

# SCHMEMANN'S APPROACH TO THE SACRAMENTAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH: ITS ORTHODOX POSITIONING, ITS CATHOLIC INTENT

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[...] we need in *this* world the experience of the *other* world, its beauty, depth, treasure, the experience of the Kingdom of God and its Sacrament – the Eucharist.

Alexander Schmemmann, *The Journals*, p. 24–25.

The nominalist contagion has become transversal in contemporary culture. Schmemmann sees it as pervasive in Western Christianity, but it can be also found in the Eastern Church in the excessive ritualism and formalism associated with Byzantium: in sum, Orthodoxism and the issue of clericalism. Moreover, the transversality of nominalism is such that it practically defines secularism with its own universalist pretensions. The two great church bodies that see themselves as apostolic and catholic would do well to look back to Schmemmann's criteria for the right kind of consolidations, especially in regard to sacramental realism, to break the hold of nominalism. In exploring this theme, we shall note Paul Ricoeur's critical hermeneutics to bring forth the peculiarities of Schmemmann's Orthodox positioning, and, we shall briefly allude to some facets of Donald Davidson's theory of radical interpretation to suggest how the dialogue might proceed, as well as Bulgakov's own take on *Una Sancta* and where it meets one of Schmemmann's crucial concerns.

## 1

The issue of 'Mapping the *Una Sancta*' would have interested Father Alexander Schmemmann. To begin with, from the time of his upbringing in Paris to his mission on behalf of the Orthodox Church in North America, his relationship with the Roman Catholic Church was been never less than meaningful.<sup>1</sup> Along with his

<sup>1</sup> In his *Journals* he would recall his student life in Paris and the positive experience of stopping by to hear parts of the Catholic Mass. He associated with it the same intuition that he experienced as an Orthodox and will have a place in this essay, namely, 'the coexistence of two heterogeneous worlds, the presence in this world of something absolutely and totally "other." This "other" illumines everything, in one way or

stature among modern Orthodox theologians and besides his familiarity with the Catholic world, his quest for a satisfying expression of Orthodoxy's call to catholicity makes Schmemmann an especially pertinent figure for the meeting's theme. His concerns are primarily directed at his own church's difficulties in that matter. In regard specifically to the Eastern Church, the new cultural contexts in which she increasingly finds herself put into relief how much ethnic baggage from her peoples' ancestral homelands have been brought with them to those contexts. And this would include an uncritical attachment to a later 'illustrative' Byzantine style of worship that gradually dilutes the ontological grounding of her earlier worshipping practices that assumed sacramental realism. A pernicious nominalism gradually showed itself in its excessive formality that came to obscure the reality of Christ and His Kingdom as revealed in the Gospels. In his posthumously published *Journals*, he confesses, 'I realise how spiritually tired I am of this "Orthodoxism", of all the fuss with Byzantium, Russia, way of life, spirituality, church affairs, piety, of all these rattles [...] All of it appears to me to have no common measure with Christ and His commandments'.<sup>2</sup> And, in a later entry, he expresses his disquiet in this way: '[...] I feel that the West is my native land, my air. Rome, not to mention Paris, are closer to me than Athens, Istanbul, Palestine [...]'.<sup>3</sup> So, the West matters to him enough that he cannot possibly pretend not to belong to it. As far as the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church is concerned, the same kind of realism is called for.

It is the lasting influence of Byzantium on the Orthodox mind that lies at the root of Schmemmann's personal *angst* about the matter. However, it should be said that not every Westerner who is also Orthodox feels the same. Nor does Schmemmann ignore the impressive creativity of truly lasting import for the Christian Church in the early and middle periods of Byzantine culture. Among these achievements, he recognises enduring significance in the patristic writings, the dogmatic settlements of the Ecumenical Councils, and, with some reservations, the ascetic culture and prayer life of monastics. These contain the universalistic core of the Eastern Church's doctrinal teaching and devotional practices. For him, they speak to the human condition and its renewed and enhanced possibilities, generated by God's philanthropic and saving action on behalf of all humankind. Nevertheless, Schmemmann does raise the important issue of the Orthodox Church's capacity to effectively express the catholic

another. Everything is related to it—the Church as the Kingdom of God among and inside us.' *The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann (1973–1983)* translated by Juliana Schmemmann (Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000), 19. Besides his interest in the works of Catholic theologians, specifically those associated with *La nouvelle théologie* and the idea of returning to the Fathers as an important resource for overcoming the dominance of neo-scholastic theology in their Church, he became an Orthodox observer at the Second Vatican Council. From the Catholic side, Fr Richard John Neuhaus's admirable and admiring recollection of him in, 'A Man in Full', written on the occasion of Schmemmann's posthumous publication of his *Journals* in the influential periodical, *First Things* (January, 2001), gives us a picture of a man to be reckoned with.

<sup>2</sup> *The Journals*, 146.

<sup>3</sup> *The Journals*, 210.

vocation that inheres in her. With the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Byzantine culture that characterised the Church at that time remained relatively undisturbed, and, in the aftermath of its isolation from the West, it continued to inform the essential style of the national churches in the East that retained it as an expression of their Orthodoxy during the intervening centuries. Not only do they persist today as fragmented jurisdictions, the catholic intent that they claim will seem odd and idiosyncratic in contexts that are not organically Orthodox. It is an issue that preoccupied him from very early on in his writings. For example, in his foreword to *The Historical Road of the Eastern Orthodoxy*, originally published in 1963.

I have always been amazed by the absence within the Orthodox Church of historical reflection aimed at the whole Church, at the Church as a totality. Our historical memory seems to be fragmented into local and national memories, just as—alas—is our Church life itself. Yet without the restoration of a common and truly 'catholic' memory, without a common understanding of our common past, we shall not recover that catholicity, that universality of Orthodox life and experience which we confess and proclaim to be the very essence of our Tradition.<sup>4</sup>

By his own admission, the writing of this book represents a personal reflection, aiming notably at detecting critical moments of transitions 'in the long historical pilgrimage of Orthodoxy'.<sup>5</sup> He often discovers in them ambiguous ecclesiastical policies that still compromise the catholic vocation of the Eastern Church. Yet, though finding the situation bothersome and a source of spiritual discomfort, Schmemmann maintains a high view of the witness that the Orthodox Church is meant to provide 'for the life of the world'. In his later *Journals*, he formulates the state of mind that he mostly maintained throughout in his writings:

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy* (Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977), v. In *The Journals*, a much later text, Schmemmann leaves us with this observation: '[...] nothing at all has harmed the Christianity and the Church as much as the merging of Christianity with nationalism, of the Church with the natural order of things'. (152) In both cases, the ontological difference of the Church is sacrificed to a reified onticity.

<sup>5</sup> In the section of his useful and insightful presentation of modern Orthodox theologians, Father Andrew Louth's opinion of *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy* was limited to being 'derivative' and a projection of Schmemmann's dislike of Peter the Great upon the Byzantine emperors. (Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: From the Philokalia to the Present* (Lonkon: SPCK, 2015), 198. Granted that there is no particular surprise in the actual 'givens' pertaining to the history of the Church that were included in Schmemmann's version of it, it reveals much more than Louth supposed in his summary opinion. Reading back into the earlier work from the last ones, including *The Journals*, *The Historical Road* reveals a discrete but complex reasoning about where things went wrong. Though the core conditions of Orthodox faith remain intact, it has the obligation to be more than that what it has been and, indeed, is. Such is the conviction and message that remain constant throughout his writings.

I feel that my heart cries for something ‘other.’ But I do not see any way out. To leave? Where to? I cannot leave the church—the church is my life. But as I am now, I cannot serve the church as I understand that service. I firmly believe that Orthodoxy is Truth and Salvation and I shudder when I see what is being offered under the guise of Orthodoxy [...].<sup>6</sup>

Given this confession, and considering the thematic content of Schmemmann’s intellectual labour, a primary motivation for his efforts can be understood as an advocacy for an Orthodox Church that he *can* effectively serve in good faith. As he puts it, it is not the one that he finds and is immediately involved in, it is ‘other.’ Nevertheless, Orthodoxy is the bearer, in Christian terms, of Truth and Salvation. So, the task ahead of him promises to be largely revisionist, namely, the reviewing and realigning the instances and categories that genuinely characterise Orthodox life. This will imply the recuperation of that ‘common and truly “catholic” past’ from within the fragmented ecclesial bodies. Yet it seems clear to him, as it does to us, that this cannot be done without adequately dealing with the West (i.e., the Church of Rome) and its own peculiar historical path. There is no place where Schmemmann makes this more explicit than in his Introduction to *Ultimate Questions: An Anthology of Modern Russian Thought*.

## 2

Thinking particularly of Russian religiosity and the theology and philosophy that it inspired, Schmemmann admits that the quest for ‘total unity’ is the Orthodox theme that underlies the various contributions that constitute the volume. This should remind us, he thinks, of the ‘inner-universalism’ that characterises early and middle Byzantine culture. He notes that the Eastern Church’s propensity to confine the Orthodox experience as something strictly ‘eastern’ can only find its cure through the challenges of Western thought and may be thus ‘overcome from within.’<sup>7</sup> We take this to mean that the self-inflicted limitations that Eastern Christianity imposed on itself—surely for historical reasons as well—need to be loosened. From this, a more authentic expression of the Orthodox sense of universal mission can emerge, along with a more lucid acknowledgment of its historicity and cosmic dimension.

In the process of introducing the contributing authors’ reflections on eastern and western modes of thinking and being, Schmemmann offers the following summary of the historical situation of the catholic and apostolic Church that we can easily grasp and that has everything to do with the subject we have at hand: ‘The two halves

<sup>6</sup> Schmemmann, *The Journals*, 31.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *Ultimate Questions: An Anthology of Modern Russian Religious Thought* (Crestwood: Saint Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1977), 8. The authors of the anthologized texts are: Weidlé, Khomyakov, Solovyov, Florensky, Fyodorov, Rozanov, Berdyaev, Fedotov, and Bulgakov.

of the ancient and primitive Christian world were gradually separated and transformed from “halves” to two independent, self-sufficient “wholes”, tragically losing the consciousness of belonging to each other.<sup>8</sup> This repression of consciousness, regarding the co-belonging of the Catholic Orthodoxy of the East and the Orthodox Catholicism of the West, seems progressively more difficult to sustain. At the very least, self-conscious apologetic retrenchment on both sides only and obviously serves as a confirmation of the significant otherness with which they consider one another, be it with sympathy or not.<sup>9</sup>

However, Schmemmann never abdicates his Orthodox positioning and its thematic emphasis on unity, oneness in Christ, the wholeness of creation, and conciliarity.<sup>10</sup> Equally telling is the claim made in ‘The Ecumenical Agony’ (1976), in which he sees the import of an Orthodox perspective in ecumenical meetings as consisting largely in its bringing into sharper focus in the spiritual destiny of the West, ‘of that Western culture which has truly become today *the culture*’.<sup>11</sup> In his *Journals*, Schmemmann expresses clearly some forty years ago how this destiny appears to him.

The West—secular, hedonistic, technological, etc. lives by its renunciation of Christianity. I emphasise, not by indifference to Christianity, but precisely renunciation (happiness, economics, sex, abortion ...)

The revolutionary West lives by its fight with Christianity, with the Christian man, *homo Christianus*

The East is divided between Western renunciation [...] and fight with the West under the sign of either revolution or Islam.<sup>12</sup>

The rootedness of the rebellion in the West, its dogmatic secularism, conjoined simultaneously with insistent Islamic *Jihad* (however its meaning about struggle is ultimately defined and put into practice), engenders its own mission to confine and weaken the historical import of Christianity. It furthermore deems that talk of or thought about ‘God and his Kingdom’ would actually be threatening to its own purposes. ‘What God reveals to people is unheard, impossible, and the tragedy consists of this deafness. And this revelation can no longer penetrate Western life without ripping it apart’.<sup>13</sup> Something conceived of as crucial for the life of the world, namely, the Christian *kerygma* has been systematically made to appear harmful for

<sup>8</sup> *Ultimate Questions*, 7.

<sup>9</sup> Edward Siecienski’s works on *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) and *The Papacy and the Orthodox: Sources and History of a Debate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) have, for example, documented in impressive detail the constant back-and-forth work by both ‘halves’ to justify their doctrinal differences within the common conviction of catholicity and apostolicity, to which both lay claim.

<sup>10</sup> As a sustained reflection on authority in the Orthodox Church, there is a pre-Vatican II text, ‘Towards a Theology of Councils’ (1962), where Schmemmann argues for a conciliar unity, the catholicity of which is assured by a ‘council of bishops’, functioning as a necessary hierarchical instance. *Church World Mission: Reflections on Orthodoxy in the West* (Crestwood: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1979).

<sup>11</sup> Schmemmann, ‘Ecumenical Agony’, *Church World Mission*, 202.

<sup>12</sup> *The Journals*, 212.

<sup>13</sup> *The Journals*, 122.

human well-being and needful of gradual marginalisation. Hence, there is all the more reason to think more thoroughly and critically about the co-belonging of the communions to establish what they both must suffer and confront together. But this also involves an effort to ascertain just where, each in their own way, the sanity of ontological realism that both presuppose in their theology and sacraments tend to yield to forms of 'nominalism'—a term that Schmemmann uses to indicate idolatrous flight from content into form for its own sake. Otherwise expressed, it is where ecclesiology becomes ecclesiolatry.

For example, Pope Paul VI's visit to New York and Washington in 1979 occasioned a reflection on the state of the Roman Church. In *The Journals*, Schmemmann noted in the celebrations surrounding the event, that the fixation was on the Pope *qua* Pope. Where is Christ, or even Saint Peter for that matter, in all of this? 'Only *he* is needed, the Pope is needed as manna, as physical presence of the supernatural. [...] Again, a thirst for the sacred. And I fear for religion'.<sup>14</sup> But the most interesting comments are stated in terms of paradox. Firstly, 'The tragic paradox of Catholicism is that without an absolute obedience to the Pope, without the cult of the Pope, Catholicism falls apart'.<sup>15</sup> And yet, Schmemmann goes on to comment that the majority of Catholic faithful, even after a papal visit, go on living their lives as if the papacy had nothing to do with them. Secondly, and now bringing his Orthodox Church into the picture, he wonders about the issue of clericalism: in the event that the papacy becomes less monolithic and clericalism less a factor (as it currently endeavours to be), succumbing to secular priorities, then he reasons, 'clericalism will, in any case, become stronger in *our* Church because we will be the last truly apocalyptic carriers and worshippers of the *typicon*, of canonical law and of clerical triumphalism. One must pray for the Church!'<sup>16</sup> That is, the Orthodox Church might be sought after for the assuring of strict conservatism that that her claims to be the 'ancient' faith might encourage, namely, a kind of utopianism of the past.

But, here too, we find in a backhanded way that we belong to each other: both run the risk of allowing themselves to be drawn into forms of idolatry that betray the realism of God's saving acts, assumed and celebrated in the early Church. Both are, thereby, faced with the increasing irrelevance of Christianity as a spiritually transformative presence before the naturalising process aligned with globalisation. The loss of relevance is proportional to the nominalism that has supplanted the eschatological and realist conviction that Christians once had in regard to the sacraments of the Church. This has affected in different ways both communions and is the result of the propensity to divorce religious formality from the content of faith, individualistic piety from participative communion in Christ, utopic versions of the eschaton from the Kingdom within and with us. In other words, a dramatic tension

<sup>14</sup> *The Journals*, 231.

<sup>15</sup> *The Journals*, 232.

<sup>16</sup> *The Journals*, 232–33.



exists between the realised, or at least, imminent Kingdom, of which the Gospels give witness, and the illustrative versions of it, ardently wished for but purely textual and projected into some imagined future ideal that ought to determine how the present should be organized in anticipation—that which Sergius Bulgakov called ‘anthropotheism’. For Schmemmann,

[...] we live in a frightening and spiritually dangerous age. It is frightening not just because of its hatred, division and bloodshed. It is frightening above all because it is characterised by a mounting rebellion against God and his Kingdom. Not God, but man has become the measure of all things. Not faith, but ideology and utopian escapism are determining the spiritual state of the world.<sup>17</sup>

The sense of the eschatological that constituted the binding force by which Christian believers in early times perceived the presence of the Kingdom in their Eucharistic celebrations seems to him to be seriously compromised. He notes, for instance, a ‘discrepancy between the demands of Tradition on the one hand, and the nominalism and minimalism of liturgical piety and practice on the other hand’.<sup>18</sup> The inconvenience that this represents is that, having limited the effects of the liturgy to the confines of the physical church, it then has no power to shape the world-at-large. Schmemmann’s celebrated work in the domain of liturgical theology, and perhaps everything else that he wrote, constitutes, at least tacitly, an appeal to re-appropriate the sacramental realism postulated in the ecclesial event around the celebration of the Eucharist, overcoming thereby forgetfulness of the primacy of the Kingdom, of Paradise, and resisting the drift into ritualism and textualism.

### 3

The historical setting for Schmemmann’s theological project is the middle period of the twentieth century in Paris and the growing proximity of the Russian émigré scholars with the Roman Catholic theologians who sought to reinvigorate Catholic theology by returning to its patristic sources. Writing from within the spirit of shared exploration, Vladimir Lossky’s suggestion, advanced in the Introduction to his *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, remains pertinent:

If while remaining loyal to our respective dogmatic standpoints we could succeed in getting to know each other, above all in those points in which we differ, this would undoubtedly be a surer way towards unity than that which

<sup>17</sup> Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom* (Crestwood: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1997), 9–10.

<sup>18</sup> Schmemmann, “Theology and Liturgy”, *Church, World, Mission*, 131.

would leave differences on one side. For in the words of Karl Barth, ‘the union of the Churches is not made but we discover it’.<sup>19</sup>

*In illo tempore*, the idea of getting to know each other better in the points under contention translated fundamentally into getting to know Gregory Palamas better—i.e., moving beyond Martin Jugie’s negative assessment of ‘Palamism’ and Orthodoxy. From the Orthodox side, the aim would have been to see in the Palamite synthesis a consequent and culminating explication of Orthodox spirituality and what it means to live and think apophatically according to the mode of the uncreated. As such, it ought to be judged a genuine contribution to Christian theology, regardless of its origins in late Byzantium and its being practically lost from view for centuries. In truth, it constitutes a theological project that should be granted its deserved space among others deemed worthy of reflecting the Christian faith and its catholicity.<sup>20</sup>

Along with its convincing advocacy on behalf of Palamas’ theological promise, Norman Russell’s *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age* provides a useful reconstruction of the Russian émigré theologians’ retrieval of Palamite thought, tracing a network of influences and positionings between the main protagonists among them. Although Schmemmann is never mentioned in the account, Kiprian Kern, Schmemmann’s preferred teacher, receives special acknowledgement for his contribution to the campaign around the figure of Palamas, a contribution that received much moral and material support from the Benedictine monastery of Chevetogne in Belgium. In Russell’s presentation of Kern’s thinking, he underscores its two vectors: on the one hand, the continuing importance of the Fathers in general and Palamas in particular; on the other, the liturgy and the Eucharist. Both have in common the Orthodox insistence on the primacy of experience and non-dialectical, participative relationality. In sum, where they differ is in the former’s close alignment with the hesychast spirituality that grew from within

<sup>19</sup> Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. (Cambridge: James Clark & Co., 1957, repr. 1968), 22. Lossky’s *Seven Days on the Roads of France* (Yonkers: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2012) is a moving account of his love and loyalty to France under attack, but also his devotion to the saints of France, especially those who were free from later Germanic influences in the medieval Roman Church. The ‘New Preface’ to this work by his son, Fr Nicholas Lossky, accentuates his father’s open-hearted Orthodoxy, but also reveals that his discipleship to Etienne Gilson led to friendships with Fathers Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac, and Yves Congar. Apparently these were among the original audience of the lectures that became *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*.

<sup>20</sup> The conviction that a fairer reading of Palamas is still held persistently by the Orthodox side as potentially useful for strengthening the bonds between the communions. It can be found notably in appeals made by Fr Nicholas Loudovikos who maintains, ‘It is impossible to find one Western scholar who completely rejects Palamas *due to a deep knowledge of his theology*’. (his italics—‘Initiating the Discussion: “For the Fall and Rising of Many”: St. Gregory Palamas at the Crossroads of Interpretation’ in *Analogia* 3.2 (2017): 1). On this, see especially Norman Russell’s crucial work, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). Edward Siecienski also appears to suggest something of the sort in Palamas’ proposal to resolve the *Filoque* controversy, a proposal that follows closely that of Maximus the Confessor, in his book on the subject.



Eastern monasticism, emphasizing on *ascesis* and deification (i.e., divine union, attained through purification and illumination). About this vector and in relation to John Meyendorff, Schmemmann's friend and colleague in those Parisian times as well as later at Saint Vladimir's Seminary in New York, Russell states neatly that, 'The next step was to be taken by Kiprian Kern's pupil, John Meyendorff, who was there to inaugurate a new era in Palamas studies'.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, though left unnamed in Russell's account, Schmemmann's publication of *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (1966), 'Dedicated to the Memory of Archimandrite Kiprian Kern, February 10, 1960', confirms his taking forward Kern's convictions concerning the experience of the *mysterion* in the liturgical prayers, or more specifically, in the Eucharist. The situation of Schmemmann's discipleship in relation to Kern—who was, in fact, his spiritual father—is made even more obvious, as the work that Father Alexander wished to be his most decisive textual offering to the Church, *The Eucharist*, bears the same title as Kern's work to which he refers on occasion, *Evkharistiya*.<sup>22</sup> It is the eschatological realism in the sacramental life of the Church that may contribute to the whole, all-embracing, and total vision that must define the Church's catholicity.<sup>23</sup> And the thought from *The Eucharist* that we might keep in mind as we seek to bring this out is the following: 'In the tradition of the Church, nothing has changed. What has changed is the crisis consists in a lack of connection and cohesion between what is accomplished in the Eucharist and how it is perceived, understood and lived'.<sup>24</sup> It is that which is realised and effectively consolidated in the Eucharist that needs to be repeatedly rediscovered and expressed in words that are adequate to the real depths of the symbol that provides the conditions for synergetic union.

#### 4

<sup>21</sup> Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, 74.

<sup>22</sup> An entry in *The Journals* also reveals Kern's place in Schmemmann's life. His ordering of pictures on his desk reflect purposely decisive influences in his life and leaves one with the impression of having a totemic character: 'On a shelf over my desk, I arranged the picture of Bishop Vladimir (who ordained me); Father Cyprian (professor of Liturgics, friend); in a beautiful blooming garden, my father—our last picture together, at the Schmemmann gravesite, where he is buried now, my father and his five sisters. When I die, nobody will know any longer what huge layers of my life are reflected in these pictures. And the picture of Solzhenitsyn and me, the day of his confession and communion in Zurich', (174).

<sup>23</sup> In his *Orthodoxy and the West* and citing Metropolitan John Zizioulas, Christos Yannaras puts the matter in this way: 'Orthodoxy does not constitute the criterion of the Catholic Church; the Catholic Church is the criterion of Orthodoxy' (*Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Identity in the Modern Age*, trans. Norman Russell, [Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006], 285). This is a good rule that is consonant with Schmemmann's thinking. Owing much thematically to Schmemmann's early writings, Yannaras deals explicitly with this issue as well, albeit less sympathetically relative to Catholicism. 'The Religionization of the Ecclesial Event: Historical Overview', *Against Religion: The Alienation of the Ecclesial Event*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2013), 130–66.

<sup>24</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, 9.

Schmemmann had little patience with speculative theology and academic niceties, for example, extensive use of footnotes and bibliographical references to relevant counter-proposals. But he does set up certain conceptual parameters that provide him with a heuristic tool to correlate the unchanging and the culturally relative, the ontological and the ontically derived. He sees this as an 'eternal tension' and as characteristic of an Orthodox approach to the Church, her mission, and the world to be saved. In 'Ecumenical Agony,' he asks, for instance, '[...] if ours is, as we always claim, the *true faith*, has not the time come to show—to ourselves in the first place—how it works in life, in that eternal tension between the total, absolute and truly apophatic transcendence of God and His real and wonderful presence in this created, fallen world?'<sup>25</sup> Also, he typically organizes the issues of Orthodox Church history and liturgy by distinguishing layers (or levels, or strata) that are seen as constitutive of them. Within each, their diachronic character involves the ebb and flow of crises and consolidations that attend to changes in historical and cultural circumstances, that refer to the often ambivalent issues of articulation and connection within the absolutely unchanging and the problematics of the changing and potentially nominal. In a short address to Orthodox university students, he offers this general observation: 'The entire history of the Church is in a way the history of her mission, that is, of her relation to and action in the world. And as we look into the past, we discover there a rhythm, which I think could be defined as the rhythm of crisis and consolidation.'<sup>26</sup> In *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, where this crisis and consolidation view of church history is particularly notable, the self-evidencing Church emerges from her Judaic matrix to configure the reality of a new Israel with a universalist vocation in her worship. Here, crises represent inevitable challenges that appear in the course of history. Configurations of political and cultural forms of life involve processes of constant re-figuration. It is ever-changing and subject to idolatrous temptation, investing the yearning for the infinite in finite forms and manifesting itself in endless argumentation and self-justification. While these are dissonant in relation to the maximalist expression of both the content of faith and the Church, their temporal and worldly dimensions are not disrespected and beyond redemption. On the other hand, consolidation appears as the struggle to secure the content of faith in strict correlation with the sacramental realism that sustains the Church's enduring prophetic presence on behalf of the salvation and life of the world. Though its meaning is unchanging, it is, nevertheless, available to human experience, the justification of which takes the form of a gift 'from above,' recognised in the Ordo of the Church's liturgy. Therefore, the object of liturgical theology is,

<sup>25</sup> Schmemmann, 'Ecumenical Agony,' *Church Mission World*, 208.

<sup>26</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, 'The Mission of Orthodoxy,' (Chesterton, Indiana: Ancient Faith Publishing, 1994), 12 (adapted from a lecture given in 1968).

To find the Ordo behind the 'rubrics,' regulations and rules—to find the unchanging principle, the living norm or 'logos' of worship as a whole, within what is accidental and temporary: this is the primary task which faces those who regard liturgical theology not as the collecting of accidental and arbitrary explanations of services but as the systematic study of the *lex orandi* of the Church.<sup>27</sup>

By Ordo, he means, then, not the historical development of the Church's sacramental system and its particular order. He associates it rather with the Eucharist, an event indicative of a realised presence of the Kingdom already at hand in *this* world. As 'logos of worship,' the Ordo actively structures (*lex orandi*) the *logos* of belief (*lex credendi*), implying the creative effort to articulate right-thinking with right-praxis. However, what is crucial is how the upper end of the eternal tension is, for Schmemmann, safeguarded in the supra-temporal factor of the Ordo:

The worship of the Church has as its real centre the constant renewal and repetition in time of the one unchangeable Sacrament; unchanging, that is, in its meaning, content and purpose. [...] The Eucharist is the actualisation of one, single, unrepeatable event, and the essence of the Sacrament consists first of all in the possibility of the conquest of time [...].<sup>28</sup>

As Schmemmann expands his thinking about the Ordo, he associates the supra-temporal aspect of the Eucharist, celebrated in the Divine Liturgy, with the non-sacramental 'liturgy of time' (Vespers, Matins, Hours). These assure the connectedness with the temporality of the cosmos and its rhythms, situating the worship of the Church within the worldly reality it aims to save and transform. Thus, the Eucharist and the liturgy of time are 'connected in such a way that this connection actually constitutes the Ordo in its general and basic form'.<sup>29</sup> But what is relevant for us is the persistent presence of the transcendent supra-temporal conserved in the Ordo and its correlation with the eschatological experience of the Kingdom. For this, Schmemmann proposes a law of 'development,' proposing that '[...] changes in outward form are frequently determined by the necessity of preserving inner content, of preserving intact the succession and identity of the experience and faith of the Church under all changes in the outward circumstances of her existence'.<sup>30</sup> Thus, with the advent of the Empire, the rise of monasticism, and the Byzantine

<sup>27</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Crestwood: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1966), 39.

<sup>28</sup> Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 43. In *The Eucharist*, the idea of the eternal tension receives this formulation: '[...] if [the liturgy] is served on earth [...], it is accomplished in heaven, in the new time of the new creation, in the time of the Holy Spirit'. (218)

<sup>29</sup> *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 42.

<sup>30</sup> Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, 109.

Synthesis, new layers in the life of the Church emerged and necessitated alterations capable of retaining the dignity of the Ordo at its centre and, with it, the uncreated energy communicated in the Eucharist.

At this first level, we likewise encounter the Gospels and the Apostolic writings, presenting us with a maximalist picture of Christ that calls for a maximalist commitment of faith. They are constitutive of the ‘inner content,’ the core of the Christian faith that calls for insistent realisation through sacramental participation. The action suggests a movement of recuperation of that which is radically given in an antecedent way. It is anagogical rather than dialectic: the consolidations that might follow the crises are not properly progressive and surely not dialectic. ‘I see the error of any dialectics that proceed with thesis, and synthesis, removing possible contradictions, I think that openness must always remain, it is faith, in it God is found, who is not a “synthesis” but life and fulness.’<sup>31</sup> This non-dialectical position, assumed by Schmemmann, is, by his own definition, decidedly Orthodox and can eventually be an important aspect of what ‘the Orthodox man’ can contribute to the mapping of *Una Sancta*, namely, the primacy of experience of divine gifting: ‘[...] that I was a part of Hegel’s or Kant’s life leaves me completely indifferent. The gift of life is in inverse proportion to the gift of ideas.’<sup>32</sup> But with even more pertinence,

[...] the Orthodox man begins with the ‘end,’ with the experience, the breakthrough, the very reality of God, the Kingdom, the Life—and only afterwards does he clarify it, but in relation to the experience he has had. The Western man rationally arrives at and evokes the ‘end’ from a series of premises. The Orthodox often expresses that ‘end’ quite poorly in theology. For the

<sup>31</sup> *The Journals*, 47.

<sup>32</sup> *The Journals*, 28.

In what can be construed as a nearly direct response to Paul Ricoeur, who describes himself as a ‘post-Hegelian Kantian,’ but whose critical hermeneutics could appear at first sight with Schmemmann’s crisis / consolidation approach. Ricoeur’s ‘post-Hegelian Kantism’ is permanent in his work but becomes particularly recognised in his proposed resolution of the hermeneutical problem, inherited from Wilhelm Dilthey’s aim to create a specific epistemology for the historical sciences. Dilthey’s solution consists in distinguishing ‘understanding,’ necessary for grasping the interiority implied in the range of human cultural productions, from the objective explanatory approach of the natural sciences. What is relevant for our purposes is how much the preoccupation with hermeneutics (and, thereby, language) dominated the philosophical and theological discussion of mid-twentieth century France and the extent to which this is reflected Schmemmann’s own critical bent when dealing with Orthodox matters, particularly Orthodox tradition. In addition, writing in the 50s and 60s of the last century in that atmosphere would imply at least tacit reference to existentialism and Nietzsche’s legacy, including that of God’s death. Schmemmann was no exception—and neither were the Orthodox—Zizioulas and Yannaras with their personalist responses that paralleled those of Ricoeur’s and his Catholic colleagues in the movement *L’esprit*. What interests us, however, is just where Schmemmann is exceptional in his usually calm factoring of the cultural agitation of his time into an Orthodox perspective. His consolidation / crisis approach is distinctly different than that of the Protestant Ricoeur and that which might be implied in the Roman Catholic idea of doctrinal development.

Westerner, the end somehow disappears, is diluted in elaborate constructions.<sup>33</sup>

Schmemann's liturgical theology contemplates the living tradition of the Church as non-dialectical tension between unchanging self-donating God, encountered in the Eucharist, 'sacrament of the Church and unity par excellence',<sup>34</sup> and the demands of contingent historical contexts. The former is postulated as that which effectively (and affectively) communicates the Kingdom in symbolism directly and immediately related to the experience. As a function of this primary positioning, the latter reveals a nominalist tendency, seeking to substitute surreptitiously conceptual distinctions, insights, or embellishments for the integrity of experiential content. This being the case, ontological connectedness would sustain the catholic intent of the eschatological realism that Schmemann recognises in the Eucharist and, extensively, to the intelligibility of both personal and cosmic reality. This stands over against the varied manifestations of nominalism that cultivate dichotomies and ultimately rely on discursiveness in lieu of bodily and transformative experience.

5

Schmemann makes much of being attentive to the spiritual destiny of the West for all that it means for the entire world, and he would see the Roman Church as part of it. But, as mentioned from the beginning, he is far from ignoring the creeping infiltration of nominalism in the Eastern Church in relation to Byzantine culture and even claims it is responsible for the failings of the Christian Church. '[...] More and more I am convinced that the root of evil about which I wrote (i.e., the isolation of the Eucharist from its eschatological, hence cosmic and historical meaning) is not in the West, but in Byzantium, in undigested Platonism, in the platonic heresy about time'.<sup>35</sup> (Hence, the importance he attributes to the theology of time as also constitutive of the Ordo.)

In a stream of journal entries, he raises questions about the possible relevance for contemporary humanity of Pseudo-Dionysius' *Church Hierarchy*, a standard reference point for Byzantine theology. He thinks that advancing such a metaphysic has resulted only in 'the reduction of the Church to a mysterious piety, the dying of its eschatological essence and mission, and, finally, the de-Christianisation of this world and its secularisation'.<sup>36</sup> He feels alienated from the world that deems itself Christian and very much a part of the secular one that Christ has come to save and where the Church must remain to continue the work: '[...] in the Bible, there is

<sup>33</sup> *The Journals*, 110.

<sup>34</sup> *The Eucharist*, 95.

<sup>35</sup> *Journals*, 314.

<sup>36</sup> *The Journals*, 316–17.



space and air; in Byzantium the air is always stuffy. All is heavy, static, petrified'.<sup>37</sup> The onus falls heavily, for him, on the Platonic residue that remains in Byzantine thought, where the world is treated as an indifferent reality. For this reason, the Church gradually turned its back on the eschatological and very biblical concern for the salvation of the world and its life.

Nevertheless, our question as Christians—Schmemmann's reasoning continues—is how to live in the real world with God and in God. 'Byzantium's complete indifference to the world is astounding. The drama of Orthodoxy: we did not have a Renaissance, sinful but liberating from the sacred. So we live in non-existent worlds: in Byzantium, in Rus, wherever, but not in our own time'.<sup>38</sup> *Grosso modo*, the issue with the sacred is that it brings into the picture its opposite, the profane. This would represent an unfortunate dichotomization, sustained by a nominalist tendency, belying not only the fullness of salvation that comes with Christ, but also the reality of transforming participation as exemplified in the Eucharist. In other words, it represents a prime example of the mysteriology that create the conditions for the religionization of Orthodoxy.

So, along with his ample criticism of the West's decidedly nominalist tendencies in conceiving Church life, Schmemmann demonstrates good grace in turning his attention principally to his own communion's responsibility (not at all common among Orthodox authors) in contributing to the conditions of the Church's failure in giving effective testimony to the power and glory of Christ's Kingdom realised. 'In Orthodoxy there is no less apostasy, no less betrayal than in Catholicism or Protestantism, maybe even more; *but none of it is made dogma, or proclaimed to be the truth*'.<sup>39</sup> The problem seems to lie around the mysteriology and the weakening of the *mysterion* at work in the eschatological realism of the Eucharist, the gage of the Church's fullness that needs to be preserved. It will require some pruning of the rationalising scholastic intrusions, as well as the deviating Byzantine accretions, that have found their way, in the Orthodox understanding of the Divine Liturgy. The rehabilitation of the deep grammar of the *ordo*, the original principle of correlation between the celebrant and the people who together seek communion with Christ/God, requires also that of the symbol, the ontological sense of which has been diluted, even lost—hence our ecclesiastical malaise and with it the diminishing or any claim for catholicity that is more than nominal.

<sup>37</sup> *The Journals*, 213.

<sup>38</sup> *The Journals*, 213.

<sup>39</sup> *The Journals*, 81. *My italics*. We are left by this with the impression that, if so, the eventual failure of the Western Church might be somewhat derived from the Byzantine constraints imposed on the vitality of Eastern Christianity to positively affect Latin Christianity, or, at least, to have become such that Rome saw it as obligatory to oppose as a matter of ecclesiastical principle and, perhaps, convenience. Whatever the justificatory apologetics, they have been, up to now, effective enough to maintain the two traditions with the conviction that one of them is the holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and not the other—or, at least, not so much.

## 6

For Schmemmann, the typical Orthodox argument against the predominance in the West of the scholastic approach to theology underscores its systematic rational reconstruction of theological and ecclesiological givens. Lacking an authentic understanding of apophatic thinking, it has had the effect of accentuating argumentation at the expense of experience of divine life-giving reality. As we saw above, Schmemmann recognised this as a generalisable trait of Western thought. However, his concern is less with rational systemisation and more with how scholasticism played a role in the suppression of the symbolic realism that the Church Fathers acknowledged in the sacraments, namely, as the embodiments of reality's mode of expression.<sup>40</sup> For them, the content communicated by the sacrament is not produced as if by a miracle in discontinuity with the natural order, or what one would normally expect from it. The sacrament is rather drawn forth from the very sacramentality of the world, or creation, given to man/Adam as gift, by which he may eventually participate in divine life. The Christian sacrament realises the potential of the gift, manifesting it in its maximal form, perhaps even its maximal intelligibility. 'The "mysterion" of Christ reveals and fulfils the ultimate meaning and destiny of the world itself'.<sup>41</sup> Christ is the life of the world by saving and renewing it in its sacramentality, as both cosmic and eschatological.<sup>42</sup> Therein lies the authentically catholic reach of the sacramental life.

This continuity between sacrament and symbol is crucial, for while it satisfies the patristic position concerning the unknowability of God in His essence, it also illuminates that knowledge of God and deification of man can result from the *mysterion's* implication with the symbol, by which its intuited presence takes form.

For it is the very nature of symbol that it reveals and communicates the 'other' as precisely the 'other', the visibility of the invisible as visible, the knowledge of the unknowable as unknowable, the presence of the future as future. The symbol is means of knowledge of that which cannot be known otherwise, for knowledge here depends on participation—the living encounter with and entrance into that 'epiphany' of reality which the symbol is.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> A fuller explication of Schmemmann's complaint of Western scholasticism's influence on Orthodox Church—i.e., the centuries of her 'Western Captivity'—would involve the loss of the wholeness of the ascending movement of the Divine Liturgy by parcelling its moments and considering them individually. Other consequences would be the cultivation of individualism and pietism. We shall not go into those issues here.

<sup>41</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973), 140.

<sup>42</sup> The sense of the Christian vocation goes, consequently, in the same direction, following the pattern of Christ and His self-giving for the life of the world, the world itself being a gift from the Creator/ God to humankind: 'The Christian faith can say that the world was created for each individual, and it can say that each person was created for the world, to surrender himself for the life of the world'. *The Eucharist*, 83. In the light of this, we do not go to Church for ourselves, but for the service of Christ's work in the world.

<sup>43</sup> *Life of the World*, 141.

The epiphanic quality of the experience of participation removes from consideration that the relation between symbolic form and the invisible ‘thing’ to which it refers is merely semantic, causal, or representative. The relation is participative, ontological, and mutually involved (i.e., synergetic). The sense of the symbolic realism in this regard is for the symbol to manifest the invisible in the visible, the spiritual in the material; it is the evidence of that which cannot be seen, yet thirsts for corporality.

The doctrine of sacramental *real presence*, largely derived from scholastic theology and which became a point of contention between the Church of Rome and the Churches in the West that adhered to the Protestant Reformation in the modern period, is a non-issue in the Eastern Church. For the Orthodox, the sacrament is truly real and, indeed, is symbolically communicated, but the symbol of the sacrament is constituted with the real, namely, its institution by Christ: it is the act of fulfilment and realisation, an ‘epiphany—in and through Christ—of the “new creation”’.<sup>44</sup> The problem comes to the fore in the Western Church with the disjunction of the symbol from the real and its reduction to a mode of knowledge and representation of the real. The real is not symbolic and belongs to the order of illustration. The notion of real presence will become dependent on the words that are used at the time of the consecration, as if conjured up in the saying of them, granted under the power of the Holy Spirit. But the reality is not borne within the symbol itself, accentuating the primacy of the mental (i.e., nominal). Instead of a continuity between Christ and the sacraments, a hiatus opens between the real and sign, where causality is extrinsic and discontinuity implied and effectively noted when the sacraments are considered apart from the inner movement of the Divine Liturgy in which the Church, Kingdom, and world are held together, namely, the dimensions implied in the perspective advanced in Orthodoxy. But, here as well, the illustrative symbolism of the later Byzantine era, traceable back to the mystagogical commentaries that became normative for the sake of catechetical purposes, masked the discrepancy between their so-called symbolic interpretations and the meaning and the structure, *Ordo*, of the liturgical texts themselves.

Schmemmann’s corrective restatement of patristic realism in relation to symbols constitutes a reminder of the intimate bond between Incarnation and the eventful character of the liturgy: ‘[...] in its essence, in the fact that it is rooted in the divine incarnation and its orientation to the coming kingdom of God manifested in power, the liturgy rejects and excludes the counter-position of “symbol” and “reality”’.<sup>45</sup> This advent of the real in the symbol has, moreover, an apophatic quality. It cannot be known in terms of a what, but it can be known as responding to an original affirmation of hope that resides in human desiring for wholeness of life, including the world in which the quest for such occurs. In *The Eucharist*, Schmemmann expresses it thus:

<sup>44</sup> *Life of the World*, 143.

<sup>45</sup> *The Eucharist*, 106.

'[...] Christian sanctification consists in the restoration to everything in the world of the symbolic nature, its 'sacramentality', in referring everything to the ultimate aim of being'.<sup>46</sup> The world's failure to see this is largely attributable to Christianity's failure to maintain its original significance in the life of the Church and its epiphanic power, a failure coinciding with the de-ontologising of the symbolic language at her disposition. In other words, the world is not contemplated and taken up in her sacramental character as a possible source of a God-derived epiphany. However, '[The Church] was left in the world, as part of it, as a symbol of its salvation. And this symbol we fulfil, we "make real" in the eucharist'.<sup>47</sup> Sacrament for the world, the Church catholic is, thereby, the privileged *locus* of the sacrament of unity that simply cannot be less than all-embracing and transformative.

## 7

Keeping in mind *Una Sancta*, let us to return to Lossky's Introduction and the crucial words proffered by Yves Congar that are recalled there:

Where the West on the basis at once developed and narrow of Augustinian ideology, claimed for the Church independence in life and organisation, and thus laid down the lines of a very definite ecclesiology, the East settled down in practice, and to some extent theory, to a principle of unity which was political, non-religious, and not truly universal.

We have become *different men*. We have the same God but before him we are different men, unable to agree as to the nature of our relationship with him.<sup>48</sup>

From what we have been able to see above from Schmemmann's thinking on the subject, Congar's points still need addressing. For his part, Lossky sought to respond to Roman Catholic doubts through a clear presentation of Gregory Palamas' theology. Schmemmann's liturgical theology took a different, non-Palamite path to establish Orthodoxy's catholic intent. Presupposing the importance and relevance of the Palamite theological legacy,<sup>49</sup> he eschews, nonetheless, the discussion around the theological metaphysics that it proposes. Schmemmann seemed satisfied with simpler categories like 'eternal tension', preferring to work through the theological elements that make up the sacramental life of the Church with the transcendent-im-

<sup>46</sup> *The Eucharist*, 61.

<sup>47</sup> *The Eucharist*, 53.

<sup>48</sup> Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 14.

<sup>49</sup> In 'The Ecumenical Agony', Schmemmann defends, as being lost to the ecumenically minded, the contemporary relevance for man's self-understanding of, 'created versus uncreated grace, the Palamite distinction between the divine essence and the divine energies, the essence of the mystical experience (the 'nature' of the light *seen* and experienced by the saints), the essence of sanctification' (203).

manent antinomy in mind. Details of his interpretative readings of history, and even of liturgy, may be disputable, but the emphasis on liturgy and the Eucharist, the sacrament of unity, rightly situates the living faith of Christians as engaged materially and corporally with and through Christ God for the edification of the visible Church and catholic communion. Schmemmann has no particular interest in institutional unity, but Eucharistic unity with its eschatological implications sets the tone for where the Kingdom may be already shared.

We should like to think that some progress towards mutual understanding has been made since Congar's evaluation of Catholic and Orthodox divergence. Some twenty-five years or so afterwards in 1968, Schmemmann adds to it a different dimension and difficulty that still is in vigour. 'For us Orthodox one of the most agonising aspects of the ecumenical encounter lies very often precisely in this inability of the "West" to grasp anything "Orthodox" unless it is reduced to Western Categories, expressed in Western terms and more often than not, altered in its true meaning'.<sup>50</sup> Again, this is not entirely unsurmountable. To deal with this sort of thing, the analytical philosopher Donald Davidson advanced the notion that radical interpretation might be useful. Simply described, it has the following features: (1) adopt the principle of charity in relation to the linguistic behaviour of an 'other' (individual, tribe, church, etc.); (2) grant that the meanings attributed to the words employed in relation to contextual actions reflect beliefs that are true for the speakers and part of a holistic system of beliefs and desires; (3) over time, persistent engaged description provides more precise evaluation of the meaning and the consistency of the beliefs, as well the actions they justify.<sup>51</sup> This does not ensure agreement, but a high degree of commensurability is very possible.

But more in line with *Una Sancta*, it so happens that Sergius Bulgakov has a couple of things to say about it, and they offer a wider perspective than the habitual way of dealing with the subject. Moreover, he touches on points that are important for Schmemmann, not by chance Bulgakov's former student at Saint Sergius.<sup>52</sup> In *The Bride of the Lamb*, Bulgakov offers his version of what *Una Sancta* means to him and something about the royal priesthood of the faithful that we believe resonates with what is especially important to Schmemmann's vision of the life of the Church.

In summary, for Bulgakov, the *Una Sancta* is supra-confessional and uncontrolled by historically determined ecclesiological organisations. In a sense, it serves him as an idea-limit of an ever-continuing Incarnation (of an ever-kenotic God)

<sup>50</sup> Schmemmann, 'The "Orthodox World", Past and Present', in *Church, World, Mission*, 25.

<sup>51</sup> Donald Davidson, 'Radical Interpretation', in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 125–40.

<sup>52</sup> Schmemmann's verdict on Bulgakov's theology is rather negative: it is capricious, lacks humility, and is emotional and likely not to survive. *The Journals*, 261. But there is certainly agreement about clericalism and love for the Divine Liturgy. On the latter, Schmemmann writes beautifully of him as a priest and celebrant in a passage that Andrew Louth happily included in his refection on Bulgakov in *Modern Orthodox Theologians*, 51.



and Post-Pentecost coming of the Holy Spirit. Conjoining the effective presence of God with the prophetic power that it communicates, it overcomes all spirit of confessionalism and serves as the living foundation for the multiplicity of ecclesial expressions that exist.<sup>53</sup> This uncontainable notion of the *Una Sancta* speaks tacitly to Schmemmann's sense of tragedy that he recognises in the separation of the 'two halves' of the apostolic Churches that, come what may, belong to each other. Bulgakov's solution for the dilemma may seem extravagant, but it contains a poignant message that ought not to be missed.

Putting together the pieces, it comes down to this: the problem of the 'two halves' is based on a presumption that each has its identity in two differing kinds of apostolic successions (i.e., of the nature of the vicariate). One half believes that it comes down to one person, Saint Peter. The other half supposes that all the apostles effectively consecrated bishops in different places with the same legitimacy. It is supposed that the power was given by Christ to the apostles to do so. But, in fact, the bishops have their succession only from the apostles themselves in the case of both traditions, and not from Christ. 'Clearly, with regard to Christ, there can be no question of succession or any kind of succession of any kind of vicariate'.<sup>54</sup> For, in the Body of Christ, the Church, there are not so much functions of power but of ministering services alongside one another. 'Only on the basis of royal universal priesthood, of the hierarchism of the whole Church, can one accept the distinction of hierarchal functions, and avoid the exaggerations owing to which clericalism creeps in'.<sup>55</sup> Hierarchical priesthood must be interpreted properly: '[...] hierarchy arises only on the basis of the universal priesthood, in which the Divine-humanity in the priesthood of Christ is expressed'.<sup>56</sup> Hence, first the Church as the Body of Christ, the royal priesthood of the people, then, hierarchy.

Daring as it is, Bulgakov's visionary theology makes the point about where the undivided *Una Sancta* might find root, namely, in the priesthood of the faithful. It also relates to the problem of clericalism that Schmemmann sees as affecting both communions. Finally, it reflects Schmemmann's concern with the gathering of the faithful and the clergy, together with them, in the great announcement of the anaphora that he would like to see rendered thus: *Your own of Your own do we give unto You on behalf of all, for all, and by all*.<sup>57</sup> Thy Kingdom come, catholicity realised.

<sup>53</sup> Sergius Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, translated by Boris Jokim (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 292–3.

<sup>54</sup> Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 277.

<sup>55</sup> Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 279.

<sup>56</sup> Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 281.

<sup>57</sup> *The Eucharist*, 107.