

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

In his new book, “Scaffolds of the Church: Towards Poststructural Ecclesiology” Mr. Hovorun presents issues in Orthodox ecclesiology. This book is useful, not only for Orthodox Christians, but for all those who are sincerely interested in Orthodox theology and its possibility to confront modern challenges. This is a very convincing attempt to make further step into the issues of church structures trying to reconsider prevailing ecclesiological positions, especially those of metropolitan Zizioulas. In an interesting and pervasive way the author gives an historical and theological overview of Church’s structural development. Convincingly the author shows that church’s administrative structures have been the product of the development and adaptation of the Church in order to confront different historical circumstances. Each way of organizing Church structures in early Christianity had one goal in mind, to save the unity of the Church.

The author made a long trajectory showing Church’s administrative development, from community to the territory, and from territory to national model of organization. The change from community to territory was already evident in the canon 4 of the First Ecumenical Synod where church decided to turn to the territorial model of church organization following the Imperial structure. The same could be said for *pentarchy*, which was developed under the influence of Imperial order and structural changes in the Imperial administration itself. Territorial organization of the Church, which took place already in 4th century, has been blended in 19<sup>th</sup> century with national freedom movements, which followed old territorial model, but with a new brand name – *canonical territory*.

Especially important in this book is the author’s attempt to give a new interpretation of “borders” in the church’s life and the Canon Law. Using the Roman idea of Empire, where Empire is always spreading in order to

conquer the whole world, the author makes a distinction between the terms such as frontier and borders. Borders today have been understood as lines protecting one’s territory, while frontiers in the Roman Empire represented starting points for further expansion. In other words, *Pax Romana* never saw the end of its expansion – expansion was unstoppable and the Empire could have taken over the whole world. If some part of the world were not under Rome that was considered only as temporary situation. Christianity was born in this world, with sense of universality and infinity. Each part of the world is going to be conquered by Empire, and the Church shared this thinking waiting to conquer the rest of the world. This gives even more eschatological understanding of borders, we do not only protect ourselves but we have been called to perceive the whole world as a Church “in becoming”. The Early Church was less structured and so more open for expansion and less interested in borders and questions of what is beyond those borders of the church. Pastoral issues at that time raised the question of borders of the church, namely in which way to accept those who abandoned the church during prosecution. An exception were theologians from North Africa, but even the Cyprian famous phrase “*salus extra ecclesiam non est*” was not been accepted in the church worldwide.

Mr. Hovorun takes on the difficult task of interpreting one more time the famous canon 28 of Chalcedon. In his interpretation, this canon has been laid into the framework of two organizational types of the church, communitarian and territorial. In his interpretation, the author convincingly proved his thesis that this canon is about community and not territory. In order to illustrate the issue of autocephaly the author presents the history of almost every Orthodox autocephalous Church and the way they got autocephaly/ became autocephalous. The book provides in-

teresting insights into this issue, showing that autocephaly movement in the nineteenth century was not bad all in all, but had emancipatory effects on the Balkan people in particular.

Presenting the Church organizational models as issues of Church scaffolds, which helped Her to move through the history, the author is opposing the idea that structures are part of Church's ontology. The author remarks that when we believe that primacy is part of the nature of the church then naturally, hierarchy becomes the same ontological part. However, in the opinion of Mr. Hovorun, the Church is not hierarchical in Her Being. He gives examples of some of Church functions, such as a bishop. Bishop was an adjective, episkopos – the one who oversees. It was the title given to the priest. Soon the adjective episkopos turned into noun and became a fixed and specific service distinct from priests. St. Ignatius is specifically responsible for the development of the idea of mono-episcopacy and Didascalia furthered this idea. Saint Ignatius' idea obviously helped the Church to confront issues in his diocese but at the same time had many side effects – the routinization of the services in the church and reduction of charisma. That would bring the first opposition to this mono-episcopacy idea in a Montanist movement who was nostalgic for an idea of the Church before mono-episcopacy. Hierarchy was a product of Neoplatonism and the Roman world so that three levels of the hierarchy (bishop, priest, deacon) soon substituted all other charisms and services in the early church. Such acceptance of hierarchy changed the perception of these services. Diakonia changed from non-hierarchical order into hierarchical privilege. The gap between clergy and laity, i.e. “the formation of administrative structures in the church increased the distance between ordained clergy and laity.”

From the time Christianity became the official religion, bishops were substituting pagan priests whose service was to offer a holy cult for people. Church orders slightly slipped into the same box, they focused on

the sacraments and their performance, taking less care for community itself. The celebration of Eucharist became exclusive prerogative of the hierarchy as ministers of the holy cult. The growing gap between people and hierarchy has created a gap between the community and the Eucharist. Explaining this development in more detail the author clarifies how it turned out that Eucharist became holy relict, and not the communal act in the Church's life.

At the end, the author concludes that hierarchy does not belong to the Church's ontology but rather serves “as instruments of convenience and outcomes of conventions.” Namely, the Church needs to accommodate Her structures like She always did throughout history. The Church in today's world should not be perceived as a structure but more as a relationship. Priesthood in Christianity does not have the role to “exploit the restrictions of access to the holy, but to help the members of the community to use as fully as possible the abundance of grace granted by Christ to everyone without measure (John 3: 34).” In other words, church structures should not be perceived as ontological but relational, something that Nick Crossley calls “relational sociology” discovering relational character of social systems.

As a conclusion of this massive work, we could quote the author himself concerning the church structures as part of Church's scaffolds in history, “All structures have from time to time deviated from their initial purpose and rationale. Some of them have perished as a result. Others have been renewed over time, such as, for example, the clerical orders of bishops, presbyters, and deacons. In other cases, completely new structures have emerged under old names, as has occurred with autocephaly. It has always been up to the church to decide which structures to forget and which to reinterpret or remake. This means that the church can create new structures when it deems necessary.”

This book is important giving us strategy on how to overcome problems in the realm

of the Orthodox Ecclesiology. I would highly recommend this book to those especially interested in Orthodox ecclesiology and Canon

Law believing that this book will open their horizons in order to face other Christian communities and the modern world in general.

**Rastko Jović**

**Dietmar Schon (Hg.), *Dialog 2.0 – Braucht der orthodox-katholische Dialog neue Impulse?*** (Schriften des Ostkircheninstituts der Diözese Regensburg, Band 1), Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet 2017. ISBN/EAN: 9783791729237

Der katholisch-orthodoxe Dialog ist in eine Krise geraten, die offensichtlich seine Entwicklungsdynamik beeinträchtigte und einen Stillstand im gesamten Prozess der gegenseitigen Annäherung verursachte. Solche und ähnlich pessimistische (oder doch realitätsbezogene) Diagnosen des aktuellen Standpunkts im Dialog zwischen zwei Kirchen hört man immer öfter von verschiedenen Stimmen und Beteiligten an einem der wichtigsten Prozesse der ökumenischen Zusammenarbeit. Ob diese in etwa grauen Tönen gefärbten Stellungnahmen der wahren Lage entsprechen und tatsächlich das für den ökumenischen Dialog ungünstige Momentum richtig beschreiben, sind zweifelsohne die gravierenden Fragen, mit denen sich seine Akteure heutzutage konfrontieren müssen.

Der hoffnungsvolle Anfang in den späten Sechzigern des letzten Jahrhunderts – die gemeinsame Initiative des Ökumenischen Patriarchen Athenagoras und Papst Paul VI., wie auch die Beschlüsse des II. Vatikanischen Konzils – hatte eine ganze Generation der Hierarchen und Theologen zum offenen und brüderlichen Gespräch ermutigt. Seine erste Ergebnisse waren die von der Gemischten Internationalen Kommission für den theologischen Dialog in achtziger Jahren verabschiedeten Dokumente. Jedoch kam es in der letzten Jahrzehnten des 20. Jahrhunderts zu einer Stagnation in den Beziehungen zwischen Katholiken und Orthodoxen. Mehrere, nicht nur kirchlich-theologische, Faktoren führten zu diesem ungünstigen Wandel im katholisch-orthodoxen Dialog, die seinen

Prozess heute immer noch beeinflussen. Was sind die konkreten Gründe dieser Stagnation, kann man die Probleme präzise lokalisieren und gemeinsam überwinden und inwieweit sind die Kirchenvertreter bereit, die bequeme Sicherheitszone der innenkirchlichen Normen und Narrative zu verlassen, um einen neuen Schritt im Dialog zur Erfüllung seines letzten Ziels zu machen?

Mit den obigen Fragen beschäftigt sich der kürzlich erschienene Tagungsband „Dialog 2.0 – Braucht der orthodox-katholische Dialog neue Impulse?“, herausgegeben von Dr. Habil. Dietmar Schon O.P., dem Direktor des neugegründeten und neu konzipierten Ostkircheninstituts der Diözese Regensburg. In dieser ersten Ausgabe der Schriften des Ostkircheninstituts, lassen sich zwei bedeutende Punkte erkennen. Einerseits werden in den Beiträgen der beteiligten Teilnehmer die mannigfaltigen Aspekte des ökumenischen Prozesses angedeutet, seine historische Perspektive geschildert und dessen aktuelle Hauptprobleme diskutiert. Andererseits drückt die Neugründung einer solchen Einrichtung die klare Bereitschaft zur Fortsetzung und Wiederbelebung des katholisch-orthodoxen Dialogs aus.

Die Komplexität des ökumenischen Dialogs zwischen der Römisch-Katholischen und Orthodoxen Kirche wird in seinen unterschiedlichen Blickpunkten dargestellt. Dementsprechend erfährt der Leser aufgrund der Bemerkungen und Ansichten prominenter Teilnehmer viel über seine historische Entwicklung wie auch über die gegenwärtigen