje uresničevanje želje po starševstvu, ne da bi se vedno upoštevala dobrobit otroka. V Svetem pismu je žena cenjena kot mati, moški pa kot oče, ki po veri sprejemata Božje obljube. Vera v očetovstvo Boga pomeni, da v bližnjem prepoznamo brata. Spomnil je, da je vloga očeta voditi k podobnosti z Bogom in da mora Cerkev predvsem oznanjati dostojanstvo Božjih otrok in vero v vstajenje.

2.4 Tehnološki ali digitalni človek

Giambattista Formica, profesor filozofije na Papeški univerzi Urbaniana v Rimu, in Anastasios Petkou, docent fizike na univerzi v Solunu, sta obravnavala vprašanje »tehnološkega človeka«. Formica je poudaril, da digitalne tehnologije oblikujejo našo dobo do te mere, da živimo v »infosferi« in »hiperzgodovini«. Omenil je tri filozofske drže: antagonistično (kot odgovor na prejšnje dobe dominacije belih moških elit), futuristično (z vero v bioinženiring in skoraj nesmrtnost) in konstitutivno (človek kot bitje po svoji naravi presega tehnologijo). Zaključil je, da človek najde polnost le v odnosu s presežnim.

Petkou je predstavil razmišljanja Erwina Schrödingera iz študije *Kaj je življenje?*, kjer je znanstveno razlagal stvarjenje. Spomnil je, da medtem ko termodinamika napoveduje entropijo, v resnici vidimo rast življenja. Človek pa je edino bitje, ki s svobodo in zavestjo ustvarja. Petkou je mlade spodbudil, naj vlagajo svoje sposobnosti v svojo ustvarjalno svobodo, in ne v posnemanje umetne inteligence.

2.5 Identiteta in drugost

Carlos Salto, dekan teološke fakultete na Antonianumu v Rimu, in Charidimos Koutris, teolog iz Soluna, sta obravnavala temo »identiteta in drugost«. Salto je poudaril, da po veliki frančiškanski teologiji človek odseva trojico – spomin, razum in voljo – in je ustvarjen kot čudovito bitje, poklicano k odnosu z Bogom, s seboj in s stvarstvom. Človek je romar, ki potuje v upanju.

Koutris je razložil pravoslavno razumevanje Trojice, kjer Oče kot izvir omogoča edinost Sina in Duha. Človek je ustvarjen po Božji podobi, toda greh ga odmika od popolnosti; zato je Božja Beseda postala meso, da nas ozdravi in vodi k podobnosti z Bogom. Pot k temu vodi skozi vzgojo, Cerkev in ekumenski dialog.

3 Okrogla miza

Po končanih referatih je sledila okrogla miza s tremi katoliškimi in tremi pravoslavnimi govorniki. Sodelovali so: Evaghelia Amoiridou, Lorenzo Raniero, Ilias Evaghelou, Luca Bianchi, Panaghiotis Yfantis in Guglielmo Spirito. Strnili so glavne teme in nakazali, kako jih prenesti v pastoralno, liturgično in duhovno življenje Cerkva, da bi te bolje pospeševale Božje kraljestvo in hrepenenje po večnem življenju.

4 Pravoslavna Božanska liturgija in obisk Barija in sv. Nikolaja iz Mire

Zadnji dan simpozija, 30. avgusta, je bila v kripti stolnice v Traniju nad grobom sv. Nikolaja Romarja prvič darovana pravoslavna Božanska liturgija, ki jo je vodil Polycarpos, pravoslavni nadškof Italije in Malte, ob somaševanju dveh pravoslavnih župnikov iz Apulije. Šele lani je bil sv. Nikolaj Romar uradno priznan za svetnika tudi v Pravoslavni cerkvi, v kateri se je rodil, in je na pobudo istega nadškofa Polykarposa vpisan med italo-grške svetnike.

Popoldne so se udeleženci skupaj z avtobusom odpravili v Bari, kjer jih je sprejel rektor bazilike sv. Nikolaja iz Mire in jim omogočil poseben ogled svetišča, kamor še danes prihajajo množice pravoslavnih vernikov, tudi Rusov, ki tam molijo ob grobu svetnika in tam lahko darujejo pravoslavno Božjo liturgijo, v duhu ekumenizma, ki ga je spodbudil drugi vatikanski koncil. Udeleženci so obiskali tudi lepo mestno stolnico, zvečer pa so jih kapucini v samostanu sv. Fare v Bariju pogostili z večerjo.

Sklep

Simpozij je bil resda akademski dogodek, a obogaten z molitvijo in bratskim druženjem, ki sta vsem dala občutek pristnega bratstva v Kristusu. V primerjavi s prejšnjimi simpoziji je bil ta zaznamovan z izrazito pozitivnim odnosom do sveta in sodobne kulture ter z vključevanjem strokovnjakov z različnih področij – psihologije in fizike – v dialog z vero, skladno z usmeritvami papeža Frančiška iz apostolske konstitucije *Veritatis*

Gaudium (2017). Posebej je bilo čutiti ekumenski duh treh grških profesorjev – to so Evaghelia Amoiridou, Panaghiotis Yfantis in Nikos Maghioros – ki že vrsto let podpirajo uspeh teh srečanj. Na katoliški strani so izstopali trije manjši bratje: fr. Guglielmo Spirito, OFMConv, ki se je najbolj trudil, da bi se simpozij lahko izvedel v Traniju; fr. Luca Bianchi, OFMCap, ki je poskrbel za pripravo in organizacijo, ter fr. Carlos Salto Solá, OFM, dekan Teološke fakultete na Papeški univerzi Antonianum v Rimu. Veliko priznanje je požela tudi stalna navzočnost upokojenega atenskega katoliškega nadškofa Sebastiana Rossolatosa, ki je večkrat – tudi tokrat – zvesto opravljal zahtevno delo prevajalca.[1]

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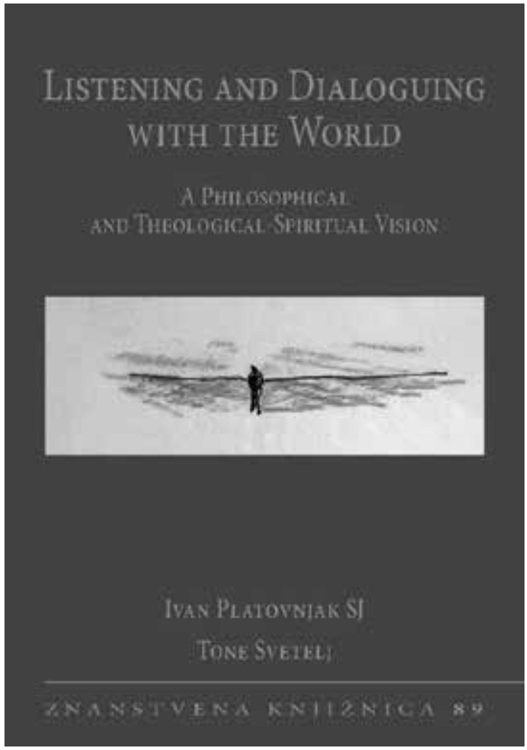
Za podporo tej raziskavi niso bili ustvarjeni ali analizirani nobeni novi podatki.
No new data were created or analysed in support of this research.

1 Prirejeno po tipkopisu: Paolo Cocco, *Cattolici e ortodossi a Trani, Nello spirito di san Nicola il Pellegrino, Insieme per riflettere sull' identità umana nel contesto della innovazione tecnologica*.



Znanstvena knjižnica 89

Ivan Platovnjak in Tone Svetelj

LISTENING AND DIALOGUING WITH THE WORLD:
A PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL-SPIRITUAL VISION

»Ta knjiga ponuja svež pristop k teologiji, ki jo vidi kot racionalno disciplino, sposobno brati pomen sveta in ki je nujna za dosego izpolnjenosti. Erudicija avtorjev daje bralcu občutek, da hodi skozi moderne čase ob spremstvu dveh odličnih vodičev. Razlagata zapleteno resničnost, vendar ne mislita namesto bralca.«

prof. dr. Piotr Roszak, recenzent zbornika

Ljubljana: Teološka fakulteta, 2024. 207 str.
ISBN 978-961-297-350-6, 20 €

Navodila sodelavcem

Besedilo, ki ga avtor[1] pošlje na naslov revije *Edinost in dialog*, je besedilo, ki še ni bilo objavljeno drugod niti ni drugod v recenzijskem postopku. Besedilo je treba poslati v elektronski obliki na naslov glavnega in odgovornega urednika (samo.skralovnik@teof.uni-lj.si) oz. na naslov revije (edinost-dialog@teof.uni-lj.si). Objave v reviji se ne honorirajo.

Zaradi **anonimnega recenzijskega postopka** mora biti prispevek anonimen (tj. brez navedbe avtorja). Avtor poleg anonimnega prispevka pošlje *prijavo oziroma spremni list*, na katerem navede ime in priimek, naslov članka, svoje ključne biografske podatke in izjavo, da besedilo še ni bilo objavljeno in da še ni v recenzijskem postopku.

Če je članek nastal kot rezultat določenega raziskovalnega programa ali projekta, ki ga financira določena organizacija ali ustanova, je to treba izrecno navesti v posebni opombi pod črto na naslovni strani. Primer navedbe: »Članek je nastal kot rezultat dejavnosti raziskovalnega programa P6-0262 *Judovsko-krščanski viri in razsežnosti pravičnosti*, ki ga je sofinancirala Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije iz državnega proračuna.«

1 Izraz avtor je napisan v moški slovnični obliki in je uporabljen kot nevtralen za ženske in moške.

1 Vrsta in velikost pisave

Besedilo naj bo urejeno z urejevalnikom besedila Microsoft Word (za okolje Windows) v pisavi Times New Roman brez dodatnih slogovnih določil. Velikost pisave naj bo 12 pt, razmik med vrsticami 1,5 (opombe 10 pt, razmik 1).

Za besede, zapisane v grščini ali hebrejščini, je treba uporabiti pisavo *SBL Greek/SBL Hebrew* (dostopna s podrobnejšimi navodili na spletni strani Society of Biblical Literature) ali *Bwtransh* (dostopna s podrobnejšimi navodili na spletni strani Bible Works).

2 Izvleček, ključne besede, obseg

Besedilo znanstvenega članka ima **izvleček** in **ključne besede**. Izvleček naj obsega do 160 besed oziroma do 800 znakov. Izvleček obsega natančno opredelitev teme članka, metodologijo in sklepe. Naslov članka mora biti jasen, zgovoren in ne daljši od 100 znakov.

Obseg izvirnega in preglednega znanstvenega članka naj praviloma ne presega dolžine 20.000 znakov (vključno s presledki), poročila ne več kot 10.000 znakov, ocene knjig ne več kot 8.000 znakov. Slikovno gradivo (in/ali tabele) mora biti poslano ločeno (v formatih JPG ali TIF), v besedilu članka mora biti označeno mesto, kamor spada.

Slog besedila mora ustrezati znanstveni ravni, besedilo mora biti pred oddajo **jezikovno pregledano (lektorirano)**. **Opombe** morajo biti pisane enotno kot **sprotne opombe pod črto**.

3 Navajanje

Način navajanja mora biti v skladu z metodologijo znanstvenega dela na Teološki fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani. Priimek avtorja, leto izida citiranega dela in stran zapišemo za citatom v obliki (priimek leto, stran), npr. (Žust 2007, 109). Na isti način navajamo citate iz periodičnih publikacij. Če sta avtorja dva, navedek zapišemo v obliki (priimek in priimek leto, stran), npr. (Škafar in Nežič 1998, 33). Pri več kot treh avtorjih uporabimo obliko (priimek idr. leto, stran), npr. (Sorč idr. 2003, 21). Če avtor dela ni naveden, namesto priimka uporabimo naslov, lahko po potrebi tudi skrajšanega, npr. (*Devetdnevnica k časti milostne Matere Božje* 1916, 5). Če priimek navedemo že v citatu, ga v navedku izpustimo in navedemo samo leto in stran. Npr.: »Kakor je zapisal Avguštin Lah (2000, 57) [...]«. Če v istem oklepaju navajamo več del, ločujemo eno od drugega s podpičji, npr. (Škafar 1998, 16; Lah 2003, 73). Če v istem odstavku ali poglavju neprekinjeno navajamo isto delo, navedemo referenco v celoti samo prvič, v nadaljevanju pa v oklepajih navajamo le še številko strani. Izpuščene dele znotraj navedka označujemo z [...].

3.1 Postavljanje referenc/sklicev

Pri **citatih** stoji ločilo

- **za referenco**, če referenca označuje del povedi:

> Nastopi brez vsake utemeljitve, nenadoma in brez obrazložitve, ko Ezra izve, da se »izraelsko ljudstvo še ni ločilo od ljudstev dežel, kajti izmed njihovih hčerá so jemali žene zase in za svoje sinove ter oskrunili sveti zarod z ljudstvi dežel« (Ezr 9,1-2).

- **pred referenco** (referenca sama je brez ločila), če referenca označuje eno poved ali več povedi:

> Tobit začne moliti z besedami: »Pravičen si (δίκαιος), Gospod, in pravična so vsa tvoja dela in vse tvoje poti so usmiljenje (ἐλεημοσύναι) in resnica (ἀλήθεια).« (Tob 3,2)

Pri **parafrazah** stoji ločilo

- **pred referenco**, če referenca označuje celoten odstavek oz. več povedi:

Z razmahom ideje individualnih človekovih pravic in temeljnih svoboščin, izrazito v času po drugi svetovni vojni, avtonomija verskih organizacij ponovno pridobiva pomen v političnem, ekonomskem in pravnem ustroju družbe. Izključne pristojnosti na področju članstva, upravljanja premoženja in vodenja organizacije, izvzem od splošno veljavnih predpisov države in možnost uporabe religiozno zaznamovanih norm vedenja in ravnanja so v današnjem času univerzalno priznani elementi kolektivnega vidika individualno zagotovljene pravice do svobode vesti oziroma veroizpovedi. (Šturm 2010, 444–457; 122–139)

- **za referenco**, če referenca označuje eno samo poved:

V večini so razlike, drugačnosti predvsem med Pravoslavno in Katoliško cerkvijo v manjšini in v temelju premagljivega (Janežič 2006, 94).

Marija, Jezusova mati, in Elizabeta, mati Janeza Krstnika, sta se, denimo, povezali v nosečnosti in v medsebojni pomoči v zanju novem, veselem in presenetljivem ter zato ranljivem položaju (Lk 1,31-56).

Za citiranje cerkvenih dokumentov, *Zakonika cerkvenega prava* (ZCP), *Katekizma Katoliške cerkve* (KKC) in drugih standardnih besedil, ki jih obravnavamo kot vire, uporabljamo ustaljene okrajšave (*Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis für Theologie und Grenzgebiete* 1992). Kratice domačih del, zbirk in leksikonov se uporabljajo, če so splošno znane in priznane. Kratice revij/časopisov so v ležeči pisavi (kurzivi), kratice zbornikov, leksikonov ali monografij so v pokončni pisavi.

3.2 Navajanje Svetega pisma

Za navajanje Svetega pisma in drugih svetopisemskih, judovskih in zgodnje krščanskih virov se avtor ravna po znanstveni monografiji *Navajanje in raziskovanje svetopisemskih, judovskih in zgodnjekrščanskih pisnih virov* (2024). Pri krajšavah (okrajšavah in kraticah) v tujem jeziku se avtor ravna po priročniku *The SBL Handbook of Style*.

Pri navajanju svetopisemskih besedil v slovenščini se med vrsticami uporablja stični vezaj (-), med poglavji pa stični pomišljaj (–):

2 Mz 20,17 Mr 4,35	ena vrstica
Ezk 11,22-25 Jn 1,2-3	več neprekinjenih vrstic v istem poglavju
2 Mz 24,3.7 Mt 5,1.5.7	več prekinjenih vrstic v istem poglavju
Jer 7,1-5; 12,5-6 Jn 1,2-3; 4,2-6	več neprekinjenih vrstic v različnih poglavjih
Mih 2 Apd 12	eno poglavje
5 Mz 32–34 Mr 3–6	več neprekinjenih poglavij
5 Mz 4,44–28,68 Mr 3,1–4,45	več neprekinjenih poglavij z vrsticami

4 Seznam referenc oz. literature

Prispevek ima **na koncu seznam referenc oz. literature**. Knjižna dela se navajajo v obliki: Priimek, ime. Leto. *Naslov*. Kraj: založba.

En avtor:

Lah, Avguštin. 2001. *Skrivnost troedinega Boga*. Maribor: Teološka fakulteta.
–––. 2008. *V znamenju osebe: poskus trinitarične antropologije*. Ljubljana: Družina.

Dva avtorja:

Rode, Franc, in Anton Stres. 1977. *Kriterij krščanstva v pluralistični družbi*. Tinje: Dom prosvete.

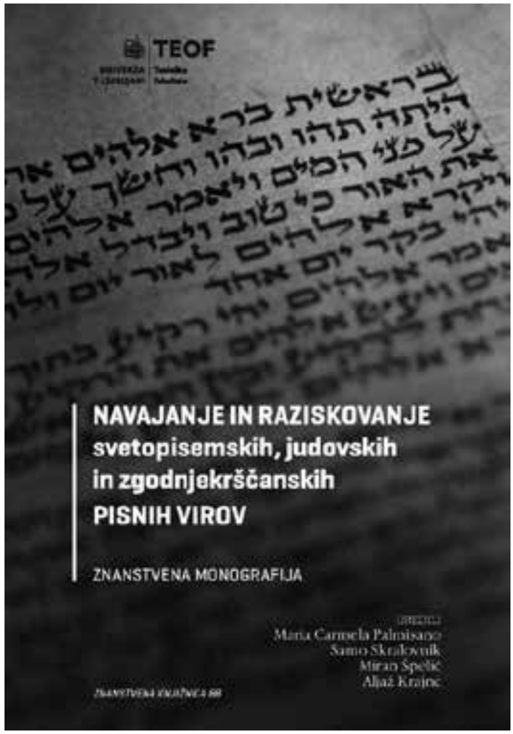
Trije avtorji:

Sajama, Seppo, Matti Kamppinen in Simo Vihjanen. 1994. *Misel in smisel: uvod v fenomenologijo*. Ljubljana: Znanstveno in publicistično središče.

Članki iz revij se navajajo v obliki: Priimek, ime. Leto. Naslov članka. *Ime publikacije* letnik: prva–zadnja stran.

Krašovec, Jože. 1991. Filozofsko-teološki razlogi za odpuščanje. *Bogoslovni vestnik* 51: 270–285.

Sorč, Ciril. 2004. Trinitarično pojmovanje osebe. *Tretji dan* 33 (julij–september): 25–33.



Znanstvena knjižnica 88

Maria Carmela Palmisano, Samo Skralovnik, Miran Špelič in Aljaž Krajnc (ur.)

Navajanje in raziskovanje svetopisemskih, judovskih in zgodnjekrščanskih pisnih virov

»Monografija prinaša resnično obsežno in temeljito raziskavo, ki pomeni novo raven v predstavitvi teh virov in njihovih zakonitosti slovenskim bralcem ter bo generacijam prihodnjih študentov močno olajšala prve korake pri delu z njimi. Zasnovana je na interdisciplinarnem pristopu, skupina avtorjev, ki se ponaša s širokim strokovnim zaledjem, ponuja izčrpen pregled različnih teorij in vidikov, hkrati pa z jasnim slogom pisanja omogoča razumevanje tudi začetnikom.«

doc. dr. David Movrin, recenzent monografije

Ljubljana: Teološka fakulteta, 2024. 340 str.
ISBN 978-961-7167-19-1, 15 €

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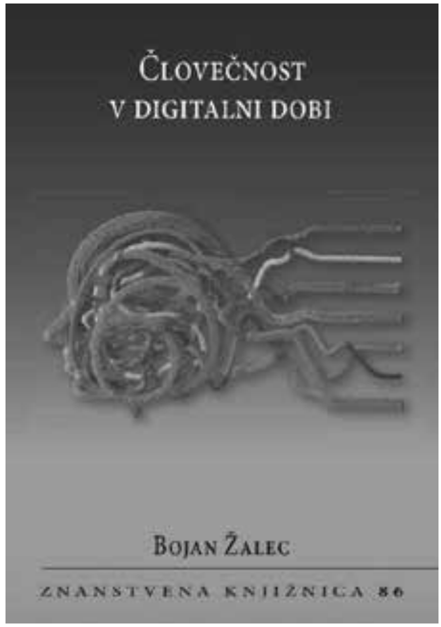

Znanstvena knjižnica 86

Bojan Žalec

Človečnost v digitalni dobi: Izzivi umetne inteligence, transhumanizma in genetike

Avtor na naslovnici zapiše: »Namen pričujoče knjige je prispevati k oblikovanju ustrezne filozofske in teološke antropologije za sodobno digitalno dobo. Izhajam iz stališča, da je naloga kritične (javne) humanistike, filozofije in teologije zaščita človeka in obramba človeškosti in človečnosti pred razvojnimi trendi, nauki in ideologijami, ki ju ogrožajo. To poslanstvo in potenciali kritične humanistike so še posebno pomembni v sedanji tehnološki dobi, ko je človeškost človeka ogrožena tako korenito, kot ni bila še nikoli. Humanistično razumevanje človeka vse bolj izpodriva scientistični pogled na človeka, ki ga razume kot proizvod algoritmov in podatkov. Scientistično podobo človeka je zato treba podvreči kritični raziskavi in jo utemeljeno zavreči ter obenem razvijati alternativno človekoslovje, ki je primerno sodobnemu času in v skladu z resničnimi znanstvenimi spoznanji.«

Ljubljana: Teološka fakulteta, 2023. 133 str.
ISBN 978-961-7167-17-7, 15 €

Instructions for contributors

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For words written in Greek or Hebrew, the font *SBL Greek/SBL Hebrews* should be used (available, with detailed instructions, on the website of the Society of Biblical Literature) or *Bwtransh* (available, with detailed instructions, on the website Bible Works).

2 Abstract, key words, scope

The text of the scientific article must comprise the **abstract** and the **key words.** The maximum length of the abstract should be 160 words or 800 characters. The abstract should present the exact definition of the topic of the article, methodology, and conclusions. The title of the article must be concise and unambiguous, and not longer than 100 characters.

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3 References

References must be provided in accordance with the methodology of scientific work at the Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana. The surname of the author, the year of the publication, and page(s) are inserted after the quote in the form (surname year, page(s)), e.g. (Žust 2007, 109). The citations from periodic publications are written in the same manner. If there are two authors, the citation is written in the form (surname and surname year, page), e.g. (Škafar and Nežič 1998, 33). If there are more than three authors, we use the form (surname et al. year, page), e.g. (Sorč et al. 2003, 21). If no author is indicated, we use the title instead of the surname and abbreviate it, if necessary. If the last name is already mentioned in the quotation, it shall be omitted in the quote and we only indicate the year and page(s). If there are several works cited in the same brackets, these shall be separated by semicolons. If the same work is being cited througho-ut the same paragraph or chapter, we indicate the reference in its entirety only once, and thereafter only the page number is indicated in brackets. We do not use abbreviation cf.

3.1 Form of references

In **citations**, the punctuation is placed

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- **in front of the reference**, if it refers to several sentences.

When citing church documents, *Code of Canon Law* (CCL), *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) and other standard texts used as sources, we use standard abbreviations (*Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis für Theologie und Grenzgebiete* 1992). Abbreviations of domestic texts, collections, and lexicons are used, if they are generally known and recogni-zed. Abbreviations of journals are in italics, while abbreviations of lexicons or monographs are indicated in an upright font.

3.2 Citing the Holy Bible

For the abbreviations (and other acronyms) in a foreign language, the author should use *The SBL Handbook of Style*.

When quoting biblical texts, a hyphen (-) is used between the lines and a dash (–) between the chapters.

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