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THE SUMMATION OF THE HABILITATION THESIS

The present habilitation thesis puts in evidence, in a systematical way, the scientific contributions of the author in the domain of the Moral Theology in the theological space of the Romanian school, subsequent to the achievement of the title of doctor in theology. In the section referring to the *scientific achievements, professional and academic on disciplinary and interdisciplinary thematic directions*, we have identified and put in evidence four directions of the theological research, assumed and developed during the years. These directions of the research developed in the area of the theological research are: 1). Ecclesiastical dimension (liturgical-sacramental) of the Moral Theology; 2). Philokalic-hesychnic dimension of the Moral Theology; 3). The approach and the assumption of the post-modern world and thinking on the coordinates of the Eastern patristic theology; 4). The ecumenical opening of the Moral Theology. In the presentation sustained by the own contributions in these directions, we have not omitted the general frame of the research in the Romanian orthodox theology and the significant contributions of the Romanian theologians, or of the theologians from outside our country.

In what concerns **the first direction of research** we have started from the underlying and framing of the Moral Theology themes in the ecclesiastical space. This thing is imposed all the more because we are living in a world in which the positive secular knowledge, through psychology, sociology, psychoanalysis, biology and medicine, tends to easily substitute to the theological perspective over the world and the man, imposing, through “scientific objectivity”, the moral relativism as the unique truth and the natural normality of the human condition. . In the researched that we have undertaken we have tried to show the complementarity but also the distinctions which are imposed to be acknowledged between the discourse of the Moral Theology, and the one of the humanistic sciences. So the lay space sums and circumscribes, usually, both the source of the morality, and the ethical norms, to the psychic and somatic capacities and needs of the individual, to the historical experience and to the social pressures. For the lay ethic, the problem of the integration and the framing of the morality in an absolute truth, divine and transcendent to the man and to the society, doesn't exist. The psychological and the social moral, consider the man as being a autonomous creature (avtonomos), and the moral *a question of convention* which disputes and configures the content between the absolutized necessities of the individual and the social, historical, economical and cultural constraints. In this case ethics doesn't exceed the psychic and somatic determinisms of the person (the individualist ethics), or the social and ideological one (holistic ethics). On the other hand, in the religious non-Christian space, the things are the same, except only that in the circle of the morality, besides the somatic and psychic determinisms of the individual and of the society, there appears one more reason: the divine norm, or the transcendent norm. But, if we take account about the fact that the naturalistic religions (non-Christian and not-revealed) they are not but the consequence of the specific

actualization, in history and in different cultural spaces, of the capacity of the sacred from the structure of the human conscience, than, the ethics of this religious type, though seem to propose a transcendent source, they do not exceed in fact the, the individual and the collective psychism. The moral norm doesn't spring out from the revelator and creator act of God Who Is, but only from the subjective projection of the man about the god and the revelation that he imagine. The source of the ethics remains, also in this case, the creature (the psychic and the social), and the moral integration of the life is reduced to death – because the creature cannot exceed the ontological condition submitted to the death, no matter how much religious, ethical and cultural sapience would gather up! Neither in Christianity, *the source of the moral* isn't approached and seen in an unitary way. The Roman Catholics determine the source and the criterions of the spiritual life from the “general human reason”, criterions which they justify after in a related to revelation way. The Protestants, though they try to underlie the ethical source and the criterions on “sola Scriptura” (only the Bible), they end also in the psychology and sociology, because the biblical Revelation is put in dependence and circumscribed to the “individual reason” of the individual, and the ecclesiastical experience and the Tradition, as presence of the Holy Ghost in history, they both are missing. The Eastern Christian Tradition highlights that the moral dimension springs not so much from a deciphering and understanding of the man as a creature in the world and of this world, but from the fact that the man is deiform in the most primarily part of his structure and structurally craves for the likeness with God. *The moral would mean not so much the knowledge, the imposition, and the conforming to some ethical principles, meant to assure to the man his survival in the world, but that existential way which to express his ontological status as image of God, but also the intrinsic vocation of this statute: the likeness with God. In this way, the moral becomes the way in which the man expresses himself and achieves himself as a man, and through which he fulfills his meaning towards the world in which he has been created and finalizes, in the same time, also the meaning of the world itself. And this (the moral) is possible to the man not by virtue of a simple freewill, governed by the natural reason, but as a consequence of the participation of the human liberty to God through grace.* The religious-moral life it is, therefore, *a spiritual life* or the life of which the Holy Ghost provokes into the man. And this can happen only in Church. *The Church is the place of coming into senses, the place of the creature, the place of deification, the place from which springs out the Life, the place and the source of the religious-moral life.* The Church, understood as Body of Christ, as Embodiment made permanent in history, makes possible the real presence in our world of a Life which springs out from eternity and which communicates the Eternity. In Church, the man has the possibility of participation and impartation with the godlike works placed by the Resurrected Christ in His human nature, which He elevated above death. The organic integration in the Church makes possible the partaking at the godlike abundance of life and, so, the life of the man becomes spiritual. This is a life in Christ, is the life of God which increases in man on the measure in which he imparts himself, the fuller, from the works of the fullness of Christ. The depth of the created nature of the man achieves in the Mystery of the Church the rays of the godhood which make possible the deification toward which the man has been built. In the Church the believer receives the power and the glory which make him resembling with the Prototype. The dwelling of the godlike life into man doesn't mean the absorption of the man into divine and neither the abolishment of his liberty, but only *the ontological normalization of the man* through that because the human nature is divinely and supernaturally activated. *The spiritual life or the religious-moral life, it is in a primarily way an ecclesiastical one.* In fact, outside the Church it is not possible the spiritual life, but only, at most, a psychological moral or different ethical rationalistic-humanistic ways.

The second direction of our research in the space of the Moral Theology refers to the philokalic-hesychastic dimension of the spiritual life. We've started from the patristic

premise according to which the knowledge of God and the speaking about Him are “organically tied to the sight of the uncreated light” and to the communion of the man with God. To theologize means “entering in the upper room”, watching the high one and describing after, in words (theological ones) the enlightening presence of the Word. The Moral Theology is a sight of the “flame of the things” (Saint Issac the Syrian), namely a work of discovering of the truth of the heavenly and earthly ones; Moral Theology becomes a theognosis or the *experimental* way of uniting with God. The theological education in general and especially the one of the department of moral, it has, so, an absolute special status: it is an initiation on the way of the unity of the man with God. The theology begins with the liberation of the man from passions, continues with the co-working between man and God and, through a process of ceaseless *unification*, it is transformed in the *contemplation of the Holy Trinity* (teoria tis aghias Triados) and in *deification of the man* (theosis). The theology is, so, identical with seeing God, and the theologian is synonymous with the one who sees God. It is a sight sprung out from the *co-habitation* of the theologian with the Word, which means also “having” God. In theology it is a priority to know *about* God, cut to *to pray to* God because the prayer makes the heart of the theologian “welling of God”. “If you are a theologian, pray verily, and if you pray, you are a theologian”. But the prayer, as also the theology, has as knowing and speaking subject the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the true subject of the theological knowledge. He makes known the ones about God, he works the revelation which will be fulfilled by the Word (“from Mine He will take, to herald to you” John: 16: 15). The theology, in the perspective of the Easter Fathers, it is, so, far from the simple intellectual searching; it is, rather, the expression of “evidence”, imparted to the dogmatic theologian. That’s why the way of the theology it is the way of *deifying unity, the experience of impartation with God*, Who makes from an erudite a theologian, because the theologian must not only inform himself intellectually about God, but *to be filled with God* (“so after we have received Him inside us, to become what He is”).

In what concerns **the third direction of research in Moral Theology**, we have kept in our sight the contextualization of its discourse to the present times. In this sense we have tried a modern lecture of the post-modernity in the wide context of the metaphysical concepts which generated it, to identify the possible converging points. “Not the critics of the post-modernism from the point of view of the Orthodoxy, neither that of the Orthodoxy from the point of view of the post-modernism, but a certain spontaneous dialogue which to surprise both of them as they are”. Starting from diverse analysts of the post-modernity, as would be: Marshall McLuhan, Alvin Toffler, J. F. Lyotard, Gianni Vattimo, Virgil Nemoianu, Mircea Cărtărescu, we have determined some characteristics of the modern and post-modern thinking of which the theological discourse is forced to take them in consideration to not risk to place himself outside the time in which we live. The post-modernity would have in view that human condition, existential and social, which takes place on the following coordinates: the post-industrial society; the centralization of the information and of the communication; the transition from the revolution of Guttenberg to the televised image and the one of the virtual existence by computer; establishing of new report between men and women – with all that proposes and presupposes the feminism; the tension between the globalization of all kind and the local cultural identities; the new report of the man with himself and through the self conscience mediated by self analysis (psychoanalysis); the relativisation of the values and certitudes; the parody as tackling, a the playful one, of the history; typical post-modern religiosity.

From the communist isolationism to the Islamic enclaves, from the ultra-conservative Asian regions to the authoritarian African ones, there is felt the coagulation and the imposition of a new type of world and international community, name by Marshall McLuhan „the planetary village”. It is the consequence of the penetration and of the impropriation in all

the mentioned worlds of new types of informational technology, through television, TV cable, Internet, etc., which have made the world “transparent”. Each individual, despite of the borders of the political systems, has achieved the almost unlimited access to the *entire* information, pulling himself out in this way from isolation even in the most insular areas. “No wall, writes M. Cărtărescu, (and in this context the wall of Berlin it is the metaphor at hand) real or ideological could not resist to this informational bombardment, which, more efficient than any propaganda, has spread the democratic thinking and the way of life everywhere. The Earth is surrounded today by an “informational cloud” as democratic as the solar light”.

The world has become a “planetary village”, a world “quicker, more transient, more anarchical, more colorful”, within which in the same time is affirmed also the *uniformity*, detrimental to the local cultures, but also the *knowledge* together of the cultural spaces, religious or not, through that they are pulled out from the anonymous regionalism and put to participate between and among them also as forms of the pluralism from the human cultural patrimony. The super-communication through Internet mediates the interior questioning, often through a tragic tottering, which comes from the meeting with the other one, with the other culture, with the other religious ethos. Giani Vattimo speaks about the sentiment of *derealization, of des-insertion* of the man, firstly from the canon of his immediate reality and, latter, through the gradual losing of the sense of reality.

The post-modern message is one of *destruction* of philosophical systems, either theological and ethics, or of the language or of the symbols with universal pretensions, or of the linearity of the history. At the origin of the post-modernity stays in the conscience of a failure which operates a deconstructive displacement. Therefore, the post-modernism denies the unique paradigms of any kind, denies already made believes, denies language and symbols imposed by a unique centre. It rejects also the transcendence and the absolute of God, but also the contingency and the neutrality of the world. It is pantheistical in many of its segments, but doesn't exclude neither the Personal God, and different at all than the creation. The connection between God and man it is discontinue, and impossible to be framed in a rigid coagulated system, and, therefore, it is imposed the religious pluralism, the contextuality, the diversity, the individualist spirituality, the popular religiousness. Everything must be denied. *The nihilism* appears as the unique possible foundation. Though, constituting stages of the human history, the modernity and the post-modernity are (in a mandatory way!) aimed by the soteriological and transforming work of the Church. They take part from the history of the salvation and, therefore, the modernity and the post-modernity, they must be assumed!

The fourth direction of research: the ecumenical opening of the Moral Theology, is begins from acknowledging the confessional division of the Christians. The theological premises of the Eastern patristic cogitation it is that the Orthodoxy and the holiness represent the natural way of the human, while the heresy it means the man's getting out from his authentic nature. Then, as the primordial falling hasn't radically destroyed the godlike image of the creature, in the same way in each Christian confessional formula there is preserved something from the ecclesiastic spirit of the One and Apostolic Church. *The Orthodoxy appears at a very profound level as being implicitly given in all the Christina confessions which confess the faith in the Holy Trinity and in Jesus Christ as Savior of the world.* Consequently the ecumenical dialogue becomes mandatory.

We know that outside the Church there is not salvation. But, who can establish mathematically until where is the Church and what territory is comprises? Who can say that few steps forward from the border of one canonical Orthodox jurisdiction begins a wilderness totally deprived by the godlike grace? or that a certain churchly life, be it even of a small intensity, which starts with certitude from the One Church, Congregational, and Apostolic, doesn't blow by there, also over communities from outside the Orthodoxy! Behold, therefore, where it is inscribed the theological obligation of the Orthodox Church to participate to the

ecumenical dialogue, either Christian, or interreligious. On a certain level, the ecumenical dialogue must be understood as a theological effort through which the Orthodoxy identifies its way in which the right worshipper seeds of the Embodied World and spread in the field of the world by the Apostles they have brought fruit in all the places, times and cultures of the humanity, a theological effort, but dialogical and common with the other Christian confessions, to separate the wheat from the weed, a work of the Holy Ghost through which the canonic Orthodoxy recognizes its own ecclesia in the “churchly life” of the divers Orthodox communities and tries to increase it toward ferment it in the dough of the world.

Our contributions to the direction of research show above, in the area of the Moral Theology, continue, explain, deepens and complete the experience and the intellectual effort of the great teachers of moral (Constantin Pavel, Orest Bucevski, Ion Zăgreanu, Nicolae Mladin, Ilie Moldovan, etc.). The first research direction, respectively the ecclesiastic dimension of the Moral, has been initiated by the Metropolitan Bishop Nicolae Mladin and continued by Father Ilie Moldovan. Following the line of these two illustrious forefathers, we have developed the identification of the source of the moral acts in the sacramental rebuilding of the man, and following the line of the report between culture and moral of the professor Constantin Pavel, we`ve initiated a wide approach, a essay of integration of the modernity and post-modernity in the Eastern patristic thinking.

In the section referring to the *evolution and development plans of the own professional, scientific and academic (research/teaching direction)*, we`ve highlighted the contributions and the didactical methods used, as also the evolution plans of the own professional carrier, in didactical and scientific plan. In scientific plan we`ve highlighted our presence at international and national seminaries with works meant to put in dialogue the Moral Theological thinking with the new medical knowledge and with the possibilities of the genetic engineering to intervene in the human genetic patrimony. That`s why, in the scientific plan, we`ve expressed our wish to continue the participation at the scientific manifestations of the Romanian Patriarchy, of the faculties of Orthodox Theology from Romania, of another prestigious theological foreign institutions, as also in the frame of the public conferences on interdisciplinary themes of theology-humanistic knowledge.

The present work has at its basis a good bibliographical argumentation, which we`ve systematically illustrated on the four research directions mentioned. Doesn`t miss from the content of the present work the memoire regarding the reception and the visibility of the own contributions, justified with the magazines, authors and pages on which appeared references about our work and theological thinking. In the same time, we`ve illustrated with some texts the way into which the theological work elaborated by us in these years has been received and appreciated by the Romanian theologians. Our theological contributions published in the last years after obtaining the title of PhD in theology represent a solid basis on which we will build in the future a unitary and profound vision concerning the presence and the work of the Church in the world and in the life of the man.