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APOSTOLICAM ECCLESIAM: SOCIO-LITURGICAL
INTERPRETATION OF THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH
IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE'S
“ANTICHRIST”

by

SEBASTIAN RYSZARD MADEJSKI

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JDDJ	The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification
AoC	The Apostolicity of the Church
LW	Luther's Works
WA	Weimarer Ausgabe

PART I

SOCIO-THEOLOGICAL APPROACH

Introduction

The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed describes four marks of the church: one, holy, catholic and apostolic. The project which I want to undertake here lays on the need of redefinition of “apostolicity” – the fourth mark of the church. Christian theology is in the constant process of interpreting the mission of the church. Therefore, churches must make constant reflection on their mission in the world and adapt liturgical forms to it.

The apostolicity of the church should be understood as the mission of the church.¹ The church is sent to proclaim Christ to the ends of the world (Mt 28:19-20). The missionary church is an apostolic church that goes out to people and is with people in their concrete existential situation.

Friedrich Nietzsche criticized Christianity for its tendency to delegate human beings to life after death. Religion in the nineteenth century focused on maintaining rituals and traditions, but Nietzsche noticed quite rightly that the people who participate in them do not adhere yet to the principles of this religion. This *Kulturprotestantismus*

¹ I am thankful to Prof. Garry Simpson, who shared with us this concept in the course Leading Christian Communities in the Mission in Fall Semester 2018, at Luther Seminary.

became a tool for indoctrination, for upholding German religious tradition and language, but less and less proclaimed the person of Christ. Of course, the 19th century liberal theology tried to separate Jesus from history and the Christ of faith to bring human beings to a closer, more existential faith. However, liberal theology at that time wanted to keep Christianity credible primarily in the face of philosophical criticism and changes in the society.

Another attempt to uphold the Church's credibility was the reformation initiated by the innocent thesis of Martin Luther. At the end of the Middle Ages, the authority of the church was seriously undermined. Luther rightly pointed out that the church declares itself apostolic, but lacks apostolic teaching. He interpreted apostolicity as a mark of the one who preaches Christ. The Gospel of his death and resurrection became an article for Luther on which the church stands. Not Peter, not Paul, not the Pope, nor Martin Luther are those who are the highest authority in faith. The ultimate authority is Christ preached by Peter, Paul, the pope and Martin Luther. Luther rightly observed that even if Herod and Pilate were to proclaim Christ truthfully, we have to believe them, because of the content of the Gospel.

Paul was repeatedly accused for the lack of proper apostolate. However, he steadfastly defended his vocation by declaring that the sign of his apostolate is the congregation in which Christ is preached. Paul pleaded not for Peter's authority, but for the Gospel received directly from Christ. The *kerygma* which is the content of the apostolic proclamation, has become the rule of faith with time, and its interpretations gradually have taken the form of dogma.

The socio-theological analysis of apostolicity brings us to the question of the incarnation and the exclusiveness of Christian preaching. The conflict between exclusivity and inclusivity in theology can be traced in principle at the beginning of Christianity, until today. In his doctrine of justification, Paul represents a more-inclusive party. He included the Gentiles in the Christian community, broke ritual barriers and ate meals with pagans. He became a Jew for Jews and a Greek for the Greeks, for the free he became free, and for slaves he became a slave to save people (I Corinthians 9:19-23).

His initial inclusivity was criticized by the Judeo-Christian side. On the basis of a comparison between the Letter to the Galatians and the First Letter to the Corinthians, it can be concluded that there has been some evolution in the apostle's views. Faced with the need to structure the liturgy, Paul proposed a more patriarchal and exclusive model.

Luther's doctrine of justification by grace through faith represents an inclusive position. His conclusions led him to a new ecclesiology based on the Word-event. On the one hand, Luther broke with the hierarchical system of the Roman Church, and on the other hand strongly emphasized the role of lay members of the church, interpreting the ecclesiastical office as a practical task for ordained theologians. In his liturgical reform he contributed to the liturgy more accessible to all Christians. However, his main goal was to redefine the Lord's Supper as a community of people gathered together around a meal. Simple liturgical forms and pure Gospel are the best meal for a soul who is hungry for God. This was noticed in the twentieth century by theologians such as Gordon Lathrop.

A more exclusive approach in this discussion is represented by the Roman Catholic side, however through the liturgical movement began to rediscover the theology of mystery. The mystery of the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection confronts man with

the living God present in the elements of the eucharist so real that the participants are somehow elevated to the sphere beyond of time and space. Golgotha becomes authentic in the Holy Mass and the fruits of the sacrifice of Christ are available for people.

According to Roman Catholic theology, the mystery enables only some people to have access to its fruits, hence the interpretation of Christ and the Lord's Supper becomes more exclusive. Nonetheless, Odo Casel's theology can be a certain answer to the liturgical needs that arose in the Roman Catholic Church in the nineteenth century. The liturgical reforms made by the Second Vatican Council opened the church for ecumenical dialogue, which is an example of theological inclusivity.

A common understanding of the mission of the church and the mutual recognition of the apostolicity are an opportunity on the path to full communion between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. The mission of the church is therefore by all means to preach the Gospel to all creation. The implementation of the Great Commission (Mt 28:16-20) consists of administering the sacraments and making disciples of Jesus Christ all who desire to believe the Good News. Understanding the sacraments no longer as rituals of initiation, and the symbols of community can therefore have an interconfessional dimension, and perhaps even an inter-faith consequence.

CHAPTER 1

APOSTLESHIP OF PAUL

1.0. Introduction

In this chapter, I will present apostolicity as a mission undertaken by the disciples of Jesus to announce the Gospel to the Jews and Greeks. I will focus especially on the apostle Paul, who understood his apostolate in a special way and faced the accusations from his opponents who questioned his apostleship.

Because Nietzsche's criticism focuses on the figure of the apostle of the nations, it is necessary to present what Paul had to say about his apostolate and on what he based his theology of mission. I will not focus here on describing Pauline theology of the ministry, but I will mark the role of women among Paul's co-workers, because it has further implications in the ecumenical discussion.

1.1. Apostolic Mission of Paul

The redefinition of apostolicity took place in the New Testament, at the beginning only Twelve Apostles were called to the mission of proclaiming the Gospel. When one of them, Judas, died, the other purposed two men to take his place. Through examination and common recognition, they selected two: Joseph called Barsabbas (whose

surname was Justus) and Matthias. After the prayer, “the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles” (Acts 1:26).¹

After Saul’s conversion, he went to the desert for the meditation and there he received the Gospel directly from Christ. There, among the sand and rocks on the Mont Sinai, he discovered his call for the mission among Gentiles. After three years he went to Jerusalem to meet Peter and James (Gal 1:13-24). In the front of “the pillars of the church” he asserted that he received the Gospel directly from Christ (Gal 1:11-16). When Saul’s life was threatened, he went through Caesarea to his home town, Tarsus. He spent several years in Cilicia and Syria until Barnabas arrived and brought him to Antioch on the Orontes river. It happened around 44 AD.

In Antioch was already congregation which included both Jews and Gentiles. The history of Antioch church began in Jerusalem, when the Christians were persecuted in Jerusalem, and many of them fled to Cyprus, Phenice and Antioch (Acts 11:19-20).

Persecutions outside of Judea has started in a vast scale. The congregation in Antioch became one of the most important Christian churches at that time. The missional potential of this community was enormous.

Various pagan religions coexisted at that time in Antioch. There was also a significant Jewish community, though not as old and large as in Alexandria. Residents of the city were famous for their cunning and impudence. In retaliation for the unfavorable reception, successive Roman emperors often deprived Antioch of its privileges—for example, the capital of Syria was moved to Laodicea for some time. However, the luxury and corruption of Antioch have become proverbial in the Mediterranean world.

¹ All biblical quotations come from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) unless otherwise noted.

In this “impure city” the church found fertile ground for spreading the Gospel. At that time, Saul was only one of the four “prophets and teachers.” The Book of Acts in the chapter 13 recalls: “Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul” (Acts 13:1). Saul is mentioned in the end, as the youngest or yet not-experienced missionary.

Neither Saul, nor Barnaba are described by Luke as “apostles” yet. However, very soon they have an apostolic task to fulfill. While the collegium of ministers in Antioch “were worshiping the Lord and fasting.”

“The Holy Spirit said: Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus” (Acts 13:2-4).

In verse 2 is *participium praesentis activi* of verb λειτουργέω, which means “to perform public duties, service, ministry.” In Greek the word “polis” refers to the public offices in service to the community. Therefore, the context of this word was quite secular, but in the Christian community was assimilated with the worship and serving the community in word and meal.

Another word in this passage is προσκἄλέω—which means “to call, to summon, to invite.” This verb appears in the Gospels when Jesus calls his disciples to explain to them something important. Also, this verb means “to call somebody to lay testimony.” In chapter thirteen, consul Sergius Paulus calls Saul and Barnaba because he wanted “to hear the Word of God” (Acts 13:7).

Therefore, the missionaries—Saul and Barnaba are called by the Holy Spirit to give testimony to their mission. Probably, they were praying for that, they were not sure if this is the ministry that they should undertake. Suddenly the solution came directly from the Holy Spirit. She pointed them to the mission that they were considering in their hearts.

The Greek words are *επιθεντες τας χειρας απελυσαν*—“laid their hands on them, they sent them off” (Acts 13:3). The laying on of hands was present already in Jerusalem by the selection of deacons. It became a symbol of a particular ministry in which some people are chosen by the assembly and by the Holy Spirit.

Receiving a clear sign and blessing from the Antioch community, Barnabas and Saul went to Cyprus, where they met mentioned Sergius Paulus. The episode with sorcerer Elymas made Saul the main character in the missional expedition, because since then the author of Acts, Luke lists the missionaries as “Paul and Barnabas,” instead of “Barnabas and Saul.”

The mission of Paul and Barnabas was controversial. To understand it, we need to understand that the houses of Gentiles and even the public places where they spent time were considered by Jewish people as impure. The Greek *οἶκος*—house, was not only a building but a social cell, where a hierarchical order (mostly patriarchal) and religious life was practiced. The Jewish restrictions regarding the Gentiles and the relations with them were described in the Law and were transmitted in the oral tradition. Paul and Barnabas, spending time with Gentiles, eating with them, and entering into their houses risked allegations of breaking these rules. However, the Gospel is everyone, Jews and

Gentiles, for all who believe in Christ. This knowledge pushed Paul to the inclusivity and deconstruction of these pure/impure boundaries.

1.2. Crystalizing of Kerygma

From Paul's Galatians Letter, we know that it was still unsure if the Gentiles should be part of Christian assembly, or they should become first of all Jewish proselytes. This conflict is noticeable in Pisidian Antioch, when Paul is turning to the Jews in the synagogue. Paul, as member of Jewish community, speaks according to Scripture and proclaims that Jesus Christ is the promised Savior, he was born, he died, but God raised him from the dead (Act 13:30).²

The sermon of Paul included *kerygma*, the basic statement about the content of faith in Lord Jesus Christ. *Kerygma*, as a confession includes everything the apostles were proclaiming, namely: the announcement of the coming of the Messiah by the prophets, the suffering of the Messiah, the rejection by the Jewish elders, death and resurrection.

Some nineteenth century theologians and historians looked for the *kerygma* and determined that its unreasonable character did not match the views of enlightenment professors at that time. They attempted to cut out irrational parts from the *kerygma*, calling these elements mythological. These theologians wanted to extract the kernel of Christianity through demythologization. Both, David Fredrich Strauss and Rudolf Bultmann were looking for the *kerygma*, the main "cry" of Apostles. The first one had a

² The aim of this section is not to describe Acts as the historical accurate source, but to present their understanding of *kerygma*, and inclusive message of the apostles. The letters of Paul contain also an inclusive message but motivations of these two biblical traditions might have been different. Therefore, they present inclusivity but understand it through different lens. I thank Prof. David Fredrickson for this and many other thoughts and comments.

huge impact on young Fredrich Nietzsche, the second one interpreted Nietzsche's existentialism as a paradoxically rescue for the Christian theology in the front of "death of religion." More about that in chapter 3.2. of that socio-theological part.

But also, in Luther's theology: Luther represents a liberal theology because he reduces the Christian theology to unconditional promise of salvation in Christ alone. Faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus is for Luther the most important cry—*kerygma*. Protestant variations from this theology are only footnotes to the doctrine of justification.

The questions: what is exactly the *kerygma* and does *kerygma* constitute the apostolicity, or the apostolicity constitutes the *kerygma* are one of the most important question in the history of theological thought. For these questions are referring to the authority of the church and its faithfulness to the Christian message.

Returning to Acts 13 and to Paul. In Pisidian Antioch, next sabbath assembly not only the Jews who came to hear Paul, but "came almost the whole city to hear the word of God" (Acts 13:44). The proclamation of the Gospel caused disruption among the citizens. Apostles came to preach in synagogue, in the religious context of Jewish worship, the Christian message caught the multitudes of Jews and Gentiles. The Gospel reached a dimension beyond the ethnical and religious borders (Acts 13:45-46).

Despite the rejection of some Jews, the missionaries kept preaching to the Gentiles, the theological reason for that is Old Testament prophecy included in Isaiah Book (Acts 13:47 and Isa 49:6).

Such an interesting moment in the history of Christianity. The proclamation of Christ reached new place and new people. The missionaries came to this land to proclaim

Christ but not only to the people gathered in the Jewish worship. They reached Gentiles, people outside of Jewish community, the citizens who heard some disturbance in the city.

1.3. Paul's Inclusive Theology

In the front of that analysis it is important to note Paul's theological project and his understanding of the mission of the church was inclusive. The most significant passage concluding his theological inclusivity is of course Gal 3:28:

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:27-28).

For Paul, the ritual of baptism is the symbol of Christ's death. Therefore, anyone who is baptized is also free. In the Christian faith there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is even no gender. The Christianity means unity with Christ. Also, in chapter 2:

“For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:19-20).

Paul perceives himself as crucified with Christ. We might consider how far it is masochistic statement, as for example Peter Berger notices in his interpretation of Christianity. However, more important here is to notice that Paul's reflection is complete annihilation of himself, by the reduction of his own person, his own nationality, his own confession to the person of Christ. The inclusivity is possible only because of Christ and

His righteousness. If Christ does not live, “*and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain*” (I Cor 15:14).

According to Helmut Koester, Paul’s inclusivity is especially present in his understanding of love: “the one who loves another has fulfilled the law” (Rom 13:8). Koester pointed out that the law erects boundaries in the relationships of people.³ The commandment of love is deconstructing of the entire law, ethnical and gender boundaries. This radical conception might have destroyed the Roman Empire but remained limited only to the religious sphere, which at that time has been interpreted as salvation after death.

The language of death, salvation, and resurrection proclaimed by apostles become identified with the afterlife. Not only because it was so interpreted by the addressees of *kerygma*, but also because Paul uses the language of Greek-Roman religion. The question is whether Paul consciously uses the terms from Greek religion such as *ἀγάπη*, *νόμος*, *κρυπτα*, *φανερα*, *μαινεσθε*, *πιστοις*, *μυστήριον* and he wants to politically deconstruct Empire or he takes these terms (many of them from mystery religions) and gives them a new inclusive meaning? I opt for second possibility, where Paul is rather taking over terms from exclusive cults and gives them new inclusive meaning.

It is important to notice that Paul, in his soteriology, is inclusive but the exclusivity comes when he is creating the communities and his structural approach seems necessary. An example for that is the analysis of women in the worship at Corinth, where Paul wanted to introduce a more orderly liturgy to protect the church from the threat of

³ Helmut Koester, *Paul & His World: Interpreting the New Testament in Its Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 205.

falling into a sect incomprehensible to outsiders. This will be explained in chapter 1.4 of the liturgical part.

1.4. Paul's Self-identity as Apostle

The mission of Paul and Barnabas was crystalizing. Their task was to proclaim the Gospel for Jews and for Gentiles. Also, in Iconium, the synagogue was the place where Jews and Gentiles heard the Gospel for the first time. The city was divided, some held with Jews, but others were supporting Paul and Barnabas. Here also, the author of Acts calls them apostles for the first time.

The term ἀπόστολος occurs already in Herodotus, and means “messenger, ambassador, envoy.”⁴ It is a derivative from the verb ἀποστέλλω—“sending off or away.”⁵ The term ἀπόστολος is related with the Jewish conception of *shaliah*, namely the representative person or group of people sent for a special task. The *shaliah* followed the instructions of the sender. The authority of an apostle was nothing else than the authority of the person who sent him for the mission.

It can be concluded from Paul's letters and the narrative of apostolic history that Paul considered himself an apostle sent to Jews and Gentiles. Although in a letter to Galatians, he states:

“On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the Gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the Gospel for the circumcised (for he who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the Gentiles)” (Gal 2:7-8).

⁴ Herodotus, *Historiae*, 1,21,4.

⁵ Euripides, *Iphigenia Aulidensis*, 688.

Paul uses a rhetorical formula to emphasize his special calling to those who are outside the circumcision community. Paul is not only an apostle sent only to the Gentiles but sent to preach the Gospel to all.

1.5. Summary

This chapter describes the basic elements of the apostolate understood by Paul as a call to preach the Gospel that accepts everyone. The vocation of Paul as an apostle was a process that lasted like Jeremiah's "from conception." During the *λειτουργία* the Holy Spirit called for Saul and Barnabas to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 13:2).

Setting out on the road, they preached the *kerygma*, the basis of faith, the *regula fidei* on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The apostolicity is the transmitting the *kerygma* forward. The proclamation of the apostolic Gospel is itself apostolic and makes church apostolic. The mark apostolicity is based on the *kerygma* and according to the *kerygma*, church has to be always reformed—*Ecclesia semper reformanda est*. The apostolic mission—proclamation of the inclusive interpretation of the *kerygma*—was controversial at the time because it was still not known whether to take pagans to the church or whether they must go through the initiation process, becoming proselytes first.

Paul coined his inclusive theology based on faith in Jesus Christ, uniting him with all ritual, legal, ethnic and even gender boundaries. Paul's teaching hit the resistance of the conservatives who questioned Paul's apostolate. However, he boldly defended his apostolate. The most important sign of the apostolate was his work among the Gentiles, the congregations formed and the Gospel proclaimed gave testimony of Paul's apostolicity.

Paul's mission would have been impossible if it were not for his colleagues, men and women among them. The Holy Spirit worked through Paul and his coworkers and without her powerful activity in the hearts and minds the mission of the church would not be fulfilled. What is worth to notice in the analysis of the role of women in the church—some of them are also called apostles. Therefore, the apostolicity is not only mark of the men's part of the church but the church as whole. The mission of the church is to deconstruct ethnical and gender boundaries and give new meaning to the life in the perspective of the death and resurrection of Christ.

CHAPTER 2

LUTHER'S ADAPTIVE THEOLOGY

2.0. Introduction

In this chapter, I will describe the crisis of apostolicity in the late Middle Ages and Luther's response to the situation. In his program of church reform, Luther made the doctrine of justification by grace through faith as a foundation of his theology. From it come further implications on ecclesiology and sacramentology.

In this part, the reformer's ecclesiology will be described, while in the second part, the liturgical one, the sacramentology of Luther will be described in the context of the reform of the mass.

The concept of justification by grace through faith is inclusive, which I will prove on the example of Luther's writings. Luther struggled with the question of exclusivism in the field of ecclesiology, his conclusions were later developed by ecclesiological projects in the Evangelical-Reformed, or Calvinist and Puritan interpretation. The question is whether the reformer from Wittenberg wanted to embrace such a direction?

2.1. Crisis of the Apostolicity in the Late Middle Ages

In medieval cathedral churches, the entrance and the facade were decorated by sculptures of the apostles, not only to describe biblical stories about the human origin, prophets, life of Jesus and salvation in his suffering, but also to emphasize that the church

is grounded on the apostolic teaching. The apostolic teaching was the criterion of faithfulness.¹

The entire structure of the church represented the apostolic faith and at the moment when the structure was disturbed by the political circumstances and the papal policy, then the question about the faithfulness of the Church to the apostolic Gospel appeared.

In the late Middle Ages, there appeared a question: who has the final authority in the doctrine and morality? As Marcus Wriedt points out, in order to understand Luther's ecclesiology, it is important to understand the question of ultimate authority of that time.² In the late Middle-Ages, theologians wrote several tracts entitled *De Ecclesia* to describe foundation and the church's apostolic authority.

Cheryl M. Peterson noticed that Luther was worried that the church declared itself as apostolic, but “do not feeding the Christian faithful with the promise of the Gospel in the midst of the various crises, economic, social, and spiritual.”³

In fact, the whole of Luther's theology was aimed to reform Church according to the apostolic doctrine on justification. At first, he thought that the pope was not aware of abuse in the Church, but when the pope ordered him to be silent, Luther faced the alternative: to remain apostolic or to be faithful to the authorities calling themselves the heirs of the apostles. As a consequence of this traumatic decision, Western Christianity was divided into many Protestant and Catholic organisms that started fought on doctrinal

¹ I am thankful to Professor Theodor Dieter for this imagine, who pointed it out once in the front of the cathedral church in Strasbourg, France.

² Marcus Wriedt, “Luther on Call and Ordination,” *Concordia Journal* 28, no. 3 (2002): 258.

³ Cheryl M. Peterson, *Who Is the Church?: An Ecclesiology for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 38.

differences. However, even at that time of the confessionalization there were ecumenical attempts from each side to create dialogue. Examples for that are characters like Johannes Kepler⁴ and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, who were seeking the reconciliation between the Roman Catholic church and Lutheran churches.

2. 2. Luther's Doctrine on Justification

Luther on the basis of his personal analysis of Psalms and exegesis of letter to the Romans, Luther came to conclusion that *iustitia Dei* is not God's wrath but the righteousness that is given to us in Christ.

While scholastics wondered if grace is given according to the will of a human being or on the basis of his merits Luther takes a different course in his theology, he focused on righteousness completely foreign to human beings (*iustitia aliena*). The righteousness, which man is never able to achieve on his own. This alien righteousness is the righteousness of Christ (*iustitia Christi*).

The *iustitia aliena* is given to the faithful, not because of merits or good deed, but because of God's grace. This reality is established by God alone and as Hans-Martin Barth in his book on Luther's theology states "against all appearances, what is real is what God declares valid through his grace! But only faith grasps this."⁵

It is possible only through God's Word which ensures us that in Christ we have salvation to those who believe. In consequence of that, Luther is coming to ecclesiological reflection and relation between church and Word of God.

⁴ For an illuminating discussion of Kepler's ecumenical hope for a capacious and tolerant church, see PhD dissertation of Aviva Rothman, *Far from Every Strife: Kepler's Search for Harmony in an Age of Discord* (Princeton: Princeton University, 2012), 297-353.

⁵ Hans-Martin Barth, *The Theology of Martin Luther: A Critical Assessment* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 172.

2.3. Luther's Ecclesiology

Luther stated, “thank God, a seven-year-old child knows what the church is, namely, holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of their Shephard.”⁶ For Luther, the church is foremost the creature of the Word (*creatura verbi*). Luther states “*ubi est verbum, ibi est Ecclesia*”—“where the word is, there is church.”⁷ The church is present not since Pentecost or the crucifixion but since the beginning of Creation. Therefore, the essence of the church is the Gospel, which saves and gives life in Christ—*Ecclesia enim creatura est Euangelli*.⁸ The Gospel is above the church and the church is a space for the Gospel. Where the Gospel is there is the church, is not a place—Wittenberg or Rome. The church is result of God's activity among people.

Luther expressed his views in his concept of visible and invisible church. The visible church is according to him the institution, the building, the bishops and ministers. The invisible church is spiritual, internal Christendom, even beyond concessional boundaries so to say. Because, according to Luther, no one can either see or feel the holy church, nor anyone can say: “See, here or there it is! For what one believes one can neither see nor feel . . .”⁹

Luther concluded that unity and apostolicity is not external phenomena. When the Nicaea-Constantinople Creed is confessing “the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church” it does not mean that “I believe in the Holy Spirit, one holy Roman church, the communion of Romans.”¹⁰ For Luther, these marks of the church—one, holy, catholic,

⁶ Cf. Hans-Martin Barth, *The Theology of Martin Luther: A Critical Assessment* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 280; *The Book of Concord*, 315, with allusion to John 10:3.

⁷ WA 39/2, 176, 8-9.

⁸ WA 2, 430, 6-7.

⁹ LW 39,22 (WA 7,684, 28-31).

¹⁰ LW 39, 67, 75 (WA 6,300, 34-35).

and apostolic—are prescription of eschatological reality, the Holy Spirit is working on the church to create this reality but church lives in constantly tension between the presence and future.

For Luther apostolic does not mean an historical succession of bishops but succession of faith and at the same time clear reference to the statements of Scripture.¹¹ But not whole Scripture as a book is apostolic and holy, the Scripture is apostolic as the living testimony on Christ and his death. The most important mark of the church is the Word of God which is Gospel of Christ. According to Luther, the statement “*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*” means “*extra praedicationem Evangelii nulla salu.*”¹²

2.4. Problem of Exclusivity

Hans-Martin Barth notices “it appears that Luther was tempted to consider the model of an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, a special grouping of those who seriously wanted to be Christians.” In a sermon in 1523, Luther states that everyone knows to believe and that faith is “kind of vessel that can contain it.” Luther states that only true believers should be assembled separately.¹³ That might mean Luther was considering his conception of church on the basis of *devotion moderna* and the revival movements in the late Middle Ages.

In the preface to the “German Mass” of 1526, Luther writes that because of the lack of knowledge of the Gospel in the church, there are people who do not know Gospel and are like pagans or “Turks” but there is another sort of people:

¹¹ Hans-Martin Barth, *The Theology of Martin Luther: A Critical Assessment* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 282.

¹² “Outside the church there is no salvation”; “outside the preaching of the Gospel there is no salvation.” Barth, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 307.

¹³ Cf. Barth, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 282; WA 12, 485, 4-5.

But those who seriously want to be Christians and who profess the Gospel with hand and mouth, should sign-in with their names and meet alone in some house to pray, to read, to baptize, to receive the sacrament and to do other Christian works. According to this order, those who do not lead Christian lives could be known, reprovved, corrected, excluded, or excommunicated, according to the rule of Christ in Matt. XVIII.¹⁴

Has it been put into practice? There is no hard evidence for that. Hans-Martin Barth suggests that this was an early stage in the development of Luther's views on ecclesiology, and the reformer later withdrew from this exclusivism. This, however, was quite effective in the period of Lutheran orthodoxy when Anabaptists, Calvinists and Roman Catholics were disputed by Lutherans.

The exclusivism of orthodoxy should be interpreted in the context of the time of 16th century European society. The creation of national churches and religious wars led to the ecclesiastical fragmentation. These structures were defending their identity and the rights to the truth. When the period of pietism came, *ecclesiola in ecclesia* served to keep faith and cultivate a pious life according to the Scriptures.

Summarizing, from the analysis of Luther's ecclesiology, it must be said that Luther encouraged the pious life and organization of prayer groups for those who have already known the reviving power of the Gospel. However, his reform was primarily

¹⁴ LW 53, 64 (WA 19,75, 18-21); cf. Martin Luther and Dirk G. Lange, *Church and Sacraments*, edited by Paul W Robinson, Hans Joachim Hillerbrand, Kirsi Irmeli Stjerna, and Timothy J Wengert, Annotated Luther, Volume 3 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016),

aimed at proclaiming the Gospel to those who had never heard of it before: “So far it is no question yet of a regularly fixed assembly wherein to train Christians according to the Gospel: but rather of a public allurements to faith and Christianity.”¹⁵ This missional character of Martin Luther’s ecclesiology is profound because according to Cheryl Peterson that church model is more inclusive than reformed one.¹⁶

2.5. Summary

The medieval church experienced a crisis and lost its credibility. She was more like an institution with hierarchy, power, and money than the place where the Gospel of Christ was preached. Luther strongly opposed this state of affairs and called for the renewal of religious life based on the doctrine of justification. The crisis of the church consisted in the declaration that she was apostolic, but she lacked apostolic teaching:

And yet we confess that in this life many hypocrites and wicked men, mingled with these, have the fellowship of outward signs, who are members of the Church according to this fellowship of outward signs, and accordingly bear offices in the Church [preach, administer the Sacraments, and bear the title and name of Christians]. Neither does the fact that the Sacraments are administered by the unworthy detract from their efficacy, because, on account of the call of the Church, they represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons.¹⁷

Philip Melancthon and Martin Luther based their ecclesiology on the doctrine of justification by grace through faith. This is an inclusive doctrine, not based on how much one owns, what education one has, and what the state represents. Salvation has become a re-participation for everyone who believes in the Word of God.

¹⁵ LW 53, 64 (WA 19,75, 18-21).

¹⁶ Cheryl M. Peterson, *Who Is the Church?: An Ecclesiology for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013).

¹⁷ Philip Melancthon, *The Defense of the Augsburg Confession*, Art. VII, 28.

The Church, therefore, is not a specific place, it is “an event of the Word.” There is the Church where the Gospel is proclaimed and the sacraments are celebrated, which are the visible Word of God—the promise of eternal life.

Luther was tempted by a conception of exclusive church limited only to those who believe. However, he stated that no one can either see or feel the holy church, nor anyone can say: “See, here or there it is! For what one believes one can neither see nor feel.”¹⁸

Therefore, we cannot judge where exactly who is—whether in the church or outside it. The task remains to preach the Gospel and create space for the Church. There is a church where the Gospel is preached—it is not limited to any group of people meeting in secret, but it is a place where people participate in the meal and hear to the Gospel. That we could consider as the mission of the church—to invite people but also to go to people with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ LW 39,22 (WA 7,684, 28-31).

CHAPTER 3

NIETZSCHE'S CRITIQUE OF CHRISTIANITY

3.1. Why Nietzsche?

There are several reasons why it is important to juxtapose the criticism of Friedrich Nietzsche with the issue of the apostolicity of the church and her mission. The first one concerns the figure of the German philosopher. He grew up in the spirit of German Protestantism, studied at theological faculty in Bonn, and was a child of the Enlightenment. However, he can be regarded as the first post-modern philosopher who approaches the matters of faith as a "free spirit," as he calls himself. At the same time, he reminds many people who say today "yes" to the faith, but they say "no" to the church.

Nietzsche was fascinated by Buddhism and understood this religion as a further stage of development beyond Christianity. He calls Buddhism "religion for races that have become kind, gentle and over-spiritualized." His juxtaposition has an aim to deconstruct Christianity in the very soft spots of Christian theology, namely the suffering and the meaning of sacrament. His philosophical contribution on suffering is formulated in this chapter, and his critique of sacrament will be presented in the second part of this paper.

3.2. German Society in the 19th Century and the Life of Friedrich Nietzsche

American historian and liturgist, Frank Senn noticed that Nietzsche saw in the 19th century, the country of Germany collapsing into moral abyss as a result of its “functional atheism.” The wars, the imperial oppression and colonization became gods of Western civilization. So far, that actions of will become beyond good and evil. The Protestant relativism reached the highest point and out of the hollow “last man” would emerge the “superman.”¹

Friedrich Nietzsche came from Eastern Germany, was born 1844 in Röcken, near Leipzig, in the Prussian Province of Saxony. He grew up in the Protestant church and his family represented the traditions of Swabian Lutheran religiosity, which was characterized by closed individualist interpretation of the Bible.

It is not known what prompted him to study theology, but it is known that after reading the book “*Das Leben Jesu. Kritisch bearbeitet*” by David Friedrich Strauss, he resigned from theological studies and began studying antique philology at the University of Leipzig. It is tempting to describe him as “atheist” or “men of the lack of faith. He was a convert, a person who experienced drastically “*meatanoia*” just as the Apostle Paul and Martin Luther did. He could be even considered as an apostle of postmodernism.

The theological context of Nietzsche’s critique is at first Protestant religion and streams of Lutheran theology—Pietism and theological liberalism. In the political context, Nietzsche faced the Prussian imperialism. He readily admitted to Polish roots because it was a kind of manifestation against the Germans and their culture, which he

¹ Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), 694.

regarded as fallen.² Nietzsche was critical of Democratism and gender equality. He regarded Christianity as the religion of women, or those weaker beings. The ideologies like Socialism, Puritanism, Feminism were for him degenerated forms of democracy, and examples of endless struggles of quantity against quality—the weak and timorous against the strong and enterprising. While, Nietzsche supported more quality than quantity.³

The German philosopher did not feel well in the society of those times. Henry Luis Mencken rightly stated that Nietzsche was, in fact, a Greek born two thousand years too late.⁴ Actually, his way of thinking was Hellenistic. In 1868, Nietzsche was offered an extraordinary professorship at the cathedral of classical philology at the University of Basel. The official appointment took place in February 1869, based on the work already published, before the doctorate, without any examinations and habilitation formalities. Nietzsche was then less than 25 years old. On May 28, 1869, he gave his first lecture: “Homer and classical philology.”⁵

Influenced by the Schopenhauer’s writings, Hölderin's poetry, and Wagner's music, he decided to become a philosopher. In 1872, he published the book “The Birth of Tragedy, Hellenism and Pessimism,” in which he laid out his concepts of the Apollonian and Dionysian dichotomy.

² "Ich selbst bin immer noch Pole genug, um gegen Chopin den Rest der Musik hinzugeben" (“For my own part, I have still enough of the Pole left in me to let all other music go, if only I can keep Chopin.” Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, Art 7, in: Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Aaron Ridley, and Judith Norman, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

³ Henry Luis Mencken, “Introduction,” in Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, translated by H. L. Mencken (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1923), 25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁵ Andreas Urs Sommer, "Friedrich Nietzsche Als Basler Philosoph," *Philosophie in Basel: Prominente Denker Des 19. Und 20. Jahrhunderts / Hrsg. Von Emil Angehrn ... [et Al.]* S. 32-60 (2011).

In 1883, he published “the book for everyone and for nobody”—“Thus speak Zarathustra,” *opus vitae* of Nietzsche. Written in 1888 “Antichrist” and “Ecce homo” are a continuation of the philosopher’s thought contained in “Zarathustra.”

In the final period of Nietzsche’s life, the constantly present disease finally turned into an insanity which has not been fully explained. He died in Weimar on August 25 of 1900, in the *fin de siècle*.

3.3. Nietzsche’s Critique of the *Kerygma*

In his book “Antichrist,” Nietzsche does not write about apostolicity directly. However, if we define apostolicity as the truthfulness of the church and also credibility of Christian teaching, Nietzsche criticizes Christian religion aiming in to this issue. His critique is particularly focused on the person of Apostle Paul and the Christian *kerygma*.

The German philosopher criticized the Apostle Paul. According to Nietzsche, Paul was the one, who has infected this religion the most effectively. “Antichrist” classifies Christianity as one of the underground cults—mystery religions in which the faith in the immortal soul was the key. According to Nietzsche, Christianity surpassed all underground cults thanks to Paul’s genius.⁶

What could be in Christian liturgy so disgusting for this philosopher? Like, already it was said, in the *kerygma* the most decadent was belief in everlasting life and resurrection. Paul’s turning from the Jewish religion of life, to the Christian religion of death was for Nietzsche completely nihilistic. According to ancient patterns, by those this German philosopher was fascinated, the life on the earth is the most significant. For him, immortality is “the vast lie:”

⁶ Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 61.

When the centre of gravity of life is placed not in life itself, but in “the beyond”—in nothingness—then one has taken away its centre of gravity altogether. The vast lie of personal immortality destroys all reason, all-natural instinct—henceforth, everything in the instincts that is beneficial, that fosters life and that safeguards the future is a cause of suspicion. So, to live that life no longer has any meaning: this is now the “meaning” of life.”⁷

According to Nietzsche, Paul led Christianity to these greatest abominations because he created the church from underground religions, rejected people, villains, simpletons and social pariahs—“*chandalas*.” According to Nietzsche, Christianity is the most disgusting of mystery religions. It focuses on death, on nihilism, it appeals to life after life without caring about the existential here and now and it must be destroyed.⁸

Christianity is called the religion of pity—Pity stands in opposition to all the tonic passions that augment the energy of the feeling of aliveness: it is a depressant. A man loses power when he pities. Through pity that drains upon strength which suffering works has multiplied a thousandfold. Suffering is made contagious by pity; under certain circumstances, it may lead to a total sacrifice of life and living energy—a loss out of all proportion to the magnitude of the cause (—the case of the death of the Nazarene).”⁹

Therefore, Nietzsche wanted to create a project based on ancient culture, faithful to the ideals of strength and power. He wanted to deny the credibility of Christianity, showing a rational lack of its foundations.

3.5. The Revaluation of All Values

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Christianity took over from Judaism and its oppression system the terms such as “sin,” “temptation,” “atonement,” “will of God.” According to Nietzsche, Christianity used the terms already present in antiquity, and gave them a new disgusting meaning.

The priest devalues nature, he desecrates it: this is the price of his existence.—Disobedience to God, which is to say to the priest, to “the law,” now acquires the name “sin”; the means of “reconciling yourself with God” are expected, the means of guaranteeing an even more fundamental subjugation to the priests: the priest is the only one who can “redeem” (. . .) Highest proposition: “God forgives those who do penance”—in plain language: those who subordinate themselves to the priest.¹⁰

Nietzsche criticizes the Christian concept of penance. In further liturgical analysis I present his critique of the Eucharist but here it is important to notice that sacraments for German philosopher are not a means of grace (like classical Lutheran theology says) but they are means of priestly oppression. What is interesting, Luther makes also this critique in “The Babylonian Captivity of the Church.”

Nietzsche is not saying about apostolicity but more about priesthood, because he is referring to a wider spectrum. The oppression of priests and the oppression of the church have reached the highest state of decadence. In his famous passage from “Antichrist” he is describing himself and his adherents as “free spirits” and is saying that the whole pathos of humanity was against them—“Every “thou shalt: has been directed against us. . . . Our objectives, our practices, our silent, cautious, distrustful nature—all of this seemed totally unworthy and despicable.”¹¹

The thinker criticized German philosophers such as Kant who justified Christianity with the moral principles contained in it and also Schleiermacher who talked

¹⁰ Ibid., 24.

¹¹ Ibid., 11.

about faith as “absolute dependence.”¹² Nietzsche states that they acted like “little females,” they thought that “beautiful feelings”¹³ constitute already an argument, that a “heaving bosom” is God’s bellows, and that the conviction is a criterion of truth. These treatments Nietzsche calls “falling for your own forgeries.”¹⁴

Nietzsche, comparing Christianity to Buddhism, criticizes Christians for their envy, for their lack of forgiveness, for the idea of the Last Judgment, which is the denial of the values which Christ lived. Buddha in this confrontation, focuses on the core of human existence. Instead of sin, Buddhism focuses on suffering and proposes rational solutions.

The revaluation of values according to Nietzsche is to break with the narrative of suffering and focus on life. We are to accept natural drives instead of stopping them with a set of rules and “moral” laws that are decadent and nihilistic. In his summary, he calls:

I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct for revenge for which no expedient (i.e., A means of attaining an end, especially one that is convenient but considered improper or immoral) is sufficiently poisonous, secret, subterranean, petty—I call it the one immortal blemish of mankind. . . . And one calculates time from the dies nefastus¹⁵ on which this fatality arose—from the first day of Christianity! Why not rather from its last? From today? Revaluation of all values!¹⁶

3.6. Christ and Anti-Christ

¹² German: das Gefühl absoluter (“schlechthinniger“) Abhängigkeit.

¹³ Nietzsche is embedded in gender stereotypes, Nietzsche, Ridley, and Norman, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 10-11.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ *Nefastus*—a day in ancient Rome, on which secular activities were forbidden.

¹⁶ Ibid., 66.

While Nietzsche hates Christianity as a product of Paul and his disciples, he appreciates Jesus Christ himself. The potential of Christianity lays not in apostles but in the person of Jesus from Nazareth. He believes that Jesus was a rebel who was directly against the Jewish church, a rebel against “the social hierarchy,” and against “caste, privilege, order, formula.” Jesus was against “everything priestly or theologian-like.” Jesus was a “holy anarchist.” He called out to the lowly people, the outcasts and the “sinners.” The Gospel was so provocative that Jesus would be banished to Siberia even at Nietzsche’s time. He died not for human’s guilt, but for his own guilt—because he was the archetype of “Übermensch.”¹⁷

Nietzsche deconstructs Christian theology saying that “nothing is less Christian than the ecclesiastical crudity of God as a person, of a kingdom of God that is yet to come, a kingdom of heaven in the beyond, a son of God as the second person in the Trinity. This is all (if you excuse the expression) one big fist in the eye.”¹⁸

According to Nietzsche the church dressed Jesus in the mythological language of antiquity. The whole idea of the Gospel is misunderstood. The “life after life,” the concept “above the earth,” “kingdom of God”—they are “the experience of the hearth, they are everywhere and nowhere.”¹⁹

The highest point of Christianity is in Jesus’s teaching and his attitude toward the ones who suffer. Miracles and angels are symbols, they are not important. They aim on life as it is. The degeneration of Christianity resulted from contact with underground cults and barbarism. This conclusion prevailed in the 19th century as proof that

¹⁷ Ibid., 25.

¹⁸ Ibid., 31.

¹⁹ Ibid., 32.

Christianity can still be saved and that pure forms can be found amid dirt and ecclesiastical corruption.

In his project, Nietzsche wanted to replace Christ/Christians/Christianity with something new, with a new form of values. Inspired by Buddhism and fondness for Schopenhauer, he tried to psychologize Jesus and teach him the shape of Dostoevsky's idiot; a holy innocent martyr of his ideas; someone like Christ, but still facing him; someone weak, but hence strong and invincible. Nietzsche's project has not been developed. The philosopher has gone mad.

3.7. Summary

Critique of Christianity did not destroy this religion. On the contrary there were many different answers to the allegations made by Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Feuerbach. In this chapter, I focused on Fryderyk Nietzsche, because of his impact on post-modernism.

In his book “Antichrist,” he accused Christianity of nihilism, pushing the problems of man's existence into life after death. He criticized the priests who cheat people with the doctrine of resurrection, heaven, hell, to control them through the sacramental system.

Nietzsche thought that his critique undermined credibility of the Christianity and apostolic teaching (the essence of the apostolicity). He concluded that *kerygma* has nothing to do with Christ's message and the Apostle Paul along with his co-workers made up *kerygma* to create priestly oppression. Martin Luther came to this conclusion through a different way. Namely, he recognized that priestly oppression has nothing to do with the *kerygma*—the apostolic message proclaimed in the Gospel. Luther, on the basis

of prayer and personal meditation on the Scripture, discovered a radical inclusive message that accepts everyone in Christ. At the time of resistance from the church hierarchy, Luther rebelled like Fryderyk Nietzsche against the institution of the church. His deconstructive theology lost this power of change in the moment of being stuck in the structures that Nietzsche hated so much several hundred years after Luther.

Nietzsche believed that Christianity as a mystery religion is gathering around itself weak, social pariahs. This inclusivism makes German philosopher furious, because only in his interpretation of the world, only the strong will survive. Christianity, as a religion of pity, must change or die a natural death in the face of changing times.

In the following chapters, I will present the conclusions of another philosopher, Peter Berger, and I will consider whether Christianity actually loses its credibility, as the philosopher from Röcken has prophesied.

There is still the question on the mission of the church in the front of the Nietzsche's critique. I will present it in the liturgical section, where I describe views of Lutheran and Roman-Catholic liturgical theologians.

CHAPTER 4

RELIGION AND ITS PLAUSIBILITY

4.0. Introduction

Peter Berger's analysis will allow us to move in our analysis of the apostolicity to the modern times. The twentieth-century perspective and the secularization process are necessary to introduce us to the problem of the church's credibility. Peter Berger, a well-known and respected sociologist of religion, formulated his conclusions in the book “The sacred canopy—Elements of a sociological Theory of Religion” which I used during the independent study at Luther Seminary in the Fall semester of 2018 under the supervision of Prof. Guillermo Hanson. I am very grateful to him for the consultations and the knowledge he gave me.

4.1. The Process of Secularization

Over half a century after Nietzsche's death, Peter Berger defined society as a dialectic phenomenon, a completely human product. Man produces himself in a world (through externalization, objectivation and internalization).¹ Religion is like social arrangements a part of socialization process, is human enterprise by which cosmos is established. In the process of socialization, the values are worshiped so profound that they are becoming sacred and with power, that the society could be related to them.

¹ Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 3.

Therefore, according to Berger, religion is nothing more than the farthest reach of man's self-externalization.² Man projects in his social process into the totality of being. Religion is the audacious attempt to conceive of the entire universe as being humanly significant. In the process of socialization, religion is transmitted through legitimating formulas. The rituals, symbols and patterns are used to create sufficient space for the legitimation. Also, legitimation may be further developed and transmitted in the form of myths, legends, or folk tales.³

Legitimations of religion create social order, and here Berger—just as Nietzsche—gives example of reincarnation and Hinduism, which as religion abolished the caste system in India and validated it theologically. The “*dharma*,” a social caste duty is relating the individual to the universal order of the universe. Therefore, it survived most of the radical reinterpretations of the latter's meaning. In China, the “*tao*” order is still included in the culture and social order, so deep that even the communist regime did not overcome it, but constructed on it economy and political order.

For Berger, the religious rituals are also important because of the process of “reminding.” The ritual makes present something sacred for those who participate in it. The rituals and words serve to recall the traditional meanings embodied in the culture and in societal tradition.⁴ For Berger, society needs legitimization especially in the “marginal situations.” These could be in individuum or in whole society.

In my opinion, Berger overestimates the role of dreams in the religion. He pointed out that “dreams and nocturnal visions were related to everyday life in a variety

² Ibid., 28.

³ Ibid., 31.

⁴ Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 41.

of ways—as warnings, prophecies, or decisive encounters with the sacred, having specific consequences for everyday life in a variety of ways” and “religion served to integrate these realities with the reality of everyday life (in contrast to our modern approach) by ascribing to them a higher cognitive status.”⁵ Wherein, the dreams-interpretors were on the margins of state religion. As in Greece, the oracles had a religious authority but were an out-of-state cult located in the polis and connected with offerings. The same is true in ancient Israel. Fairies and oracles were banned by the central religious authority in Jerusalem. If we consider the modern western society, we notice that the Church (religious institution) never interpreted dreams—*ex cathedra*—like shamans in primitive religions. Dreams and visions have lost their function far earlier than religion. Psychology (especially psychoanalysis) took the role of interpreter of dreams, which religion abounded thousands of years ago.

In addition to dreams, Berger considers “marginal situations” such as death. According to Berger, death cannot be avoided in any society, therefore religion takes the death as a reality to legitimate it in the sacred. Therefore, death is less terrible. Religion makes death more valuable, it is sometimes “a good death”—when somebody dies while retaining to the end a meaningful relationship with “the nomos.” “Nomos” is a law inside of society, it makes meaningful individuum to oneself and objectively meaningful in the minds of others.

War, natural disasters, social upheaval—these are for Berger some religious legitimations, which are necessary for religion. However, another representative of sociological approach to religion is Mark Chavez. Chavez stated that the September 11

⁵ Ibid., 43.

attacks only affected the religiosity of the Americans for a moment, the initial increased attendance at the services returned quickly to the state before the attacks.⁶

4.2. Church as a Social Structure

Berger points out that religion needs social structures, where its rules are taken as obviousness. The plausibility of the religion depends of the legitimation and protection of social structures. The individuum is located in social structures where some religion is binding and this world is truly real for the individuum. Berger calls it social-psychological dialectic and legitimations are designed to maintain these social structures of plausibility.⁷ The Berger's category of plausibility might be considered in the frame of Christian theology as an element of the apostolicity. Because the apostolicity was understood in the early church as the faithfulness to apostolic teaching, Berger's analysis might be helpful to understand the modern crisis of apostolicity, as the loss of the credibility of the church.

The elements of the apostolicity like "baptism, the Lord's Supper, the office of the keys, the call to ministry, public gathering for worship in praise and confession of faith, and the bearing of the cross as Christ's disciples"⁸ are according to Luther the marks through which the Holy Spirit creates the faith and the church. The process of secularization lies, among other things, on the reduced activity of the faithful in these rituals. Therefore, the secularization strikes the essential strings of apostolicity. Berger

⁶ Mark Chavez, *American Religion: Contemporary Trends* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 54.

⁷ Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 47.

⁸ Martin Luther, *On the Council and the Church* (LW 41,1 48-66).

proposes in that context sociological the term “plausibility” but through this term he means the credibility of the religious structures and its rituals.

In Berger’s interpretation of religion, the same human activity that produces society also produces religion, with the relation between the two products always being a dialectical one.⁹ The religion’s plausibility was maintained in Muslim and Christian worlds through education, scholarship, law, and protection of territorial limits. Protestantism destroyed in some stages these structures but also created new, many micro-worlds in national churches.

Berger considers the concept of theodicy, and is of the opinion that theodicy has a masochistic background. The pain of individuum becomes more tolerable when it is extended to religious meaning. The final form of masochism is when we let others control us—our belief and life. “I’m nothing—Her is everythin—and therein lies my ultimate bliss”—this, for Berger, is a formula in which lies the essence of the masochistic attitude. A man cannot accept aloneness and meaninglessness and therefore finds paradoxical meaning in religious self-annihilation.¹⁰ Therefore the theodicy answers the question of meaning and gives propose for the suffering, the eventual outcome of it is happiness in this world or in the next.¹¹

In my opinion, this has an important bearing on the issue of the *kerygma* and the content of the Gospel. If a secular person no longer receives the Gospel content in a masochistic manner (as Berger interprets), the church has a problem with maintaining social structures and loses confidence. *Kerygma* has in itself a kind of masochistic

⁹ Ibid., 48.

¹⁰ Ibid., 56.

¹¹ Ibid., 58.

content, namely the God is sacrificing himself for the people, as noted by Berger. If this “masochistic” content is a condition for maintaining social structures, then Christian religion as such has serious problems in the context of social changes and the loss of masochistic tendencies among people are bringing it is deconstruction.

A way of responding to this reconstructive force is the theology that is less akin to the masochistic suffering of Christ. Then, theology creates a perspective of fogging this aspect and melts the suffering of Christ in the mystery.

4.3. The Problem of Mystery in Christian Mass

For Weber and along with him, for Berger, the most radical rationalization of religion is conception of *karma-samsara*, because on the level of soteriology it concomitants theodicy. In the early stage of Buddhism, gods and demons and whole mythological cosmos is reduced to man, who behaves completely rational and somehow against emotions. There is no place for religious behaviors where emotions could be released. Subjectivity is connected with Hindu soteriology, as the Reformation did in Christianity. Also, in Reformation there are only a few rituals and they are not crucial for salvation. *Misterium* of the mass is eliminated, other mysteries are reviled to the layman, like the Bible in vernacular language.

However, Christianity, according to Berger, is full of masochistic theodicy, even Christology is essential a solution for the problem of theodicy. Christ as innocent God suffered and died. “Only such a sacrifice can relieve human suffering in the face of a severe God”—here Berger quoted Albert Camus “The rebel.”¹²

¹² Ibid., 76.

The American sociologist believes that the source of religion is suffering and an attempt to explain it is the theodicy. Berger assumes that the *kerygma*, apostolic teaching about Christ, may be an answer to the theodicy. However, in the face of a society that does not acknowledge suffering, the kerygma no longer responds to the sufferer's question.

Nietzsche thought that the problem lies elsewhere, that suffering is not something that should be compassionate, what to fight for. No, suffering shapes us and gives us strength like "what will not kill you will strengthen you." Christ seems as a "superman," the result of facing suffering. The church's babble, as Nietzsche calls it, is the vicious cycle that explains nothing, but only problems created by itself.

Secularization, according to Berger is not good or bad. It is a removal of territory or property from the control of ecclesiastical authorities. Berger noticed that the beginning of secularization occurred during the Reformation time, when Protestantism reduced religion to the text of Bible and eliminated the mystery, *misterium* and magic. The heaven was deprived of angels and saints, the radically transcendent God and the immanent man were left, that ultimately led to the statement "God died." This served as an introduction to secularization and "the disenchantment of the world."

4.4. The Loss of Plausibility

Christian theodicy of suffering lost its plausibility and opened the way for a variety of secularized soteriologies.¹³ Berger explains that it was possible because of process called "rationalization." Religion becomes privatized and dependent upon the

¹³ Some attempts to justify God in the face of the tragedy of Holocaust were the theodicies created by theologians of the 20th century, such as Emmanuel Levinas, Hans Jonas or Jürgen Moltmann.

decision of individuum—prince or local duke, and after that in consequence of the decision of lower classes. By the way, religion lost its defining function, there is no more common reality and common understanding what is good or bad, there is instead many sub-worlds, a piece of universal meaningless in some local churches and communities. Pluralistic situation is modern situation of religion.

Berger noticed, and after him also Harvey Cox, that religious institutions became marketing agencies, and there is competition between them when it comes to a religious and cultural offer.¹⁴

Berger and other sociologists perceive the ecumenical movement and other theological initiatives as a consequence of pluralistic infrastructure of modern religion. The churches provide their consumers what they need. That makes affinity of economic sphere with spiritual.

Harvey Cox pointed out that many of the mechanisms in our economy are reflecting religious elements. “Faith in the working of markets actually takes the form of a functioning religion, with its own priests and rituals, its own doctrines and theologies, its own saints and prophets, and its own zeal to bring its Gospel to the whole world and win converts everywhere.”¹⁵ He analyzed many economical elements which are common with religion, recalling encyclics of Pope Francis “*Evangelium Gaudium*” and “*Laudato Si,*” where we warned that we are hurtling toward climatic disaster, and accuses large corporations of overly trusting in the power of money.¹⁶ Cox shows that just like the church, the market has infallibility when it is efficient and has monopoly. The same, the

¹⁴ Ibid., 60.

¹⁵ Harvey Cox, *The Market as God* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

¹⁶ Ibid., 6.

Market is infallible only when is efficient: “Market efficiency means that the market is aware of all available information and uses it correctly.”¹⁷

4.5. Summary

The socio-theological analysis is important for my thesis because it describes background for liturgical changes and presents the problems which are facing the apostolicity.

This socio-theological part of my thesis presented the problem of credibility of the church. The apostolicity of the church was understood as the authentic mission of the church. The early church understood apostolicity also as the faithfulness of teaching and authenticity of proclaimed Gospel, which apostles have received from the Resurrected Christ.

The Apostle Paul reflected on apostleship and joined apostolicity with the proclamation of Christ to everyone. To make Christ known in the world Paul created theology of justification and unification with Christ. The boundaries like ethnical boundaries, religious boundaries, and gender boundaries become deconstructed by Pauline Christology. His theological project at the beginning was inclusive and welcoming, therefore Paul exposed himself to the criticism of his opponents who undermined Paul's apostolate.

Also, Friedrich Nietzsche criticized Paul saying that he created Christianity completely different from what Jesus was teaching. Christianity is a religion of *chandalas* and praises, the Christian God is like a spider and morality is more decadent than every other ethical system, because it is used for oppression. The priests according to Nietzsche

¹⁷ Ibid., 30.

control people through the sacraments and the repentance. Even if Nietzsche is referring to Protestantism in the nineteenth century, few generations before him, another German scholar, Martin Luther criticized the church and its hierarchy in very similar way.

The Reformer from Wittenberg noticed that church declares itself as apostolic, but the church had no apostolic teaching. The problem lay not in the Pauline theology, but in scholastic theology, apart from the Gospel. Luther wanted to restore the apostolic Gospel in his doctrine of justification by faith alone. This conception was very destructive for that time because it abolished the hierarchical system of the church. It gave access for layman to the Bible and to the individual interpretation of the text. Regardless of their social status or origin, everyone was seen equal before God. The peasant war and radical reformation, about which I did not write here in this place, were an extreme consequence of introducing this deconstructive concept into social life.

Modern sociologist Peter Berger, noticed that Reformation deconstructed Christian world into smaller units focused on the state boundaries. The individual is put in social structures where confession truly explains the world for the individual. Berger calls it social-psychological dialectic and legitimations are designed to maintain these social structures of plausibility. I call it in my thesis an element of the apostolicity.

Secularization is therefore, a natural process that started even before Reformation, but Reformation gave it very effective ignition. The credibility of the church is violated because the different points of views and different soteriologies are not explaining in a proper way the world as it is. Therefore, the churches need an ecumenical movement to centralize the theological conceptions and restore the credibility of the church. Searching for a common denominator in matters of salvation, ethics, ecology and

social justice. These are the tasks that stand in front of the churches. Not only to regain credibility, but also to proclaim Christ in a radical way and in accordance with the inclusive principles of the Gospel.

PART II

LITURGICAL APPROACH

CHAPTER 1

LITURGICAL THEOLOGY OF APOSTLE PAUL

1.0. Introduction

What is important for Pauline liturgical theology was already mentioned in chapter I of this thesis. The Gospel proclaimed by Paul was based on the simple *kerygma*—Jesus died and resurrected. Therefore, the law has no power, and circumcision is not necessary for salvation. The rituals from Jewish religion take on new meaning. For Paul, this release from Judaic, priestly, ethnical, and even gender structures is crucial. He based his theological project on the theology presented in the letter to the Galatians, and then extended it in his letter to the Romans. Paul decided to transmit his theological discovery, and adjusted liturgy accordingly. This aroused the opposition of some circles.

1.1. Greek Religion, Liturgy and Mysteries

The word “liturgy” comes from the Greek language, *λειτουργία* meant the public service performed by citizens at their own expense. The public service in the frame of the polis was for example preparing of the Olympic Games, preparation of the Olympic Games, warship, maintenance of the choir, organization of festivals. Gradually the meaning of the word evolved and meant the act of worship, especially in mystery religions.¹

In the New Testament the word *λειτουργία* appears 15 times, especially in the Hebrew Letter. It is referring to the cult in Old Testament (Lk 1:23; Hbr 1:7; Hbr 9:21; Hbr 10:11). Also, to the cult in Christian community (Acts 13:2—analyzed in chapter I; Phl 2:17; Hbr 8,2-6). And, what is maybe the most important in the New Testament liturgical theology, the word is referring also to submission to authorities (Rom 13:6).

Christian worship was practiced not only to commemorate the death and resurrection of Christ but also to gather all who stand in need of God’s Word. In the time of apocalyptic events such as military conflicts, Jewish riots, destroying of the temple, and rise of an absolute Roman regime, Christian assembly was a mysterious place where the promise of life was proclaimed.

Of course, the synagogue liturgy was structural basis for Christian liturgy, especially the readings of the Scripture and the prayer, the Sabbath meal, Passover and feasts of friendship—practiced in the Jewish diaspora. This influence was well researched

¹ Bogusław Nadolski, *Liturgika Fundamentalna*, vol. 1 (Poznań: Pallottinum, 1989), 9.

by many scholars, and there is no doubt that the synagogue liturgy influenced early Christianity.²

However, an impact on Christian liturgy had also the Greek social structure, and the elements of Greek-Roman spirituality. Ancient people need patterns, symbols, tangible elements to express their faith and in the frame of Christian nomenclature – to proclaim apostolic Gospel for the Nations. How far did the Greek religion shape the Christian liturgy?

The worship of the god Dionysus gave also a sense of contact with the deity. In this case, the ecstatic religious experience was achieved as a result of wine-making, sex abuse during theater performances, and a kind of carnival atmosphere. All this took place as part of official holidays organized by the state in honor of the god of wine.

The mystery religions might have had an impact on the Christianity. But the question is, if the Christianity was one of them—as Nietzsche states—is unsolved. Undoubtedly, there are connections between them, but when we approach Paul's theology closer than Nietzsche did, we can see a certain polemic with the Greek religion, not their complete adaptation.

In the following chapter, I will explain the liturgical theology of Apostle Paul and Martin Luther. Afterwards, Nietzsche's critique on Christian liturgy and the Roman-Catholic and Lutheran contributions to the aspects of that critique will be included.

² Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), 55-108.

1.2. Inclusivity and Its Opponents

As we know already, from part I of this thesis, Paul's controversial views on the Gentiles and their conversion caused a series of conflicts with his opponents. On the basis of Paul's letters, it can be said that Paul's opponents wanted to enforce the conversion of the law and circumcision on the converted Gentiles. When this did not happen, they began to undermine the sacraments administered by Paul and his teaching (I Cor 1:10-17).

Paul represented a more inclusive party in this discussion. He proclaimed the Gospel to everyone, which results from his theology described by me in chapter I and is reflected in the confession of Paul:

For though I have myself to be a servant unto all, that I can gain the more. And unto the Jews, I became as Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law; To them that are without law, that is without any law. To the weak became I weakened, I could not make the weak. And this I do for the Gospel's sake, that I might be a partaker with you (I Cor 9:19-23).

Despite the diversity of gifts, languages, and ethnicity, members of the congregation are justified on faith in Christ. The sacrament of baptism and the Holy Communion according to Paul are the signs of unity. Therefore, he emphasizes in his letters the doctrine of justification (Rom 1:17; Gal 2:15), the baptism (Rom 6:3; I Cor 1:10-17; I Cor 12:13, Gal 3:27), and the Holy Communion (I Cor 11:17-34).

Of course, other aspects of Christian liturgy are taken up by Paul, for example the question of spiritual gifts, the issue of women teaching men, prophecy, helping

widows and orphans, offering for the poor in Jerusalem, proper teaching, etc. However, all these problems are connected with his apostleship and the unity of the Church.

That shows significant inclusivity of Paul and his disciples. The liturgy was focused on simple things like: prayer and meal. The question about mysteries and their influence on Pauline theology is at the same time very important. Paul's opponents were from the Judeo-Christian group. They stoned him in Iconium, which shows that they were strictly attached to tradition and the Mosaic Law (Acts 13:50) but also in Corinthian church were opponents of Paul who undermine his apostleship.

1.3. The Sign of Apostleship—Christian Worship

One of the problems in Corinth was the lack of order during the worship service. Paul is describing in outline the liturgy in Corinth. On the basis of chapter 14 of the First Letter to the Corinthians, it can be stated that the early Christian liturgy was very specific. There were prophecies, speaking in tongues—glossolalia, meal with bread and vine and probably a lot of noise! The English Standard Version translates the fragment about people who came to the service the first time to experience Christian liturgy as such:

Foreign languages, then, are meant to be a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers, while prophecy is meant, not for unbelievers, but for believers. Now if the whole church gathers in the same place and everyone is speaking in foreign languages, when uneducated people or unbelievers come in, they will say that you are out of your mind, won't they? But if everyone is prophesying, when an unbeliever or an uneducated person comes in he will be convicted and examined by everything that's happening. His secret, inner heart will become known, and so he will bow down to the ground and worship God, declaring, "God is truly among

you! What, then, does this mean, brothers? When you gather, everyone has a psalm, teaching, revelation, foreign language, or interpretation. Everything must be done for upbuilding” (ESV I Cor 14:22-26).

Paul is writing in v. 22 about sign—σημειον—this word is also in II Cor 12:12, when he means “sign of an apostle,” which testifies his apostleship among Corinthians. Moreover, he declares that “tongues”—γλωσσαι—are not for believers but for unbelievers. They have missional potential. The “uneducated” or the “unbelievers” are called by Paul as “ιδιωται” and “απιστοις.” These people are not yet initiated to Christian liturgy might be at the Christian assembly for the first time and they do not comprehend what is happening.

The word “ιδιωται” is interesting, because from this word comes the word “idiot” in the English language. However, at that time this word meant someone uninstructed, unskilled. These people, seeing the Christian liturgy, could say or think that Christians are going crazy. Paul is asking: “will they not say that you are out of your minds?” (I Cor 14:23).

In that question occurs the word “μαινεσθε”, which means “to rage,” “to be mad.” It is important to note that the title of the god Dionysus—“μαινολης” comes from this word. Dionysus was a god of furious mysteries, during which a huge amount of wine was drunk, dancing and falling into a trance; the participants were obsessed with possession. The purpose of this was to unite with the deity and achieve a state of daze.

Paul notices that when a stranger comes to the Christian ritual, this person is “convicted by all, he is called to account by all;” in Greek the phrase is: “η ιδιωτης ελεγχεται υπο παντων ανακρινεται υπο παντων.” The word “ἐλέγχω” means also “to

expose, convict, reprove.” Therefore, the behavior of Christians during the liturgy was so strange that anyone who was not in the know would be recognized by Christians.

What is important in this fragment that Paul calls “τα κρυπτα της καρδιας”—“the secrets of the heart” of the person who came to the liturgy as outsider and “ιδιωται.” These secrets of heart become—“γινεται”—manifested—“φανερα”, and that person “is falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.” We do not know what is the secret of heart, that Paul is writing about. However, it is significant that the Christian worship is so powerful that the person from outside, who came to this assembly is struck by the ritual, so much deep, that is falling on his face and is starting to worship God with others. The Christian liturgy, and the gathered assembly makes it clear that God is really in the midst of them.

1.4. The Role of Women at the Assembly in Corinth

It is not prescription, but it is description how the liturgy was appearing. Paul is writing about the liturgy as it is at his time, and after that in the verses 26-40 we have passage as it should be according to Paul. There is speech about the regulation about how many interpreters of glossolalia is supposed to be at the assembly, and how the women should behave during the worship. As we know, these regulations probably never have been implemented in Corinth. They are Paul's *pia desideria*, who between the letter to the Galatians and the First Letter to the Corinthians probably changed his mind about the role of women in the church. The proof of this is the comparison between Gal 3:28 and I Cor 12:13:

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28).

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (I Cor 12:13).

In the letter to the Galatians, Paul is saying inclusively that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, and there is neither male nor female. But in I Cor Paul is not saying that there is no male nor female. Has something happened that Paul in I Cor is shrinking his inclusive language that occurs in the Galatian letter?

The fragment about structure of liturgy that according to Paul should be applied in Corinth is inspired by rabbinic understanding of relation between men and women. Paul is writing that “ου εστιν ακαταστασιας ο θεος”—“God is not [the author] of confusion” and therefore “women should keep silence”:

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also said the law” (I Cor 14:34).

Is Paul referring to Genesis 3:16, when God is saying to woman: “and he (man) shall rule over thee?” Therefore, is here an inconsequence of Apostle Paul? Why he is returning back from Christ to the Law? Or another law? Law of the city Corinth?

It seems that Paul is not referring to Genesis 3:16. Because this fragment has different wording in the Septuagint. First of all, Paul urges women “to be silent,” but not “to speak.” It would seem contradictory to I Cor 11:5, where women are prophesizing and praying:

“But any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head—it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved” (I Cor 11:5).

Paul rather means that women should be “subordinate” and “ask husbands at home” (I Cor 14:35f). Maybe the women at the assembly were “chattering” and were disrupting through it the liturgy?³ As Harm Hollander also notices: “The prohibition of women's speech in the assembly is wholly in agreement with the Hellenistic depreciation of women speaking in public.”⁴ The social structure of that time required that and was even natural that women are not speaking publicly, but take care of house and children. Plutarch is using the same word as Paul to express role of the women in the society, namely υποτασσεσθαι—to subordinate: “If the women subordinate themselves to their husbands, they are commended. . . . [C]ontrol ought to be exercised by the man over the woman”

Therefore, Paul is going along with customs of Greek-Roman society, but is turning at some point and saying that “as the law says.” As Harm Hollander points out:

“In an attempt to persuade his readers to prohibit women from speaking in the Christian assembly, Paul was surely correct in referring to “the law” in general. Of course, he might have thought of the Jewish law in particular, but only because he was a Jew and was most acquainted with that particular code. But the reference itself is to the law in general. And it was most probably understood this way by Paul's readers in Corinth.”

³ Harm Hollander, “The Meaning of the Term “law” (νομος) in 1 Corinthians,” *Novum Testamentum* 40, no. 2 (1998), 117-35. doi:10.1163/1568536982613043.

⁴ See, e.g., Plutarch, *Numa* 25, 9-10 (Vitae par. 77 AB); *Coniugalia praecepta* 31-32 (Mor. 142).

Paul's wish was to create worship more structuralized than it was till now in Corinth. The assembly was gathering for prayer, prophecy, glossolalia, and meal. Their meeting looked like mysteries of Dionysus, and Paul knows that describing the liturgy in the terms drawn from the Greek religion.

The position of women in the I Cor 14:34 is not descriptive, namely Paul is not describing actual worship in Corinth, but is calling the Corinthians to introduce some order according to social structures of that time. Still, Corinthians were in their liturgy very disruptive. They were gathering around their liturgy described by Paul in I Cor 14:24-25. He is writing from the perspective of "outsiders" who comes to the assembly and is surprised by the spiritual gifts of the community. Apostolicity is manifesting itself in the openness of the community to these outsiders.

Apparently, Paul wanted to create liturgy which corresponds with social structures of that time. The testimony to this is his wish that women would not gossip or talk during services, but would be submissive to their husbands. Have his recommendations ever come into force in a church in Corinth? It is unknown.

In this place, it is important to mention that Paul had many co-workers: Silvanus (1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1), Sosthenes (1 Cor 1:1), and Timothy (2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1, Phm 1:1). Timothy (2 Cor 4:17; 16:10; 2 Cor 1:19; Phil 2:19; 1 Thess 3:1-10) and Titus (2 Cor 7:5-16; 12:18). Among them were also women, for example the deaconess Phoebe (Rom 16:1-3) and Prisca (Rom 16:3-5a; 1 Cor 16:19). In the list of personal greetings in Romans, Paul mentioned also a couple, Andronicus and Junia, who are said to be "prominent among the apostles" (Rom 16:7). Junia is a female name thus it seems to support the possibility of women apostles.

CHAPTER 2

MARTIN LUTHER'S REFORM OF THE LITURGY

2.0. Introduction

The theology of justification and Luther's view on ecclesiology were described in the chapter I. In this place the liturgical reform of Martin Luther will be presented with an emphasize on Luther's understanding of apostolicity and the task of ministry.

2.1. Liturgy in the Middle Ages

The mass in the Middle-Ages was an exclusive event. The language of the mass was Latin, and only the most educated people understood the words of the liturgy. The choir had sung the songs and people were gathering in the huge Gothic and Romanesque buildings. Let us imagine the view on the interior of these outstanding medieval churches. Extremely high nave walls, colorful rose windows, vault ceiling, massive columns, decorated gates and soaring windows reaching the sky. Far away at the end of the nave is the presbyterium, altar, and tabernacle.

From there, the priests celebrate mass for the deceased. They are the main actors of the performance, they make mysterious rituals, they utter incomprehensible words, they participate in the celestial event that is celebrated for the living and the dead.

Medievalist, Susan Karant-Nunn in her book “The Reformation of ritual” points out that the words “*hoc est corpus meum*” and “*Hic est sanguis meus*” become understood in Middle-Ages as magical words of “hocus pocus.” The mass was a priestly act, the position of men in the church as the functional link between God and the community was their “priestly privilege.”¹

Whereas, Edward Kilmartin states that the Latin word *missa* was used from the middle of the fifth century.² The original meaning of this word was “dismissal”, the “sending.” The priest who concluded the liturgy was saying “*ite, missa est*”—“go, the assembly is dismissed,” or “go, and be the missionary.”³ People gathered at the assembly did not understand the sending and they call whole liturgical event as “*missa*”—“the mass.”

The meaning of the words, the meaning of the sacraments, and the meaning of the whole assembly got lost in the mystery of the event. The liturgical experience was secret and quite exclusive.

But for Luther the sacraments, the preaching, the prayers all have to proclaim the Gospel which is the Word of God. The liturgy needs to be understandable in the vernacular language and it must be cleaned from the elements which are not preaching Christ.

2.2. Preaching of God’s Word

¹ Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*, 114.

² Edward J. Kilmartin and Robert J. Daly, *The Eucharist in the West: History and Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998).

³ Anscar J. Chupungco, *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: The Eucharist, Volume 3 of Handbook for Liturgical Studies* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 3.

The religious experience of Martin Luther might have been in such a place described above. More often we imagine Luther as a professor, sitting in his monastery tower and working on the texts of the Holy Bible. His miraculous discovery was also described by himself as the moment in which he felt like a newborn and entered the paradise through the gates.⁴ The gates of heaven in late Middle-Age paintings were very often depicted as the gates to the cathedral churches.⁵

Luther confesses that he has wondered day and night about what God's righteousness means. It cannot be ruled out that this question also took him during daily prayer and worship. In the study of Luther, he is treated individually, tried to psychologize his character, tried to interpret it from the perspective of his relationship with his father, from the perspective of his explosive character but also the doctrine he formulated. This is, however, not the case of this thesis but it is important to notice it in the introduction to Luther's theology.

When it is going about apostolicity one significant fragment of Luther's writings could be used as example of Luther's opinion on apostolicity:

“Whatever does not teach Christ is not yet apostolic, even though St. Peter or St. Paul does the teaching. Again, whatever preaches Christ would be apostolic, even if Judas, Annas, Pilate, and Herod were doing it.”⁶

However, Luther was not interested in apostolicity as such. The same liturgy was taken care of by that professor of biblical studies, only because the situation

⁴ WA 54, 186,8f.

⁵ Cf. Hans Memling's painting "The Last Judgment."

⁶ *Deutsche Bibel* 7 WA 385.

demanded it. His main point of interest was the Word of God and he brought his ecclesiology and liturgical theology from him.

As it was said in chapter I, the Word of God for Luther is primarily not the Scripture, it is liturgical peaching, the oral proclamation of living Christ who comes to us and in the worship. The essence of Lutheran liturgy is presented on the Wittenberg Altarpiece of Lucas Cranach the Elder. Where the Word of God is proclaimed in the sermon and given to the people through sacraments. They are so called “the visible Word of God” and they are realizing in the community.

The context of worship is the context of apostolicity and the mission of the church is realizing in the frame of the Christian liturgy. Therefore, after the cleaning up Christian theology Luther came to the practical elements of Christian life – the catechesis and the reform of mass.

2.3. Communion of Saints

Martin Luther writes about sacrament a different way than scholastics. He departs the logical-Aristotelian narrative and focuses on Biblical and soteriological aspects of Holy Communion.

Luther is writing about a city to which one belongs on the basis of a safe-conduct given by grace. All the saints—for Luther—are members of God’s city. People through faith and sacrament are incorporated into Christ’s body like to the city in the frame of citizenship.⁷

⁷ Martin Luther, “The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods,” in *Luther’s Works*, ed. E. Bachmann (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1960) vol. 35, 50-51.

Luther points out that being ex-communicated means being out of the community. Today, people do not care if they are out of Church. But actually, many people are looking for a community, which provides trust, help, and care—all these things are related to Luther's view, what communion is really about. There we can note a missiological potential of Luther's understanding of Holy Communion.

Luther states: "to receive this sacrament in bread and wine is nothing else than to receive a sure sign of this fellowship and incorporation with Christ and all saints."⁸ Being in fellowship with Christ and all saints is sharing with them sins, issues, sorrowing and suffering and they are sharing with us: support, protection, help, and freedom.

This sacrament is for us a ford, a bridge, a door, a ship, and a stretcher, by which and in which we pass from this world into eternal life. Luther writes: a man who does not trust the sacrament is like a man who is so timid that he does not trust the ship, and so he must remain and never be saved because he will not embark and cross over the sea!

Of course, our guilty conscience⁹ assails us, and remember us our past sins, but through the trust in Communion, with Christ and all saints we could be ensured and certain that "love and support are given to us."

Luther noticed pastoral aspect of Holy Communion, he said that sacrament is for those, who need "strength and comfort, who have timid hearts and terrified consciences, and who are assailed by sin, or have even fallen into sin." Therefore, the sacrament is not only for the saints and those who fell strong in faith and works. The sacrament is for those who have lack of strength, and lack of faith, and lack of good deeds. "This food

⁸ Ibid., 51.

⁹ Ibid., 53.

demands only hungry souls and is shunned by none so greatly as by a sated soul which does not need it”—Luther quoting St. Augustin.

Luther is not contradictory to Augustin and to Thomas Aquinas, because he does not describe the phenomena of the Holy Sacrament in terms of scholastic theology. He is, rather, a priest who emphasizes the meaning and effects of being part of Community with Christ and all saints. This community has to be open! Therefore, at the end of his sermon, he gives an example of brotherhoods—groups of monks gathered in closed communities and separated from the world—such brotherhood is not a true community, because, for Luther, the community, fellowship, and brotherhood have to be grounded in love.¹⁰

The word “koinonia”—community comes from the word κοινος, which means “impure,” therefore in the community is going about mess and impurities that we share with Christ, who saves us and purifies us by his blood. Luther noticed it perfectly! His liturgical project was based on the new meaning of the old words. New definition of communion led him to brake with the boundaries of impure and pure, sacred and profane and therefore created the space for secularization.

2.4. Reform of Mass

In the front of that theology Luther made liturgical reform. The first attempt was in 1523, when Luther wrote “*Formula Missae*.”¹¹ It consisted of the Introit, Kyrie, Gloria, Collect, Epistle, Gradual or Alleluia (with psalm), Gospel, Nicene Creed, Sermon, Sursum Corda, Preface, Words of institution, Sanctus (including elevation of the elements), Lord’s Prayer, Pax, Distribution during the Agnus Dei, Prayer, Benedicamus

¹⁰ Ibid., 67-73.

¹¹ *Formula missae et communionis pro ecclesia Vuittembergensi*.

(Let us bless the Lord) and Benediction.¹² The liturgy in “*Formula Missae*” was still in Latin language, the aim was to purify the medieval mass from the “wretched accretions which corrupt it and to point out an evangelical use.”¹³

The next reform in 1526 was introduced by Luther in the “*Deutsche Messe*,” the elements of the liturgy were already in German language: the Introit, Kyrie (three times instead of nine), Collect, Epistle, hymn, Gospel, Creed, sermon on the Gospel for the Sunday or festival, paraphrase (catechesis) of the Lord’s Prayer, admonition to the communicants, the Words of Institution (sung), ministrations of the bread after the words over the bread, ministrations of the cup after the words over the cup, German Agnus Dei or other songs, post-communion prayer, and Aaronic benediction.¹⁴

Luther had been “hesitant and fearful” to make changes, “partly because of the weak in faith, who cannot suddenly exchange an old and accustomed order of worship for a new and unusual one, and more so because of the fickle and fastidious spirits who rush in like unclean swine without faith or reason,¹⁵ and who delight only in novelty and tire of it as quickly, when it has worn off.” According to Frank Senn the main aim of Luther’s reform was not to replace Latin mass with German mass, but to purify it theologically.¹⁶

Also, Dirk Lange argues that Luther was hesitant in the face of drastic changes and did not want the liturgy to become “a rigid law.” Luther is deeply convinced that Christian freedom implies adapting liturgical forms to particular context, but at the same time Luther notices that the same freedom can be abused in simply attempting new things

¹² Frank C. Senn, *Introduction to Christian Liturgy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 49.

¹³ Martin Luther, “An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg,” in *Luther’s Works*, vol. 53: *Liturgy and Hymns*, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 20.

¹⁴ Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 283-284.

¹⁵ Luther probably meant here Andreas Karlstadt.

¹⁶ Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 276.

without faithfulness to apostolic teaching (without faithfulness in translating the Gospel). The liturgy cannot be an arbitrary creation. Confronted with those innovations in the liturgy, Luther decided to write his own contribution, however his work is not a completely new liturgical form but rather the reformed order of the Roman Mass.¹⁷

It is important to point out that in “*Formula Missae*” do not include the act of confession of sins. As Frank Senn notices “the communicants were to announce their intention to receive the sacrament on the day before, they were examined and absolved and move into the chancel during the creed as the witnesses to others.”¹⁸

Foremost, Luther opposed the Catholic concept of the Mass, as a sacrifice. The sacrament is not sacrifice but fellowship of saints. His aim however wasn’t abolishing mass at all but to change false understanding of this term. To redefine the mass and to re-educate people on that case.

Luther wrote: “From here on, almost everything smacks and savors of sacrifice. And the words of life and salvation [the words of institution] are embedded in the midst of it all, just as the ark of Lord once stood in the idol’s temple next to Dagon. . . . Let us, therefore, repudiate everything that smacks of sacrifice, together with the entire canon, and retain only that which is pure and holy, and so order our mass.” As Susan Karant-Nunn states: “Gone for him was the sacrifice, gone the priestly presidency over the miraculous, gone the sacramental efficacy of all the equipage of the altar, gone the virtues of the Mass with their far-reaching implications for the cure of sin and for the afterlife.”¹⁹

¹⁷ Dirk G. Lange, *Introduction* in: Luther, Martin, and Dirk G Lange. Church and Sacraments. Edited by Paul W Robinson, Hans Joachim Hillerbrand, Kirsi Irmeli Stjerna, and Timothy J. Wengert. Annotated Luther, Volume 3. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2016, 131-138.

¹⁸ Senn, *Introduction to Christian Liturgy*, 50.

¹⁹ Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*, 114.

Where did Luther's reluctance come from to interpret the Lord's Supper in terms of sacrifice? Martin Luther understood sacrifice as an act of violence. Dirk Lange in his book "Trauma Recalled" notices a psychological tendency to glorify sacrifice and also at the same time violence. Luther wanted to move Eucharist into a different dimension far away from the violence. Not the cross is the moment of remembrance but the meal—as Jesus said “do this in remembrance of me.”²⁰

Therefore, Luther's reform of liturgy was focused more on the question how we interpret this event than how we celebrate it and which language do we use. For Luther the *ordo* includes only the simple structures and their task is to proclaim apostolic Gospel.

Gordon Lathrop notices that the metaphor of the sacrifice is connected with the metaphor of assembly as temple and minister as a priest.²¹ This image is present more often in Roman-Catholic liturgical understanding but also this issue was considered by Thomas Aquinas from two perspectives from the historical sacrifice of Jesus Christ and from the eucharistic sacrifice. The fruits of cross sacrifice are distributed *ex opera operato* by priest *in persona Christi* and the limitation of fruits depends on the devotion of the worshippers.²²

Bryan Spinks emphasized Luther's desire to remove the canon of the mass entirely and to create a new liturgy. The evidence for that is relationship between Verba and Sanctus: “Instead of trying to participate and enter into the sacrifice of Christ by lifting our hearts to the heavenly altar, we stand in awe with Isaiah as Christ speaks to us

²⁰ Dirk G. Lange, *Trauma Recalled: Liturgy, Disruption, and Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 11.

²¹ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 187.

²² Kilmartin and Daly, *The Eucharist in the West*, 263.

on earth, granting us pardon and therefore taking us up into his sacrifice.” However, it is important to notice that in the context of Sanctus, the assembly is lifted up to the heavenly sphere and participating together with the saints and angels in worship. This mystical experience of Luther was explained in the section “communion of the saints.”

Luther held for the real presence of Christ in the eucharist. Christ is present *in usu*, i.e., in the accomplishment (or celebration) of the sacrament. He meant the “event” of the eucharistic liturgy, *in usu* means within the scope of the command of Christ.²³

The mystery of the Luther understanding of the Eucharist lays not in the sacrifice or in the elements of bread and wine, but in the presence of Christ. Therefore, he is not devoted to the ritual of veneration of the bread and wine.²⁴ Luther rather is more interested in the communion of people, who see, taste and feel the Word of God in sacraments.

The most important is the assembly gathered to participate in God’s gifts. God is present in the human reality and how we as sinners participate in God’s justice. The mystery is for Luther the presence of Christ. The question on apostolicity in the front of that discourse lays in the function of minister. And this it has to be considered in following section.

In the front of reform of mass Luther wrote: “Liturgical change needs always to go paired with teaching and love.”²⁵ That might be for us very good starting point for further analysis of liturgy especially in the ecumenical discussion.

²³ Ibid., 158.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ “Eight Sermons at Wittenberg, 1522,” in *Luther’s Works* vol. 51, John W. Doberstein, ed. (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1959), 70-100. German in WA vol. 10, part 3 (Weimar 1905), 1-64.

CHAPTER 3

NIETZSCHE'S CRITIQUE OF CHRISTIAN LITURGY

3.0. Introduction

Nietzsche is considered as one of the most furious critics of Christianity. His analysis of Christianity made in the "Antichrist" is admirable in terms of eloquence and flowery of language, but the content of this sublime form deeply hurts not only the *kerygma* but also the Christian practice that is present in the liturgy.

Nietzsche suspects Christianity of being in conjunction with mystery religions. In the face of this, it is worth looking at research in this area in the nineteenth century. Although Nietzsche did not know Frazer's "The Golden Bough," he was influenced by liberal theology and the historical-critical methods. Nietzsche's conclusions: Christianity betrayed itself, Christ had something different in mind than the Apostle Paul at that time were quite common among the German academic scholars. It is worth taking into account in his analysis of the Christian liturgy

I focused in this chapter on the critique of priests and theologians. In the concept of apostolicity, the office and its credibility is an important element. Nietzsche not only criticizes the succession of teaching, so strongly accented by the Protestants. He does not focus on Catholics, he speaks of Christianity as one great lie to control people.

Rituals such as the Lord's Supper are barbaric blood drinking and a decline after barbaric customs. The victim of the firstborn and the memorabilia of his death are for the philosopher the disgusting practices of mystery religions. They are an example of a weak spirit and according to Nietzsche they should be discontinued.

3.1. The Research on Mystery Cults in 19th Century

In the past, several church fathers analyzed the Mysteries with the apologetic goal of discrediting them and exalting Christianity. They described them in negative language to create Christian identity and make borders where is paganism and where Christianity is starting. The mysteries were considered as Satan's influence and Christianity is the most pure and holy religion.¹

Nineteen century historians considered similarities between Christianity and Mysteries as an example, that Christianity is a patchwork of other religions. Christianity as a religion did not invite anything new. The elements like: love, death, and resurrection are occurring in many ancient religions. The element of salvation of the soul could be took over by Christian theologians from orphic beliefs and Neoplatonism. Elements irrationality in the New Testament—like wonders, angels, demons, testify that Christian belief is mythical or mythological.²

At that time historical-critical studies on the New Testament and history of dogma was well developed. Anthropologist George Frazer in his famous work “The

¹ Terri Darby Moore, *The Mysteries, Resurrection, and 1 Corinthians 15: Comparative Methodology and Contextual Exegesis* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2018), 2.

² Some scholars make a difference between mythological and mythical description of the New Testament's irrationalistic elements.

Golden Bough” suggested that a basic vegetation god occurs in many religions and cults in ancient world. He mentioned that Christianity, and especially Pauline theology is dependent upon the Mysteries. Jesus was a teacher, but his views and earthly mission was modified in a way that made him one of “the dying and rising” gods of vegetation. This term “the dying and rising god” became typological source for a dying and rising Christ motif presented by Apostle Paul.³

As Terri Moore writes: “Other suggested similarities between Paul’s theology of identification with Christ and the Mysteries’ focus on identifying with dying and rising god or goddess through their liturgy.”⁴ Therefore, not only Christian dogma is emerging from the Greek anthropology but also liturgy.

3.2. Nietzsche’s Critique of the Ministry

Very important element of apostolicity and liturgy is ministry and Nietzsche overthrows it very rough. The afterlife for Nietzsche does not exist, it is only a lie created by the priests. They have created “instruments of torture,” and the “system of cruelty.” They made Christianity to control people, because they already know that there is no God and also there is no such a thing like “sin” or the “redeemer.”⁵

All church concepts are known for what they are, the most malicious counterfeits that exist to devalue nature and natural values; the priests themselves are known

³ Samuel Angus, *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity: A Study in the Religious Background of Early Christianity* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1925), 244, 275; Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 193; Alfred Loisy, “The Christianity Mystery,” *The Hibbert Journal* 10 (1911-1912): 61.

⁴ Terri Darby Moore, *The Mysteries, Resurrection, and 1 Corinthians 15: Comparative Methodology and Contextual Exegesis* (Lanham: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2018), 3.

⁵ Nietzsche, Ridley, and Norman, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 34-35.

for what they are, the most dangerous type of parasite, the true poisonous spiders of life . . .⁶

The church and priests, pastors, ministers—the elements of apostolicity are condemned by Nietzsche. In some points Nietzsche describes God as a spider but here also priests are named as “poisonous spiders of life,” just as the representatives of God acting in liturgy *in persona Christi* according to classical Christian theology, the representatives of the underworld religion are described by Nietzsche as liars and representatives of the lie.

In the context of the Christian forgery Nietzsche asks the question why “generally very impartial and thoroughly anti-Christian in practice, still call themselves Christian and take communion?”⁷ Nietzsche is surprised that still people sacrifice themselves in the struggle for their homeland and defend their honor, which he believes are anti-Christian arch-writers, and yet they are still called Christians.

And here one can recognize the German philosopher as a grandmaster in issuing judgments on people of his time. In the German state in which Nietzsche lived, religion was closely related to politics. However, in many places Nietzsche sees the inconsistencies of this marriage of the throne with the altar. He judges very brutally:

Every practice at every moment, every instinct, every value judgement that people act on is anti-Christian these days: what miscarriages of duplicity modern people are, that in spite of all this they are not ashamed to call themselves Christians!⁸

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

The liturgical practice is disgusting to the philosopher because on the one hand it is contrary to the values of people who participate in it, and on the other hand is disgusting because it serves the oppressions of priests and pastors.

3.3. Nietzsche's Critique of Sacrifice and Eucharist

Nietzsche criticizes not only the Christian doctrine but also the Christian liturgy. He interprets the Holy Communion in the frame of this critical understanding. In paragraph 22 of his "Antichrist" he is saying about Christianity and its departure from native soil—"the underworld of the ancient world." According to Nietzsche, Christianity found a fertile ground among barbarians and the lowest classes in the Roman Empire and is among exhausted men, full of savage and capable of self-torture.

The consequence of that are Christian rituals that are from its native soil, that is from the lowest orders, from the "underworld" of the ancient world." Christianity according to Nietzsche with its apostles was searching for "barbarian people," "men still inwardly savage" and "capable of self-torture." They indulged in "suffering" and "subjective satisfaction in hostile deeds and ideas." Thus, Nietzsche writes:

Christianity had to embrace barbaric concepts and valuations in order to obtain mastery over barbarians: of such sort, for example, are the sacrifices of the first-born, the drinking of blood as a sacrament, the disdain of the intellect and of culture; torture in all its forms, whether bodily or not; the whole pomp of the cult (. . .) Christianity aims at mastering beasts of prey; its *modus operandi* is to make them ill—to make feeble is the Christian recipe for taming, for "civilizing."⁹

Which "barbarian concepts and valuations" did Nietzsche mean? The adapted concepts—adapted by Paul and his co-workers. Paul not only brought to the Church

⁹ Ibid., 73-74.

“decadence” and “*chandalas*,” “weak people” but also their symbols and rituals juxtaposing them with the Gospel of Christ.

According to Nietzsche, Paul observed that man needs God because of gratitude, a man wants to give him sacrifices and wants to understand him. Such a God helps but also harms; he must be a friend but also an enemy. God is angry and good at the same time. If only God would not even be understood, why would he want to have it? – asked rhetorically Nietzsche. When people die, when they feel that faith in the life-afterlife diminishes, then also God changes and becomes docile. He says people must love their enemies. He moralizes constantly, he hides into the cave of every private virtue, he becomes the God of everyone, a private, cosmopolitan – sarcastically refers Nietzsche.

As we can see, the Christian liturgy – according to Nietzsche – serves man to satisfy his fears and, in the face of doubt, at least boils down to reminding ethical attitudes. Christian liturgy is barbaric because it focuses on the suffering of the crucified man, draws out far-reaching conclusions and selfishly makes them an insulting law. By the way, Jesus did not die for the world, he died for his own blame! – the German philosopher shouts convulsively.

Such an interpretation is clearly part of the nineteenth-century critique of the Christian liturgy, which strongly emphasized the pathos and splendor of Christ's suffering. Nietzsche criticizes Paul for his interpretation of Jesus as that crucified and resurrected for the sins of men. Jesus is interpreted totally subjectively and Nietzsche puts his views in the mouths of the Master from Nazareth. As the nineteenth-century liberal theologian, Nietzsche rejects those elements that are supernatural, he tries to psychologize the person of Jesus. He evaluates New Testament statements through the

prism of enlightenment. He sees the deception in the eternal life foretold, and in the liturgy, he sees the tool of oppression.

3.4. Summary

Nietzsche approached Christian belief as an ancient skeptic but also as a first post-modern philosopher. His bitter criticism leaves no traces of German theology, which despite its rationality emptied itself of Christ's faith, focusing on Jesus' history. By the time the Christ of faith, the Word of God, Christ of mystery is the object around which the Church gathers.

The *kerygma* (the essence of apostolicity) was strongly criticized by Nietzsche and the violence of sacrificial act comes – according to him – generally from Christianity. Nietzsche does not make difference between Protestants and Catholics at that point. Nietzsche seems totally unaware of Luther's views on the theme of the Supper, or he is familiar with the views of Lutheran theologians who did not know Luther's views.

Nietzsche speaks through the spirit of what is to come, namely the spirit of skepticism about matters of faith. The spirit of criticism of Christianity and religion in general. The spirit of doubt in the content of the *kerygma*, and in particular in the sense of suffering of Christ.

The concepts of sin, reconciliation between God and man, the notion of sacrifice, as seen in the example of Nietzsche already in the 19th century, ceased to have meaning for people. It was necessary to return in theology and attempts were made to conceive of mystery, attempt to identify church with people, create movements of workers' priests, or liturgical renewal.

Nietzsche's critique had a significant impact on Christian theology in the twentieth century. While before Second Vatican Council Odo Casel's mystery theology was considered heretical and the term of "mystery" was suspicious. After the council, theologians like Bouyer or de Lubac were writing about the liturgy and the mystery, the mystery of supernatural, initiation into mystery, etc.

Nietzsche was the son of a Lutheran minister. His philosophy strongly influenced Protestant theology after World War II, thus liturgical theology as well. For Nietzsche, the Christianity we knew so far must die or change its character in a radical way. Elements such as liturgy, apostolicity, church, dogmas must die and create space for "freedom of the spirit."

In the next part, I would like to present an outline of liturgical theology and the understanding of apostolicity in the post-Nietzschean theology: in Catholic perspective – Odo Casel, Louis Bouyer, Romano Guardini and in Lutheran perspective: Frank Senn, Gordon Lathrop, and Dirk Lange. I try to answer the question: How did these theologies want to preserve the apostolicity of Christianity, its credibility and its message in the frame of liturgical assembly?

Nietzsche criticizes Christianity, believing that it was the apostle Paul who misrepresented the original message of the Master of Nazareth. Discovering the ancient culture and the figure of Jesus, he came to his project of "the death of God." The German philosopher not only became Paul's most-fierce critic but also undermined the credibility of Christianity in general.

PART III

ECUMENICAL APPROACH

CHAPTER 1

ROMAN CATHOLIC REFLECTION ON MYSTERY AND LITURGY— STRUCTURAL APPROACH

1.0. Introduction

In this part, which I have called the ecumenical part, I will try to outline the concepts that emerged in the twentieth century in Catholic and Lutheran theology. These concepts stemmed from the criticism of nineteenth-century scholars, Nietzsche was among them.

It is important to note that Nietzsche's philosophy did not have a loud echo in the Catholic Church. It was silenced or treated with pity. The philosopher was accused of leaving the senses instead of facing his arguments. A certain attempt to oppose the fallen

liturgical life in Germany in the second half of the nineteenth century, exactly when Nietzsche was working on the "Antichrist" was the liturgical renewal movement.

The goal of liturgical movement was "the active participation" of all the faithful "in the most holy and sacred mysteries."¹ One of the main representatives of this movement was the Benedictine theologian and monk, Odo Casel. He approached the Christian liturgy searching for sources of renewal in Greek and Latin in the Greek Bible. His analysis of the mystery served to redefine Christianity instead of its sharp criticism.

In this chapter, I will briefly present Casel's conclusions on the subject of the mystery, and in the following I will present the contribution of Louis Bouyer and Romano Guardini in the redefinition of liturgical concepts.

1.1. Catholicism in the 19th Century

Seemingly, these theologians do not refer directly to this German philosopher, but with a closer analysis, there are several common features among them that can be interpreted as a kind of response to the philosophy of the author of "Antichrist."

First of all, theologians strongly used the Holy Scriptures and ancient traditions to recycle structures corresponding to post-enlightenment times. At that time, the Catholic Church was increasingly pushed aside in theological and philosophical discourse. Ultramontanism and political involvement led to ossification in the liturgical forms adopted by Council of Trent.

The Tridentine liturgy strongly emphasized what Nietzsche criticized, namely: resurrection, life after death, collecting merits and holding back the impulses of the body.

¹ See Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955), 60, and Gordon Lathrop, *Holy People*, 90.

Everything had to be centralized and concessionally limited to obedience to the priests whom Nietzsche hated so much.

Considering the apostolicity of the Church, this the post-Tridentine age was intended to preserve the apostolic teaching and to emphasize that there is no salvation outside the Roman Catholic Church.

To achieve a higher degree of credibility, the popes interfered in political matters. They were at the head of the conservative party and were reluctant to attempt a new order in the form of empires, republics or democratic states. What are the examples of conflicts with Napoleon Bonaparte, conflict with Bismarck, and finally conflict with Garibaldi.

The First Vatican Council attempted to redefine theology and come up against new issues, but it proved to be the victory of the traditionalist fraction in the church and acceptance of a few dogmas which, although true in the practice of the church, did not have the final approval of the Pope.

In the liturgy, triumphalism and Latin dominated, attempts to change these issues were fiercely suppressed and it was not until the twentieth century that the resistance to change was overcome. While the First Vatican Council should be regarded as the victory of the conservative faction in the Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council was the victory of the Modernists. The First Vatican Council was a more dogmatic council and less inclined to liturgical changes. The Second Vatican Council has made landmark changes in the liturgy and made a step towards ecumenism.

1.2. Odo Casel's Theology of Mystery

The analysis of Roman Catholic theologians in this section will allow us to outline the emerging views in Catholic theology, which in my opinion arose from the criticism of scholars such as Nietzsche, and through the attempt to redefine important concepts in the field of Christian liturgy. Roman-Catholic theological liturgist, Odo Casel (born in 1886, died in 1948), wrote:

The sober, practical religion of the Romans had neither concept nor word for mystery. It did possess a consecration to God, devotion, which was expressed particularly in oath-taking, above all the military one. This was *sacramentum*. How easily an oath of this kind could be made into a kind of *mysterium*, a ritual obligation of the greatest force to the powers below is shown by Liv X, 38f,² in his impressive picture of the oath recruits took in the “*Samnite legion*” because of the flax about the place where they were sworn (*sacrata*). They were, as Livy says, initiated (initiate) according to the ancient rite of consecration (*ritu sacramenti*).³

The German theologian concludes that the whole ceremony was more than military oath-taking. It was initiation into a mystery. The *sacramentum* was “a consecration, mystery”, but also “military oath.” Casel noticed that the word *sacramentum* was used in the religious mysteries and was brought by Christians to translate Greek word μυστηριον. Casel writes:

The whole ancient terminology passed into Christian usage, but in keeping with the higher spiritual level of the new religion was made the bearer of higher and more spiritual concepts. The spiritualizing process did not, however, lead to an evaporation of content; the word remained concreto, and kept its constant relationship to the worship.⁴

He gives an example saying that, in fact, John did not use the word mystery in his Prolog, but writes about “the act of mystery,” namely incarnated *Logos*. Also, Paul is

² Titus Livius Patavinus (64 or 58 BC-12 or 17 AD).

³ Odo Casel and Burkhard Neunheuser, *The Mystery of Christian Worship: Milestones in Catholic Theology* (New York: Crossroad Pub, 1999), 56.

⁴ Ibid.

describing Christ as “mystery” in Eph 1:9f. The apostolic mission of Paul was according to Odo Casel the fragment from third chapter:

To make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph 3:9f).

“The knowledge of the mystery of God, of Christ in whom are all the hidden treasures of wisdom and Gnosis” (Col 2:2).⁵

Paul takes the ancient terminology to juxtaposing it with Christ. He is interpreting the saving act of God as the epiphany of Jesus Christ and therefore for Casel “the incarnation is rightly called a mystery of sacrament.”⁶ According to Casel the high-point of salvation is the death and crown of resurrection, this is moment of redemption, which is not done once, neither is not repeated but is present still and real in the liturgy. Casel interprets the Christian *kerygma* as primarily the mystery which is completely unachievable. Only in the Church the worshipers have kind of access to it, but also not completely.

Aidan Kavanagh in the introduction to the book *The Mystery of Christian worship* noticed that according to Casel “Christ is not present just as the object of our pious memory, but is present in his saving acts – he dies not again but *still*, rises not again but *still* – in us, by us, and through us for the life of the world.”⁷

⁵ Also *ibid.*, 57-58.

⁶ Thus, Paschasius Radbert, monk of Corvey, *Liber de Corpore et Sanguine Dni*, ch. 3. Migne PL 120,1275 ff.

⁷ Aidan Kavanagh, “Introduction,” in Odo and Neunheuser, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, xi.

That uncommon project done by Odo Casel in liturgical theology had huge impact on the Roman-Catholic theology in the 20. Century, especially on the Second Vatican Council. Before the Second Vatican Council Casel's mystery theology was considered as heretical and the term of "mystery" was suspicious, after the council theologians like Bouyer or de Lubac were writing about the liturgy and the mystery, the mystery of supernatural, initiation into mystery etc.

Did the category of mystery seem too suspect for Catholic theologians? Was it too foggy? Or maybe she had negative connotations in connection with Nietzsche's allegations? In any case, theology of mystery defended the kerygma and also the apostolicity of the Church at the time of ecclesiastical exclusivism in the era after the First Vatican Council.

1.3. Louis Bouyer's Contribution

Another theologian, Louis Bouyer (1913-2004) was focusing on liturgical theology from the Roman-Catholic perspective. He was emphasizing the apostolicity of practice. The liturgy is "living pattern" which means that apostolicity is truly proclaimed in the faith of the assembly gathered in the church. The "living pattern" is living what is truly celebrated. The apostles and church are together gathered in the front of the Mystery of the Cross, and that makes the church apostolic.

He noticed that liturgy has an obligation to maintain social life, but he understands it according to John's theology. He wrote:

Obviously, a truly liturgical life must be a truly social life, a life which does not ignore man's obligations to his neighbors, but rather fulfills these obligations in the most effective and fruitful fashion. We cannot "witness" to the divine *agape* which is taking possession of us unless we are trying, each of us according to his vocation, to communicate this love of our fellow-men. Or, as St. John puts it, if

we do not love our neighbor whom we can see, how can we pretend to love God Whom we do not see.⁸

According to Bouyer the suffering of other men should be the suffering of us, but we can alleviate suffering with them because there is Christ, who suffers with us, too. This suffering of Christ is “sacred of fruitful suffering and final victory over suffering and death.”⁹

Bouyer sees the source of the liturgy in the tradition that is not dead. On the contrary, this tradition is alive and almost immortal. He calls the liturgy "living pattern" which must be celebrated forever. The liturgy according to Bouyer was given by Christ and the apostles and must be celebrated in community, never separately by individuals. This liturgical connection with Christ and the apostles is the essence of apostolicity.¹⁰

Bouyer along with Yngve Brilioth is saying about four irreducible elements: communion, sacrifice, eucharist properly speaking (that is, thanksgiving) and memorial. But another reality which is cannot be separated from them is the Mystery.¹¹

When these four elements are combined in proper proportions and are wide open to the illumination given them by the Mystery – without losing their own individuality – then we have the full Catholic¹² tradition in all its wealth and purity. But when a given age overemphasizes one of these elements so that the others are partly lost sight of, or so that they are subordinated to it, then the fullness of tradition is lost, the spirit of the authentic liturgy is endangered as well as that of authentic Christianity, and one may look for the appearance of all kinds of errors, in doctrine as well as in practice.¹³

⁸ Louis Bouyer, *Life and Liturgy. Liturgical Studies* (notre Dame, Ind.), V. 1. London: Sheed and Ward, 1956, 260.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 72.

¹¹ Ibid. 75.

¹² In Roman Catholic theology catholicity and apostolicity are very close to each other related.

¹³ Ibid., 75ff.

Then Bouyer analyzes each of these elements. In our deliberations, which serve to focus on the issue of the apostolicity as transmitting the kerygma through the liturgy, Bouyer's notion of sacrifice and mystery is important. The French theologian notes that in fact, so-called "mystery religions" are analogous to the Christian religion, because mystery religions have also a specific ritual associated with death and return to life of a god. This ritual makes the initiates the partakers of death and life of that god. However, in Christian mystery is not going about myth (a symbolic returning to the beginning) in Christianity is interest in the salvation history as such. The mystery gods were above all gods of nature. The Christian god is more universal. The Graeco-Roman mysteries contained a *hieros logos* and magical rites. The Christian Mystery depends on God's Word and on the faith of the people.

Buyer relies on the discussion between two Protestant scholars, Hans Lietzmann and Yngve Brilioth on Paul and his attitude to the eucharist and mystery religion. Lietzmann pointed out that Paul imposes a new meaning on the meal, namely in Corinth he started to emphasize the death and Cross: "for as often as you shall eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes." In other words, according to Lietzmann, Paul has interpreted the Cross as a life-giving mystery. This idea was closer to pagan sensitivity than to Judaism.

Bouyer criticizes this conception saying that the resurrection was always the most important part of the Christian assembly, not the Cross. The "eucharistic joy" is the key, not the Cross: "From the very first, Christians saw the Cross as illuminated by the

resurrection; the resurrection was not to them the reversal, but so to speak, the natural product of the Cross.”¹⁴

Eucharist is for Bouyer the purely Jewish rite and he abolish Nietzsche’s view on the pagan influence on the Christian Mystery. Jesus did not create a new rite, he was only performing once again a traditional rite in the frame of Jewish tradition “infusing it into a new meaning.”¹⁵ Therefore, Bouyer denies the possibility of the influence of pagan religions on the Christian liturgy, calling it “completely mistaken notion.”¹⁶

The French theologian makes at that point very powerful notion about the apostleship and the mission of the church. He understands that God sends His Word to us, and God is present in His Word. God is not delegating people to the afterlife or to the past. “He gives Himself, His Word, being nothing else than that life which is His divine life and absolute self-giving.”¹⁷ Therefore, Father sends His Son, and Son sends His apostles, but “not only a few men in a small place for a short time, but all men throughout the whole world to the end of time.” In consequence, the Word of God is present also in those who have been sent in their turn.¹⁸ The mission of the church is to proclaim the Word of God, the eternal gift of God, the eternal gift of His love – as Boyer calls it:

Therefore, as God’s gift of Himself proclaimed by Christ the Word became by means of His Cross the actual reality of that new creation in this world of ours, so the Word of the Cross has to be proclaimed through the Church by those whom Christ has sent, in order to speak through them to all generations, so that God may effectively be all in all.¹⁹

¹⁴ Ibid., 84.

¹⁵ Ibid., 85.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 106.

¹⁸ Ibid., 107.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Who is sent according to Bouyer? He is not saying it directly, but he meant first of all the Church hierarchy – “the apostolic hierarchy.” However, also the members of the Church, the *ecclesia* is sent by Christ to proclaim the *kerygma* – which Bouyer understands as “the Mystery of the Cross.” The fundamental ministry of the Church is *leiturgia* of the Church, which Bouyer calls “the permanent proclamation of the Mystery.” The content of that Mystery is not Cross itself, but God’s love and His offering for people the new creation.²⁰

1.4. Romano Guardini’s Liturgical Reflection

Romano Guardini in his book “The church and the Catholic” makes ecclesiological reflection writing about catholicity, which he understands very apostolic. He is criticizing individualism and Nietzsche’s “will to power” as the highest expression of Protestant individualism.²¹ Answering to the question what is the church Guardini is writing:

She is the Kingdom of God in mankind The Kingdom of God – it is the epitome of Christianity. All that Christ was, all that He taught, did, created, and suffered, is contained in these words – He has established the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God means that the Creator takes possession of His creature with His burning love and the root of its being with His divine peace, and He molds the entire spirit by the creative power which imposes a new form upon it.²²

Guardini uses very erotic language to describe relationship between God and the Church. The “Divine Love” seizes the creation and brings it to the second birth. God gives the people his own nature and lives with them in the new life. That is Trinitarian

²⁰ Ibid., 108.

²¹ Romano Guardini, *The Church and the Catholic: And the Spirit of the Liturgy*, translated by Ada Lane, Catholic Masterpieces, No. 12 (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1935), 203.

²² Ibid., 33.

activity because that rebirth makes Father in His child, Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

For Guardini it is important that the Church is supra-personal, the human community is reborn into Kingdom of God. The Church as supra-personal community consists individual persons, but is never individualistic.²³ The Church itself is “the way to individual personality,” in modern world there is “a process of passing from the individualistic and subjective to the social and objective structures.”²⁴ His liturgical project was created to face with this problem of individualism and proceed worshipers from it to supra-personal community. In the context of apostolicity, his reflection is valuable because he pointed out that not an individualistic decision saves but the God’s decision which is realized in the community of the church. Apostolic church is the church here and now, but also the church of the apostles and this collective dimension is apostolic.

In one place Guardini writes “the church is always the opponent of the contemporary.”²⁵ Even if we do not agree with him, it is important to note that Church is very hard to adaptive. The Church is more conservative than society in which she lives. The liturgical structures are very hard adaptive and they demand solid theological argumentation and time.

Guardini made an interesting liturgical analysis in the frame of the Eucharist. He states that the sacrament of Communion is the “sacrament of community.” Its character is totally incomprehensible; however, we know that through it “God is personally united

²³ Ibid., 35.

²⁴ Ibid., 58.

²⁵ Ibid., 76.

with the man.”²⁶ While, not only one man is united, but all his fellows. All receive God “on behalf of the others, on behalf of husband or wife, or children, parents, relatives, and friends – for all those to whom he is bound by ties of love.”²⁷ In my opinion it is quite patriarchal approach to liturgy, but very well corresponds to the Roman Catholic structure of celebrating the liturgy. Guardini wrote:

His Sacrifice and Sacrament as communal acts, expressions of the community between God and man, and between men in God, all “in Christ.” Who “has made us partakers of the divine nature.” Such was the belief and practice of the Apostles, and of the Church after them.²⁸

Therefore, the apostles and church united through “the belief and practice” are the guarantee of salvation in Christ. Such approach is very Roman Catholic and for Protestant theology is difficult to grasp because, according to Lutheran approach, the Word of God constitutes the church. The practice and the doctrine are consequences of God’s activity among the people. In the Roman Catholic approach, it is more the other way around. The “belief and practice” in accordance with the “belief and practice” of the apostles lead us to the God. *Kerygma* is realized therefore in the community, not in the individual decision, as Nietzsche wanted it.

1.5. Summary

The views of Catholic theologians are expressing the apostolicity while they are saying less about the suffering of Christ and the masochistic aspect of his death. In my opinion that is a suitable reaction to the critics of the nineteenth century.

²⁶ Ibid., 98.

²⁷ Ibid., 98-99.

²⁸ Ibid., 100.

Odo Casel defined *kerygma* as primarily the mystery. However, he was not using the word “mystery religion” to describe Christianity. Apostolicity is realizing that in the sacraments Christ is not present merely as the object of our memory, but is present in his saving acts (*anamnesis*) – he dies not again but *still*, rises not again but *still* – in us, by us, and through us for the life of the world.²⁹ That makes the contemporary church the witness of the Christ at that same stage as the apostles were witnesses of the Christ.

Bouyer is a very influenced theologian in the Roman Catholic Church. In his book “Life and Liturgy,” he wrote about the *kerygma* as the Mystery. In the front of Nietzsche’s critic, Bouyer denies the possibility of the influence of pagan religions on the Christian liturgy, calling it “a completely mistaken notion.” He sharply separates between pagan religions and Christianity and claims that the mystery of Christ has nothing to do with the pagan mysteries.

The mission of the church is to proclaim *kerygma* which Bouyer understands as the Mystery of Christ. The apostolic mission is to hold the liturgy within four irreducible elements: communion, sacrifice, eucharist properly speaking (that is, thanksgiving) and memorial. All these elements are apostolic *kerygma* on God’s love which is mysterious and is only possible to grasp it in the Christian liturgy.

Romano Guardini, like Luis Bouyer, stands against novelties in the liturgy. The liturgy for them is not an arbitrary matter, it is to proclaim the *kerygma* about Christ and even if it is a mystery it is a holy and apostolic mystery.

For Guardini it is important that the Church is supra-personal, the human community is reborn into the Kingdom of God. The Church as supra-personal community

²⁹ Aidan Kavanagh, “Introduction,” in Odo and Neunheuser, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, xi.

consists individual persons, but is never individualistic as for example Nietzsche wanted it to be.

The Roman Catholic theology in the 20th century is important to redefine apostolicity as the active mark of the church in the frame of the liturgy. The elements of the Christian worship are transmitting the *kerygma*, which is apostolic proclamation on the death and resurrection of Christ. Without that reflection in Roman Catholic theology the ecumenical dialog with Lutherans would be impossible.

CHAPTER 2

LITURGICAL FORMS AND CHRISTIAN DOGMA—POST-STRUCTURAL LUTHERAN APPROACH

2.0. Introduction

Danish Liturgical Theologian, Regin Prenter in his “*Liturgie et dogme*” pointed out that “the liturgy is a bodily form of dogma, and the dogma is the soul of liturgy.” Therefore, systematic theology or rather theological reflection shapes the liturgy. The theological reflection is contained in the liturgical patterns and the liturgy communicates the Christian message through the senses.

2.1. Gordon Lathrop’s Project

For Gordon Lathrop this paradigm has clear consequences, namely “the ordinariness is reflected in the ordinary words in meeting, gathering, book, washing, meal, song, speech, instead of divine service, evangeliary, baptism, Holy Eucharist, offertory, sermon.”¹ His liturgical project was to say old words in the new things, juxtaposing the antient liturgical patterns with contemporary issues.

¹ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 10.

Gordon Lathrop in his book “Central Things” is answering the question “What are the essentials of Christian Worship?” And he recalls the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the document of the Second Vatican Council (on December 4, 1963).

The authors of the document wrote that Christ is present in the church in the sacraments, especially baptism and Eucharist, in his word – “since it is he himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the church” – and in the gathering of the church, for he promised: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”²

This is in line with the Augsburg Confession, which states, “It is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel.”³

Lathrop notices that the ancient church was, in fact, interested in what is “apostolic,” especially in the selection of the Scriptures, in holding on to the creed, in the exercise of *ordo*, and in administering the baptism and the Lord's Supper. The regulations concerning ministers were a sign of community between churches. Therefore, even *notae ecclesiae* were interpreted by their presence in the liturgy.⁴

The assemblies are the *catholic* church because they do these things in ever new cultural situations, according to the dignity of each local place, bringing the gifts of land and peoples into the unity that links all the assemblies across time and space. And the assemblies are *apostolic* because there reverberates, as the assembly's central meaning in the midst of all these marks of their life, the apostolic witness, made with apostolic, Godsent, authority, that Christ is risen and that in his resurrection all things are becoming new.⁵

² Gordon W. Lathrop, *Central Things: Worship in Word and Sacrament* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress), 2005.

³ Philip Melancthon, *The Defense of the Augsburg Confession*, Art. IX.

⁴ Gordon Lathrop, *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 56.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Lathrop believes that worship is where apostolicity is realized. The liturgical life of the church is based on “central things.” The unity, catholicity and apostolicity of the church are visible in the practice of Christian worship. In the theological reflection on resurrection these elements are realized by the church to fulfill God’s commandment – to be his “apostolic witnesses.” Therefore, the marks of the church are present in liturgical practice of the churches, especially in the cooperation between churches, exchange letters and exchange of kiss and greetings.

Apostolicity is primary in the teaching; therefore, the assembly has to hold out the critique of all ministers, bishops, presbyters and deacons. Lathrop points out that the presence of formal ministry of any sort does not preserve the church from error. The proper ministry according to him “set out Christ in the heart of the meeting,” and constitutes *ekklesia*.⁶

In Lathrop’s reflection on liturgy the most significant thing is *ordo*. The *ordo* is the order of the worship, through elements of *ordo*, God’s Word speaks to the assembly again. Bible is also a foundation of the *ordo*, it is closely related that most important things presented in *ordo* have biblical source – Baptism, Word, and Eucharist. The readings, prayer and sacraments are transmitting rule of faith. The biblical stories – like Emmaus story – explain the source of Eucharist and Sunday’s assembly. The Pauline letters were read in the assembly and became some of the first books in New Testament’s canon. The liturgy shaped theology and theology shaped liturgy.

Lathrop points out that New Testament does not give us “a constitution of the church or service book.” However, the New Testament proclaims Jesus Christ, who is

⁶ Ibid., 97.

seen and known in ordinary things – “water for washing, words for telling important stories and for prayer, a shared meal with neighbor.”⁷ Lathrop describes very fundamental actions in this very simple and at the same time very powerful language.

Now, in late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, there are a lot of people who are talking about Jesus Christ. That name is used for many religious ideas present in our current cultures – for success programs and for self-realization plans, for politics of the left and of the right (. . .) [But] We need Christ, the historic biblical Christ, and not simply our own projections and ideas of him. So “church” is none other than the assembly that does these things in which we encounter Christ, in which the Spirit acts.⁸

The inclusivity of Lathrop’s project lays in the words that he uses to describe Christian worship. He uses very often “word” instead of “reading Scriptures,” “bath” instead of “Baptism,” “meal” instead of “Eucharist.” For these words can be used in praise and in lament in joy and in trauma, they encounter both – dead and life. Also, he prefers to use word “memory” instead of “mystery.” The reason for that is that “mystery” for Lathrop occurs more often in Roman-Catholic and Orthodox tradition than in Protestant.⁹

The book “Ordo: Bath, Word, Prayer, Table” is referring to this liturgical project presented in American liturgical theology. Dwight Vogel points out that Gordon Lathrop is appealing to memory – “where liturgical time is understood as an invitation to go to Bible times in our imagination and find salvation there,” and is appealing to mystery – “where liturgical time can be seen as incorporating us in a time-beyond-time, a sacred and mythic time that saves all time. Lathrop is appealing also to fantasy – “where liturgical time is experienced as imaginative “play” in which we see the world and

⁷ Ibid., 110.

⁸ Ibid., 111.

⁹ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 160.

ourselves in a way different from the here and now.”¹⁰ Therefore, the liturgy brings us to another dimension of reality in front of God's face, and at the same time puts us among the people together with our warmth on ground.

The category *anamnesis* is not just remembering about historical events in the past. It is something from the past that becomes real in the present. It transfigures and transforms the present reality. Therefore, Vogel and Lathrop understand Jesus's words “this is my body” as God's embodiment in the present liturgical experience. This dynamic is grounded in Paschal mystery and may be considered today as the contemporary Lutheran interpretation of sacrament.¹¹ For Gordon Lathrop and the authors of “Ordo: Bath, Word, Prayer, Table” the old is juxtaposed with the new and so that our usual way of understanding is “broken.”¹² Vogel states on the basis of Lathrop trilogy, that the broken understanding and transforming power of the Holy Spirit comes to “make all things new.”¹³ The church has to continue transmitting this depth dynamics in the basic pattern of liturgical time in the Church's life and this is its apostolic task.

Dirk Lange writes in the introduction to the “Ordo, Bath, Word, Prayer, Table”:

Liturgy is the vision of God's dominion distilled into ritual and the rhythms of our daily lives. (. . .) Liturgy is God's irruption into our lives, a theme that will be pursued repeatedly by the authors of this primer. Liturgy is not simply remembering of a past event but the distillation of that event as an irruption in the present moment. It is discovering the Cross present in the world today.¹⁴

Therefore, the apostolicity is implemented in the liturgical activity of the church.

The liturgy itself proclaims the apostolic Gospel in the simple patterns of bath, word,

¹⁰ Dirk G. Lange, Dwight Vogel, Edward Schillebeeckx, and Gordon Lathrop, *Ordo: Bath, Word, Prayer, Table: A Liturgical Primer in Honor of Gordon W. Lathrop* (Akron, OH: OSL Publications, 2005), 139.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 140.

¹² Paul Tillich's category of “the broken myth.”

¹³ Lange, Vogel, Schillebeeckx, and Lathrop, *Ordo*, 140ff.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

prayer and meal. It is not about the unreflective creation of new liturgical forms, but the juxtaposition of old forms with the new theological content. Liturgy is “God’s dominion.” It brings the liberating content and through it God irrupts in the present moment of our history. God’s salvation history becomes our salvation history. The past is becoming present and the community is becoming part of the kerygma narration on the death, trauma, and resurrection.

The mission of the church is nothing else but to preach the Gospel. This actualization of the *kerygma* means to juxtapose the history of Jesus Christ with the contemporary social problems. To proclaim the release in places of slavery and political oppression. To announce equality in places where social and sexual inequality prevails. To preach life and resurrection where death and doubt prevail. That is the consequence of Lathrop’s liturgical theology and the mission of the church today.

2.3. Dirk Lange’s Contribution on Liturgical Theology

The problem of sacrifice and the tragic element in the kerygma require a new interpretation. The problem noticed by Nietzsche and also by Berger lays on the masochistic tendency in the religion at all. In many religions there are sacrifice rituals and among others, cognitivist Scott Atran noticed in his book “In God We Trust: The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion” that sacrifice is also an essential part of Christian religion. The question is: Whether Christian message (*kerygma*) could be understand in a different way than in this kind of “masochistic” / “barbarian” way?

In the face of that, I present a bold and progressive concept of Dirk Lange in his book, “Trauma recalled.” He interprets the trauma in Luther theology from perspective of French Jacques Derrida and Maurice Blanchot. However, recalling Friedrich Nietzsche,

he points out that this German philosopher was also fine reader of Luther and he is, for Lange, a connection between our post-modern times and Luther.¹⁵ As a post-structural theologian, Lange agrees with Nietzsche to some point. However, he introduces a new term; which Nietzsche does not use in his reflection.

Let us recall, Nietzsche is reading the New Testament as philosopher and postmodern thinker, he criticizes Christianity in the soft spot of Christian doctrine of suffering, calling it the doctrine of pity. The death of a man causes pity. For Nietzsche, the pity is a sign of weakness and should be annihilated as soon as possible. In Christianity, the death of Christ is all the time remembering in Eucharist.

Trauma is the whole Christ event, the liturgical tools recall life, death and resurrection of Christ but what does it mean for liturgical theology in the post-structural world?

According to Lange, Luther meant that the liturgical language remains always indirect, and is not graspable in history. The promise is “heard” in life therefore it could not be grasped or systematized. It always returns in liturgy as an unconditional gift. As an example, Lange gives us Luther’s tower experience. Because he could not express its character in words he uses baptismal language: “Luther frames his autobiographical text not in terms of a unique insight through divine revelation but as a story of continual baptism.”¹⁶

If *kerygma* is so traumatic that it could not be spoken, then the liturgy is the way to express its traumatic content.

¹⁵ Lange, *Trauma Recalled*, 65.

¹⁶ Ibid., 125. “Baptism works as an opened metaphor through which Luther expresses something about his involvement in the happenings of the Reformation. The baptismal metaphor, of course, underlines the passive character of Luther’s involvement in things he did not always understand or control.”

Luther does not use hagiographical narrative but points to the ritual of Baptism, as it should be exercised every day, because “all Christians regard their baptism as the daily garment that they are to wear all the time.”¹⁷ Lange understand in that context the ministry not as a conscious, individualistic, personal, self-establishing act but “simply as an addition, an *accessio* – something that continually comes back, like an onset, as a force that returns and continually disrupts.”¹⁸ Admittedly Luther does not use the categories of “disruption” but he turns to the liturgical language, where he finds the embodied Word of God.

How in the front of Nietzsche’s critique of the sacrament can we understand sacrament today? Lange points out that the sacrament is first of all “disruptive.” He notes that Luther’s own sacramental language is very radical and disruptive. Jesus' words "This is my body" have caused a great debate and sadly divided Christians. Also, sacrament is paradoxical, because as it is in classic Protestant tradition is functioning as “*anamnesis*” – the enacted remembering act of the event, but also in the front of post-structural language the sacrament is a single, and unrepeatable special moment.¹⁹

The sacrament is *mysterion*, but not in that sense how Casel or Bouyer interpret, rather *mysterion* is mystery of God’s experience in the simple things. Lange considering the Jean-Paul Sartre’s question of “Qu’est-ce que?” – “What is this?.”²⁰ The question of “what?” is resounding in the question on eucharist.

What is the eucharist? – we will always be tempted to return to a presupposed origin. We will want to know what really happened and, if possible, we will want to “see.” To reenact and relive, the scene as in a movie. But through which lens

¹⁷ Martin Luther, *The Large Catechism*, in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 466.

¹⁸ Lange, *Trauma Recalled*, 127.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 128.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 65-67.

are we going to view the scene? Through the passion? Through the resurrection? Through a notion of sacramentality? Through Aristotelian or Thomistic metaphysics? Through the notion of sacrifice or perhaps through testament? Through a question of “direction”? through memorial or *anamnesis*? Perhaps through the Word alone? No matter how forcefully each argument is stated, these approaches all have one thing in common: they all apply a hermeneutic to the eucharist.²¹

Lange proposes an answer in the radical promise of life. Luther in his less polemical tractate “Treatise on the New Testament” writes that in the unity through love is abolished the whole law of Moses and appointed by God only “one law or order for his entire people, and that was the holy mass (. . .) And where the mass is used, there is true worship.”²²

Luther believes that the entire life is in baptism and it means dying and rising in Christ, and that worship is the place where “something” is happening. Therefore, the sacrament is not an “ending event” but constantly irrupts and calls us to participate. The liturgy invites people into divine reality. *Anamnesis* is in that context a communication between people and the divine revelation. This divine revelation is mystical and could not be grasped, but continually irrupts.

Lange rarely uses word apostolicity or apostolic. However, he describes in very poetical and Nietzschean language the conception of continual dissemination. The liturgical practice is always dissemination as both – death of God and promise. God is broken, fragmented, displaced, and disseminated that cannot be remembered. The promise is meaning and is sent out “through the doors of many broken pieces of bread.”²³ In that sense, God is permanently becoming “for us.” Neither can we grasp him or control

²¹ Ibid., 129.

²² Ibid., 130. WA 6:354, 19-28. *Eyn Sermon von dem neuen Testament das ist von der heylige Mass.*

²³ Ibid., 152.

him. My own notion is that the apostolicity depends on dissemination of the promise. God himself sends us in the sacrament. He is the bread and vine, and the promise offered in the given meal to those who are in need.

In the front of Nietzsche's critique on Christianity and its distorted reflection suffering post-structural theologians like Lange point out that the liturgy does not make in us comfort or prevent us from the suffering (like favorite Nietzsche's religion does). It gives us new perspective on suffering, the God's perspective. The liturgy points out beyond itself.²⁴

Nietzsche hates this delegation because he thinks that it is moving the problem to the afterlife. However, it should be noted that in this reflection there is no shift to the heavenly sphere and the reward after death. Rather, it is an indication that the suffering of the world is the suffering of Christ and the suffering of Christ is also our suffering. Liturgy allows us to confront human suffering with God's suffering and gives suffering a wider dimension.

Trauma theory might be helpful to re-interpret the phenomena of the cross and at the same time the essence of the *kerygma*. Cathy Caruth enacts in her research on trauma the question of survival and continual displacement of the trauma. Lange notices that ritual moves and "passes on" responsibility and he believes that particular in Christian liturgy that is important. He asks:

Could we say that the dark and inaccessible region – the execution of God on the cross – returns and haunts Christian liturgy as the question, How could someone die for me? How could God die? And, in even greater surprise, how could God die for me? Once again, the enigma of survival is posited: Why did I survive? This surprise itself displaces the easy notion of death, of God's death, as a

²⁴ Lange, Vogel, Schillebeeckx, and Lathrop, *Ordo*, 3.

sacrifice act. The surprise displaces the theory of sacrifice by the enigma of death and the question of survival.²⁵

My observation to that in the context of apostolicity, *kerygma*, liturgy and ecumenism is following: The *kerygma* has very traumatic content, namely the Cross, which even for Nietzsche's philosophy is problematic. As Lange notices, the cross is disruptive, as is sacrament. If apostolicity is transmitting the message of *kerygma* in the liturgy and in liturgical activity of the church, then the Christian message has deconstructive potential which divides the ecclesial institutions and every place of comfort. However, trauma has also potential for reconciliation and unity. This dialectical tension is also the content of *kerygma*, which is the death and resurrection – without death there is no resurrection – without Good Friday there is no Easter, expressing it in liturgical patterns.

In Lange's liturgical reflection one element is also very significant. Namely, he significantly emphasizes the importance of silence. Also, Lathrop begins with a fiery irruption that silences the bell and, in that silence, questions the relevance of the *ordo*.²⁶

2.4. Summary

Kerygma puts the church in the face of trauma, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The consequence of that message is more than Nietzsche observed, describing that event in the category of "pity." It is also unreasonable to describe the *kerygma* in nihilistic terms because "here and now" human beings face existential traumas in every suffering and sign of oppression. The theodicy and the problem of suffering could not be resolved in

²⁵ Lange, *Trauma Recalled*, 115.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 216-217.

the reasonable way after the holocaust and the events in the twentieth century, however Christ through his death is paradoxically closer to us even in the secular and post-secular times. The mystery of death and suffering are involving every suffering creature in the world. The mission of the church is to proclaim the Christ and his death and resurrection as event which reflects in every place where is the suffering and death, and less of hope. This is not only task of Lutheran churches but every church and community which gathers around the Word of God.

CHAPTER 3

APOSTOLICITY IN THE ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.0. Introduction

In this section, I presented two important documents assigned by Roman-Catholic and Lutheran representatives. “The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of the Justification”, both of them are important for common understanding of the mission of the church and apostolicity in ecumenical dialogue.

3.1. “Join Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification”—1999

On October 31, 1999 was assign the document “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification,”¹ it was a result of work done by the Catholic Church's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) and the Lutheran World Federation.

For many years there was a consensus on the justification between Catholics and Lutherans, however never has been done a common official document in that field. This lack of common recognition was noticed by theologians who worked on the Joint Declaration, *inter alia* in the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg.

The first draft of this document was written by Roman-Catholic and Lutherans theologians under the leadership of Harding Meyer. The first draft was sent to the

¹ Catholic Church, and Lutheran World Federation, *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub, 2000).

churches, for the recognition. Many churches accepted the draft but also wrote comments to it. Next step for the preparation was to collect the comments and to make revision. The final draft was accepted by Lutherans and Roman Catholics in 1999, by Methodist in 2006, and by Reformed churches in 2017.

The document states that a person is completely dependent on the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Therefore, what Catholics are saying about cooperation, they mean that personal consent is also an effect of God's grace, not human abilities.² Moreover, when Lutherans emphasize that through faith people receive forgiveness of sins, they do not deny renewal of the Christian's life. This soteriological perspective is saying more what stays behind the Lutheran and Roman-Catholic doctrine. What is important for these both traditions and where they put their emphasis.

Lutherans and Roman Catholic state that condemnation in the sixteen and seventeen centuries are still valid but they do not have "a church-dividing effect."³ Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification was "shaped by the conviction that in their respective histories our churches have come to new insights."⁴

The word of "church" used in the document is reflecting self-understanding of the churches, and does not intent to resolve the ecclesiological issues, however, for the Lutherans the question on the right teaching and the doctrine of justification is extremely significant for the ecclesiology.

The document itself declares as a step forward on the way to the overcoming the divisions between churches.⁵ At this stage, a consensus was reached on the fundamental

² JDDJ, Art. 20.

³ JDDJ, Art. 1.

⁴ JDDJ, Art. 7.

⁵ JDDJ, Art. 44.

issue, namely, justification by grace through faith. This issue was understood as an article on which the church stands or falls.

Of course, the declaration was criticized, mainly from the Protestant side. However, the Catholics' recognition that teaching in the Lutheran churches is consistent with the *kerygma* and the rule of faith is one of the milestones in ecumenical dialogue.

3.2. “The Apostolicity of the Church”—2006

“The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of the Justification” opened a perspective for forward discussion on the mutual recognition of teaching and the ministry within the Lutheran and Roman-Catholic churches. For the further step on this way we can consider the study document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity called “The Apostolicity of the Church.”⁶ My goal is not to present a detailed analysis of the document, but only to outline some of the conclusions reached by its authors.⁷

The document has four parts. The first part contains the biblical foundations on the apostolicity. The second part is about the relationship between the Gospel and the Church presenting a wider spectrum on transmitting the Gospel in the Church’s teaching. The third part is about apostolic succession and the ministry. The last part contains reflections on the doctrine and the Scripture in both Roman-Catholic and in Lutheran tradition.

For our reflection on apostolicity as the mission of the church the most important part is the second and fourth part. The question in the front were authors was “What

⁶ The Lutheran World Federation and Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Apostolicity of the Church* (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2007).

⁷ I am very grateful to Prof. Theodor Dieter with whom I was working in Strasbourg, at the Institute for the Ecumenical Research to understand the content and argumentation of this document.

makes church apostolic?” There are two-simple-alternative in the differences between Catholics and Lutherans, namely that Lutherans see the apostolic succession only in the teaching, and the Roman-Catholics see their apostolic succession only in the unbroken episcopal succession. Both stereotypes are “misleading.”⁸

The apostolicity is not only expressed in the teaching and the succession of the office, but also in the lifestyle, art, and liturgy. In the Middle-Ages there were attempts to revive the *vita apostolica* (“apostolic lifestyle”) in closed communities dedicated to work and prayer. The Waldensian movement promoted the apostolic lifestyle and encouraged laymen to read the Bible and proclaim the Gospel. In the architecture, the figures of apostles were depicted, number twelve occurred very often in the iconography and in the architecture. In the liturgy the Roman Canon calls the twelve apostles in the prayer *Communicantes*, after the *Te igitur*. The benefits from the offering were announced to all who hold “the catholic and apostolic faith.”⁹

Martin Luther spoke rather rarely about “the apostolic church.” However, he understood the apostolicity as the continuity in practicing “baptism, the Lord’s Supper, the office of the keys, the call to ministry, public gathering for worship in praise and confession of faith, and the bearing of the cross as Christ’s disciples.”¹⁰ Luther and other reformers wanted to reject what is contradictory to the Gospel and Luther did not reject the apostolicity of the Roman church. According to the Augsburg Confession Art. 7, the Gospel and the sacraments rightly administrated are the essence of the church. Beyond

⁸ AoC, Art. 67.

⁹ AoC, Art. 89-91.

¹⁰ AoC, Art. 95.

this apostolic nucleus, “traditions” may be accepted, however they are not as necessary for constituting the church and its unity.¹¹

The document notes that the Trent Council did not present a dogmatic ecclesiology, but left this problem open.¹² Post-Tridentine ecclesiology was dominated by the polemics with Protestants and emphasizing the papal office and succession from Peter. The reason for that authors of the document see in “the aim which was to identify the institutional entity in which Christ’s truth is normatively taught, his efficacious sacraments administered, and a pastoral governance exercised in a legitimate manner, especially by reason of apostolic succession of Pope and bishops in a church assuredly still sustained by Christ’s promised assistance.”¹³

Biblical and historical analysis indicates that the authors came to the conclusion that the apostolicity must be taken as a complex reality with many elements.¹⁴ The elements of apostolicity are present both in Roman-Catholic and Lutheran churches. The ecumenical perspective is official recognition of them. One of these elements – the basic teaching was recognized by “the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of the Justification.” The question is still on the mutual recognition ministry and the episcopal office. However, the document gives some ecumenical perspective on that referring to “differentiated consensus.”¹⁵

¹¹ AoC, Art. 101.

¹² AoC, Art. 104.

¹³ AoC, Art. 105.

¹⁴ AoC, Art. 127.

¹⁵ AoC, Art. 138.

FINAL SUMMARY

In my thesis I described Early Christian dogma – “*apostolicam ecclesiam.*” the element of the Creed. According to it, apostolicity of the church belongs to the marks of the church. I analyzed that dogma in the frame of systematic theology and liturgical theology in the perspective of Friedrich Nietzsche’s critique.

I focused on theologians who had an impactful contribution on the understanding of apostolicity. I described inclusive missiology and liturgical theology of the Apostle Paul, because he was accused by Nietzsche for making Christianity a “decadent religion.” As well in the socio-theological part as in liturgical part I described Martin Luther’s contribution on apostolicity.

Martin Luther struggled with the crisis of apostolicity in the late Middle-Age church. The church declared itself apostolic but there was a lack of apostolic teaching, therefore the reformers wanted to bring the Gospel on its proper place. Luther understood church as apostolic in the eschatological reality, because church is in constant tension between the presence and the future, and the exclusivity and inclusivity. The apostolicity of the church lies in its mission namely in the proclamation of the apostolic Gospel. For Luther, the church is where the Gospel is rightly preached and sacraments are correctly administered.¹⁶

The sacramentality of Martin Luther led to the conclusion that the reformer strongly emphasized communion as the focus of the Holy Supper. The “Communion of

¹⁶ WA 39/2, 176, 8-9.

Saints” is the holy exchange between gathered assembly and “the Saints and Christ.”¹⁷ The exchange of sins and exchange of holiness. The sins or burdens people share with each other and the holiness Christ share with us, therefore through liturgical activity the assembly is justified but still not fully rightness. The assembly is in constant tension but what keeps the church is the Holy Gospel and the promise in which is included. *Kerygma* is the cry of apostles about the death and resurrection of Christ. The death and life are traumatic content of the Gospel, that Nietzsche attempted to undermine.

Friedrich Nietzsche criticized Christianity of his time for being focused on the violent sacrifice of the man, the pity and compassion to him. However, Christ himself – according to Nietzsche – pointed out something different. He did not speak about life after life but existential life “here and now.” Nietzsche wasn’t focused on apostolicity; however, he accused the apostles of betraying Christ. Paul and his co-workers invented Christianity – the religion of pity, the religion of sin, atonement and hierarchical structure to oppress people. In the comparison with Buddhism, Christianity is a lie and “decadence.” The content of *kerygma* is actually content of underworld religion – mystery religion that appeared in Roman Empire to destroy it and ancient culture.

The problem of Christianity as a mystery religion is complex. I tried to make an outline of the problem noticed by Friedrich Nietzsche but also by Peter Berger, an American sociologist, who analyzed in his book “The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion” the process of secularization. He did not write about apostolicity directly, but the “loss of plausibility” and “the secularization process”

¹⁷ Martin Luther, “The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods,” in *Luther’s Works*, ed. E. Bachmann (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1960) vol. 35, 50-51.

strongly influence the issue of apostolicity of the church. Berger noticed that especially Protestantism tears off Christianity from the mystery. The Christian message became merely intellectual content that works within the “plausibility structure” of the church. Less attendance in churches has serious consequences – also for apostolicity – because the Gospel reaches fewer people. The Christian message – *kerygma* – is no common anymore. The church has become an organization that declares itself as having apostolic content and patterns, but people are no longer interested in that content and they do not feel grasped by the liturgical patterns.

In the ecumenical part of my work, I presented the positions of several theologians whom I consider important in the contemporary discussion on the apostolicity. My choice is completely subjective and my aim was to present their liturgical theology and their interpretation of the *kerygma* in the post-Nietzschean era.

I described Odo Casel’s theology of the mystery because he had a great impact on liturgical theology in the Roman Catholic Church, especially in the liturgical movement. He approached Christianity as Nietzsche did, namely he discovered in Paul’s thought pagan influences and elements of mysteries.

Another theologian, Romano Guardini, a legend of Catholic liturgical theology, made strong statement that the church is apostolic so far as it keeps apostolic teaching. According to him, the church is supra-personal, it is the human community reborn into the Kingdom of God. In the context of apostolicity his reflection is valuable because he pointed out that not an individualistic decision but God’s decision, realized in the community of the church, saves. Apostolic church is the church here and now, but also the church of the apostles and this collective dimension is apostolic.

Louis Bouyer stands against novelties in the liturgy. The liturgy is not an arbitrary matter, it is the proclamation of the *kerygma* about Christ and even if it is a mystery, it is a holy and apostolic mystery. The liturgy is for him a “living pattern” which means that apostolicity is truly proclaimed in the faith of the assembly gathered in the church. The “living pattern” is living when it is truly celebrated. The apostles and church are gathered together under the Mystery of the Cross, and that makes the church apostolic.

In the Lutheran section, I presented two important American theologians, Gordon Lathrop and Dirk Lange. For Gordon Lathrop the mission of the church is nothing else but to preach the Gospel. This actualization of the *kerygma* means to juxtapose the history of Jesus Christ with the contemporary social problems: to proclaim the release in places of slavery and political oppression, to announce equality in places where social and sexual inequality prevails. To preach life and resurrection where death and doubt prevail. That is the consequence of Lathrop’s liturgical theology and the mission of the church today.

Dirk Lange noticed that the *kerygma* has a traumatic content, namely the Cross which even for Nietzsche’s philosophy is problematic. The cross is disruptive and this is reflected in the sacraments. If apostolicity is transmitting the message of *kerygma* in the liturgy and in liturgical activity of the church, then the Christian message has a deconstructive potential which divides the ecclesial institutions and every place of comfort. However, also trauma has the potential for reconciliation and unity.

In the last chapter of the ecumenical part, I presented two important documents assigned by Roman-Catholic and Lutheran representatives. “The Joint Declaration on the

Doctrine of the Justification” is saying that the teaching on justification in Lutheran and Roman-Catholic churches is rightly proclaimed. However, there is still different traditions and theologies though they no longer have a destructive effect on the unity of the church. The document “The Apostolicity of the Church” analyzes a deep common understanding of apostolicity from various perspectives. Its complex content is opening a new Lutheran-Roman-Catholic understanding of the ministry, apostolicity, and also the mission of the church in the contemporary society.

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