The Church and the Bible

in the context of the correlative relationships of power and authority

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UDK 262:22:348
Original scientific paper
Received: March 26, 2007.
Accepted: April 20, 20007.

Summary *The premise of this work is the distinction between the concepts of "power" and "authority." The author attempts to indicate the often unjustifiably synonymous use of these concepts, whether in Bible translation or in colloquial speech and the way in which they are wrongly used as alternatives. The concept of power belongs to institutions and organisations, while the concept of authority has its origin in commission, calling and (supernatural) equipping.*

In the second part of this article the author considers some historical and theological connections between "power" and "authority" in relation to church power and scriptural authority, while aware that these concepts, though not synonymous, need not be mutually exclusive. Some of the many dangers, temptations and attractions of "power", with which the historical Church has been constantly confronted, are pointed out.

In the third part, the author focuses on particular biblical texts, to show where and how the concept of the authority of the Holy Scripture is found and upon what it is based. In this part, he refers in brief to textual history and the authority of Scriptures as seen both from the perspective of a systematic theologian and from biblical theology and literary contexts.

In conclusion, the author points to three possible "safety valves" by which the danger of being tempted by power might be shown and avoided, thus fulfilling the calling and commission of the Church to be salt and light and a community of hope.

Power and authority

Synonymic abbreviation

It is constantly shown that many of our disagreements and differences of opinion in communication arise from misunderstanding resulting from the vague or

imprecise articulation of thoughts or ideas as well as from a too general use of semantic concepts.

We often consider it important only to latch onto main thoughts and ideas, dispensing with subtle differences in meaning which can significantly alter the whole sense or full comprehension. So some concepts that are only similar in meaning we understand as completely synonymous, forgetting to take into consideration particular, significant nuances of meaning. Absolute synonymity between two lexemes, in the sense of identical meaning, hardly ever exists. In speaking of synonymity, we mostly mean partial synonymity. Two concepts or words may overlap in their meaning, in some, but not all contexts. With synonymity, it is often the case that two or more expressions indicate *nearly* the same meaning, but not the semantic identity (Cotterell and Turner, 1989:159). If we overlook these situations, we arrive at a general sense of the meaning, independent of the particularity of an individual term. Such abbreviations in communication could be called *synonymic abbreviations*. In using them we accomplish little more than trivialisation of the message, using the excuse, "I know what the writer wanted to say." Such synonymic abbreviations are not only useless, easily lead in the wrong direction when drawing conclusions[1]. In fact, we find ourselves blowing in the wind, unsure of what the writer wanted to say. Or, as biblical phrase goes, *One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard*. In using words, from a linguistic perspective, we mean the selective properties of lexemes (Heid, 1994:226). Lexical categories of the same semantic and associative fields, placed in apposition, can denote two different realities in particularity. As we operate in such an associative field, some concepts initially gain positive connotations, while others are negative. So the concept of "authority" mostly carries a positive associative charge, while the concept of "power" often carries a less positive associative charge.

The terms "power" and "authority" are often treated as synonyms, so they are subject to alternate use. In this study, we want to point out that the flexible use of two terms that we do not consider synonymous is unacceptable. To begin with, the term "power" falls into an institutional category, while "authority" belongs to the category of charisma (calling, commission and equipping). Let us take, for example, actual situations where power exists and is exercised without authority. There may authority *de iure*; but possessing and manifesting authority does not necessarily mean possessing and manifesting power; authority *de facto*.The dis-

[1] It is indicative that in *Enciklopedijski rječnik lingvističkih naziva* [*The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Linguistic Terms*] (MH, Zagreb, 1969), vol II, p. 381 "synonymous" is defined as: "same meaning," "co-meaning" and "similar meaning;" but two concepts cannot at the same time have the "same meaning" and "similar meaning." Concepts of equality and similarity, in and of themselves, fall into the category of absolute synonymity

tinction is between the *extrinsic* (*having power*) and *intrinsic* (*being authority*)[2]. With such a distinction between "official" and "charismatic" authority, we must now posit our basic assumption that power belongs to the category of *institution*, and authority to the field of *charisma* (Kolarić, 1989:135). The examples of the Church and Holy Scriptures, as exceptionally appropriate models for the issue of correlation of "*power*" and "*authority*" will be used in the following exposition to indicate that the concepts of power and authority, are not only non-synonymous, but are sometimes mutually exclusive. The facts often indicate that there are serious difficulties in bridging the gap between "power" and "authority." The author's stance is that they need not exclude, but may complement each another.

Power and might

In Croatian, the etymology of the verb "to rule" comes from the Old Slavonic *vold*, which primarily means "might" (Skok, 1971:III,604).[3] Its post-verbal forms translate as "power", "government", and the active noun "ruler" (male and female forms). However, everything points to the fact that originally and etymologically "power" is strictly patriarchal. That is why synonymous forms, such as "govern" or "rule," or the verbal nouns "government" or "reign" often occur. The ruler is "dominus", hence "to dominate" and refers to the one who has "might" (potestas).[4]

In its primary, semantic meaning the word "power" appears in the sense of "government," related to an organised system or institution, governing something or someone, whether a political entity with well defined and/or limited powers (a city, state or region) or an institution such as the Church. But the polysemantics of the verbal form "to govern" point to some interesting conclusions. If someone says, "*Watch how you govern,*" he means in relation to something or somebody, in the sense of an institution. In that sense "power" has an institutional, organisational form. However, if someone says, "*Watch how you govern yourself*," he refers to personal behaviour, or in other words, "*Watch how you control yourself*." Here is a moral or ethical aspect of ruling and governing. We can conclude that an understanding of "government" and "governing" in the sense of ruling contains both

[2] "Outward" (*extrinsic*) authority or "inward" (*intrinsic*) authority.

[3] In one variant "to rule" comes from the Old German "walten." In contemporary German, "walten" is often found in complex words like "Gewalten", "might" or "verwalten" in the sense of holding, maintaining, governing; as in "schlecht verwalten" bad governing.
In Croatian and Slavic anthroponyms with the same root, we have given names such as Vlado, Vladimir and in German,Waldemar.

[4] It is interesting to note some semantic overlaps. Thus in Czech "might" means "homeland," in the sense of "fatherland" as in "patria" (from lat. "pater," father). "Ma Vlast", the title of a symphony by Smetana would be translated "My homeland", but should in fact be as "Vaterland" (Ger.) or "Fatherland" (Eng.).

these elements, *institutional* and *moral*.

The term "might" will inevitably be included in this discourse about power. Unfortunately, it often carries a negative connotation and dimension as oppressive and tyrannical. Its positive connotation, being in power or wielding power, means "enabled" to be in the condition or position (institution) of ruling or being capable of doing something. In our initial assumption we pointed out that power belongs to an institutional environment, to some *organised system* in the societal-political sense, that position brings power, not only in the sense of being capable of doing, but also in the negative connotation of oppression. Thus we return to our initial assumption that "power," as opposed to "authority," primarily and exclusively belongs to the category of institution. And the Church or her congregations are an organised system, congruently and inevitably in a position to either deal with challenge or simply exercise power and might.

Might and power come in many forms.They include being able to (wanting to) govern someone, or overpowering someone, overwhelming them.In this discussion, how should we consider the well-known Messianic text from the prophet Isaiah, which says, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders." ? (NIV) (הַמִּשְׂרָ֣ה עַל־שִׁכְמֽוֹ) (Isa 9:6) Is this "power" and "might" withan oppressive connotation? The form מִשְׂרָ֣ה (government; rule, have dominion) is only found in this place in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, we find the Greek equivalent in the noun πρωτοκλισι, in the sense of the honorary first place (see Lk 14:8). The Latin equivalent would be "principatus" (primacy, first place).[5] But the authority (מִשְׂרָ֣ה) mentioned in Isaiah must be regarded in the light of Messianic power, which is indicated in the immediate literary context, power which emerges from the oppressive and tyrannical dimension of might. Although it does not belong to the Messianic *milieu*, Php 2:9-11 indicates the universality of messianic power, along with Messianic authority.

[5] (The etymology of מִשְׂרָ֣ה is not completely stated and clear, although it is unquestionably related to the verbal form שָׂרַר). We further have a noun form שַׂר (=prince), the one who rules, and then the verb שָׂרַר In Qal imperfect it will be rfy, and ultimately this points to the etymology of the noun form u יִשְׂרָאֵל (=Izrael).

We should consider the differences in etymologies here, but also in the meaning and understanding of power and authority in relation to power which is carried and exercised by a prince שַׂר (sar), and on the other hand, a leader (prince) dygIn" (nagid). For a prince (sar) the importance is on the domain, area of reign, administrative region. Prince (nagid), from the verb נָגַד (= proclaim, declare) in Hifil; it is the one who is exalted, declared to everyone (Jer 4:5). It is evident that "nagid" carries a charismatic connotation of authority.

Authority

Etymologically, authority (Lat. "auctoritas,") literally means to have "power to do something," or delegated powers, as an ambassador is sent with the authority of the one who sends him.[6] The history of the Church demonstrates that the Church has taken (on) powers for which she did not have a true mandate in the sense of authority or commission. It is indicative that in regard to power and authority, the the "two swords principle" was formed and developed. We will return to this later.

One question that could be asked is whether authority is imparted to someone along with an official duty (police officer, teacher) or whether it is an identifiable part of someone's personality and actions (Jesus in the Gospel). The first is a power and authority in the institutional sense; the second a natural or supernatural gift, which becomes an inalienable and identifiable part of the one who carries such authority. There is also the question of *multidimensiona authority*. It is clear that fathers and policemen differ in their powers (true, there are fathers who use "police authority"). But let us consider the concept of authority as an inalienable, inherent part of personality, rather than dependent upon forms and institutions, externally imposed often repellent. When a father says to his son, "I am your father and you must listen to me," he is referring to his paternal, parental identity, which involves real power, and not to his authority as an inherent part of his nature and actions. The first, power, can and must be obeyed, and the second, authority, is to be recognised and acted on accordingly.

In regard to the Holy Scriptures, multidimensional authority is seen depending on what aspect of scriptural authority we consider and how we consider it. It may be authority derived from the historical, canonical or normative, in the sense that the Word is directive and authoritative. Then there is the question of distinguishing between authoritative and authoritarian. These aspects of authority are worth considering separately and we cannot go in more detail here.

I believe in the church?

Comprehending ecclesiality

In order to continue considering the question of the correlation of power, authority, the Church and the Holy Scriptures, we first need to define which Church we are talking about. The title of this article makes it clear that we are talking about the Church in the singular! The historical *credo* to which all Christians

[6] "legatos cum auctoritate mittere" cf. M. Divković, *Latinsko-hrvatski rječnik* [*Latin-Croatian Dictionary*] (Zagreb, Kraljevska hrvatsko-slavonska-dalmatinska zemaljska vlada, 1900)

subscribe does not declare, "I believe in a Christian congregation," but, "I believe in the holy, catholic Church and the communion of the saints" (Apostles' Creed) or "in the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church" (Nicene Creed). What does a Christian believer truly confess (and believe) when confessing his faith in the Church?

When we speak about "believing in the Church" then *credo ecclesiam* certainly must be distinguished from believing in God. A Christian does not believe in the Church in the same way that he believes in God in his triune reality as Father, Son and Spirit. But he acknowledges the Church as the realm of operation of the Spirit of Christ" (Pannenberg, 2005:130). This *credo ecclesiam* has a twofold function. It relates to faith in the visible Church, specific, confessions or congregation, structured organisations of believers and clergy. At the same time it also implies believing in the Church as the universal Body of Christ, above denominations, invisible in geographical and temporal terms, unlimited by time and space.

Those who accept the Church exclusively in her "visible" reality, sometimes hyper-organised, soon discover the tendency of the Church to lose or compromise her spiritual authority. On the other hand, those who overemphasize the "invisibility" of the universal Church may have only a virtual, unreal view of the Church. They have an ideal of the Church, completely irrelevant to the needs of the world around, ignoring the calling and commission of the Church. As Mounier says, such a view "cuts off the Church from the Earth" (Mounier, 1972:126). Radical pietistic traditions and some evangelical church congregations have unfortunately succeeded in this "cutting off". In their spiritual enthusiasm, they have stifled the God-given commission of the Church. The Church is by its nature a real fellowship of real believers in a particular time and place (not virtual people in virtual time and space). In that sense, the Church (and churches) is both visible and organised.

In this reflection we want to see what kind of correlations of "power" and "authority" existed in the history of the Church as a universal and invisible, or as a specific and organised confessional community of believers. Some church communities explicitly negate any kind of confessional determination or affiliation. On the one hand, they emphasise the universality of the Church, and on the other, the freedom of the Holy Spirit to operate outside confessional limitations. This is often true in reference to movements of spiritual renewal and the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church in the catholic sense, regardless of confessional determination. Pentecostal movements are common in contemporary church life and are not denominationally limited. They are found in the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches. However, this does not mean that Pentecostalism, as a confessional determiner, is not a ecclesiastical reality, nor that it is not a denomination. What determines a denomination, as opposed to a move-

ment or a sect, as defined by some Catholic theologians?[7] Questions of ecclesiality and denominationalism must be included in any discussion on the position and role of the Church in the world, and are directly linked to the theme of the "power" and "authority" of the Church.

Ecclesiality is a controversial topic encompassing different perceptions, whether concerning the internal arrangement and models of the Church, from Episcopalianism to "Free Church" congregationalism. The term "free congregation" is indicative of and relates to the specific ecclesiology of the Anabaptist tradition.[8] In it, the Church has no "power," and sometimes no real authority either. What some like to call the "New Testament model," is "community" as an ecclesiastical concept, not the Church in historic continuity, as emphasized in Catholic ecclesiology. A special emphasis on the New Testament Church sometimes turns into a "romantic, ecclesiastic love for the past," as Hans Küng describes in his major work "The Church."

Church and community

In his books Miroslav Volf touches on the theme of Church as community on several occasions (Volf, 1991).[9] When speaking about the Church in the singular, Volf explicitly says that he means "plurality of Churches." His view on the ecclesiality of the church community is also interesting. He claims, "Theologically speaking, I consider the local Church to be the primary locus of ecclesiality." Bonaventura Duda and Cardinal Franjo Šeper clearly expound the ecclesiology of fellowship in general, especially from the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church in their papers given at the 7th Intercollegiate Ecumenical Symposium in 1986 (Duda, 1988:142; Šeper, 1988:148).

Speaking of the Church and fellowship, or rather, fellowship within the Church, appropriately for the occasion, both Duda and Šeper use inclusive language

[7] With reference to Pentecostal movements in the Roman Catholic church, see: J. Mamić, "Duhovski pokreti u Crkvi" [Pentecostal Movements in the Church] (*Bogoslovska smotra*, 1989/1-2)

[8] We could ask to what extent are we dealing with true ecclesiology in the case of "free" congregations (at least in the sense of systematic theology and systematic ecclesiology). In the tradition of these church communities, as a result of Reformation principles regarding God's sovereignty, Scriptural primacy and saving grace, systematic ecclesiology is rarely spoken off. The essence of "free churchmanship" is actually found in the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers that Luther himself advocated

[9] Doubtless the community in the sense of the fellowship of believers, is an inalienable part of the Church, because without a strongly expressed aspect of community/fellowship, the Church is nothing but an organised system and liturgical "institute." On the other hand, a community without a liturgical and organisational aspect is just a "fellowship" without true church status. In reality it has been demonstrated that "Free Church" communities embrace organisational-hierarchical aspects, as well as liturgical and sacramental traditions, without admitting to them.

and speak of fellowship in the Church and churches. However, it seems that the theology of fellowship (koinonia), the experience of the Church as community, is relative novel in Catholic ecclesiology, and has only begun to appear post Vatican II. Duda notes the "phenomenon of ecclesiology in recent, particularly most recent times...in all Churches" (Duda, 1988:143).

It should be mentioned here that almost the entire ecclesiology of most Protestant churches has always been founded on the Church as a community of believers. In that sense, it is not a phenomenon of recent times. However, if we accept Volf's attractive view about the Church as community and the ecclesiality of the local church, how can we reconcile the autonomy of individual local churches with denominational definition and full ecclesiality? Speaking of the Church in the singular while meaning "the plurality of the Church" is unquestionably the Protestant perspective. In contrast to this "open" ecclesiology, the Catholic teaching on the true Church and "separated brethren" continues to hold firm (Duda, 1988:143).[10] Therefore we cannot say that the historical *credo ecclesiam* in the case of the Western (Catholic) and Eastern (Orthodox) Churches is "catholic" enough, (in the sense of catholicity of the universal Church of Christ). Yet it remains confessionaly determined in the sense of historical continuity and confessional determination. We do not have the opportunity here to go further into the comprehension of catholicity, especially into the aspects relating to the "increase of God's people" that the Catholic church speaks about (*Lumen gentium*; III, 18); or into other elements of catholicity such as the *polemic*, *geographical* and *temporal* aspect, that Hans Küng clearly demonstrates (Küng, 1967:298). It is indicative that even today, the Pope, as the supreme head of the Roman Catholic church, is not infrequently seen as a symbol of the whole of Christianity. It is in disagreement with this position that when saying the Church – in singular – we mean the confessional plurality of the Church, so for the most part in public use, the Church is considered to be the Catholic Church (Mounier, 1972:124).[11] Not for the sake of seeking revenge, but because of the historical task and inevitable historical responsibility, we have to examine all the temptations and pitfalls of power that the Catholic Church, not infrequently, fell into (Ranke, 2006).

[10] Speaking about the "local Church" as the locus of ecclesiality, Volf says that for him, the Church is a "specific community of believers." From his exposition in the above mentioned text, it cannot be clearly understood whether he is thinking of the local community – in the sense of believers gathered in on place, in the narrower sense – or also of the particular confessionality of such a local and specific community. Namely, when speaking in the sense of locality, he could be speaking in the sense of a particular confessionality. We will also be speaking about the "domestic church" with a clear indication and sign of its confessionality

[11] Mounier says "the Pope is a symbol of the entire being of the Church." In such expression there is no space for the plurality of the Church that Volf speaks about.

Church and power

A Monarchical model of the Church

The structure of the Catholic Church undoubtedly follows the monarchical model and constitution. In such a monarchical constitution, the Church analogically follows the idea of the kingdom: in the Old Testament, it is the idea of the *messianic* kingdom, and while leaning on the New Testament, it follows the model of the *heavenly* kingdom proclaimed by Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament context, it is the idea of an Israeli monarchy and the king as God's anointed one. Such a king - the anointed one - was God's unique messianic ambassador on earth in the realm of the power of his kingdom. However, the supreme king of everything is, indeed, God Yahweh. Thus the psalmist says, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth" (Ps 47, KJV). In the New Testament, Jesus builds on the topic of the messianic Kingdom of heaven, and to him, Messiah-king, every knee will bow (Php 2:10-11).

In some places, they want to point out the possible model of church organization that would, in some aspect, resemble the civic civilian democratic model. In his reflections on the II Vatican Council, Šagi Bunić, on one hand, qualifies the church constitution as a "perfect society, with its supreme power over which there is no higher power in the world," and then also offers a democratic version by saying that looking at history "the Church has something similar to democracy," as he says, "sons of every social class can come to power in the Church and participate in the government of the Church" (Šagi-Bunić, 1986:142). As much as it looks hypothetically possible, in accordance with the canonical right of the church, it is still very utopian and unconvincing. History itself points to a different sequence of events.[12] But Šagi Bunić is quite right when he says that the Church cannot be compared to some kind of aristocracy, because "all the power is in the hands of one who is not subject to anyone in the world and no one can judge him or question." Nevertheless, we must not forget that the Church and church government are not judged just by the conscience of humanity – because, as the apostle Peter says in his epistle "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Pt 4:17, KJV). And that is all of us, the Church, in its confessional determination, but also the Church as a plurality of churches. In regard to the mystery aspect of the Church, and in relation to preserving its homogeneity and unity, Šagi Bunić further concludes that because of the preservation of the unity

[12] In the rest of his text, sort of indicatively, Bunić points out how some "thought that the Church was like the state with an aristocratic constitution, where a certain group, tribe or caste has all the power in its hands." Indeed, as he further says, "some similarity undoubtedly exists" (Šagi-Bunić, 1986:143).

of the Church and to avoid uniformity, "Christ founded the Episcopal board, which cannot be against the Pope, but together with the Pope, it can superbly lead the Church" (Šagi-Bunić, 1986:143-4).

In its inner logic, even when founded on the biblical idea of the Kingdom of God, the Catholic church adopts the structure of a highly centralized "Church-institution" (as it is called by L. Boff), but an institution typical for a monarchical system. The constitution of the Catholic Church, just as it is, comes out of the very idea of Kingdom (monarchy). In that sense, the Church becomes an institution under the control of a precisely laid out hierarchy, headed by a supreme head, "king." Many temptations of might and power inevitably followed such institutionalized Church through the history off the Church. The decree *Lumen gentium*, about the constitution of the Church in relation to the Episcopal board and their powers says, "The board or assembly of bishops does not have power except if taken together with the Roman Bishop, the heir of Peter, as the Head, while he keeps the complete power of primate over all … because the Roman Bishop, by his service as the governor of Christ and the shepherd of the whole Church, has the complete, supreme and universal power that he can always freely exercise" (*Lumen gentium*, III, 22). Therefore, as the Israelite king in the Old Testament represented the anointed one of God, the unique messianic ambassador of God on earth, so by the same analogy and inner logic, the Roman Bishop as the "governor of Christ" has "complete, supreme and universal power that he can always freely exercise," which gives him the rank of a sovereign king.

The main cause of the many historical difficulties that the Church has faced in regards to power is based on the abovementioned monarchical model. It lies in the fact that the Church completely identifies itself with the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom is completely equalized with the Church. Many Protestant churches or church communities also tend to make such conclusions and identifications. It is precisely this that leads to many unwanted results and manifestations of Church-Kingdom or the Church as the Kingdom. Yet the Church should strive toward and seek the Kingdom of God; hence we pray "your Kingdom come," and it should not want to be the Kingdom on earth in its entirety. God's universal earthly and cosmic power (Kingdom), clearly indicates that the Church neither can nor should, in its entirety, be identified and equalized with the Kingdom of God. If it did that, it would become, more and more, an "institution" (kingdom), with royal powers, and less the original Church with God's authority and power. The term "Church-institution" is used by Leonardo Boff when describing the authoritarian and centralistic *modus operandi* of the Catholic church (Boff, 1987:73).

From the Protestant perspective, it seems that in the theological and doctrinal view, in regard to spiritual powers, the Church also adopts those powers and authorizations that belong exclusively to the interference of Gods *authority*.

Because by the nature of its constitution, the Church has, besides different ministries, the ministers "who have holy power." Although the council decree *Lumen gentium* confirms that "only Christ is the Mediator and the way of salvation," it states immediately afterwards that "this pilgrim Church is necessary for salvation." Moreover, it is claimed that on the basis of faith and baptism (Mk 16:16) and regeneration of the Spirit (Iv 3:5), Christ confirms that "certain people could not be saved, who, although not unaware that the Catholic Church is founded by God through Jesus Christ as necessary, still would not want to enter in it or remain in it" (*Lumen gentium*; II,14,18). Thus the principle *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, known already since Origen (who claims, "Let no one persuade nor deceive himself, outside of this house, that is, outside the Church, no one is saved"), remains completely untouched and unchanged. In those salvation authorizations, along with God's heavenly fatherhood, the Church also takes over the motherly authority because, "The one who does not have Church for mother, cannot have God for Father" (Cyprian).

"Two sword" principle

Through out history, the Church, set upon by the temptations of power and might, constantly fell into pitfalls, all the while leaning on the *two sword principle*. Not infrequently, it actually practiced what Mounier would later call "imperialism in spiritualibus" (Mounier, 1972:127). For that reason, many in the Church often saw only a struggle for power and material goods.

The "two sword" principle refers to the division of power between spiritual things and temporal and worldly ones. It is often considered that this principle is based on the biblical text from the Gospel of Luke. In that text, before his death, Jesus is giving certain instructions to his disciples and says, "... and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, 'And he was reckoned among the transgressors' for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, 'It is enough.'" (Lk 22:35-38). Based on that text, the Church takes only one sword, and that is government over spiritual matters, while the sword of government over secular matters will be left to secular authorities. So it looked on the paper. Yet, the reality was completely different.

Under the inceptive title *Duo sunt*, Pope Gelasius (485-519) laid the foundations for the two sword principle. He separated authorizations into spiritual authority, *auctoritas sacrata pontificum*, and secular power, *regalis potestas*. Ideologically and ideally, those two forms of government should be separated and independent of one another, and should work together and in agreement for the

common good. But, in reality, it did not come to pass. Why? As by the nature of things, a spiritual head has a God given *plentitudo potestatis* (fullness of power), so spiritual *auctoritas* (authority) immediately gives the right for possible execution and universal executive power and *potestas* (might). Those ideals not only proved unrealizable, but the church and secular powers constantly collided. At the same time as *Duo sunt*, another church document also saw the light of day, which also is attributed to Gelasius. It was called *Cum ad verum* and sought to limit the powers and authorizations of spiritual and secular rulers.[13]

Not only did discussions about the power of the Church not quiet down, but they led to many violent conflicts with long lasting and very significant historical consequences. One such historical spark appeared at the end of the 13th century between French king Phillip IV the Beautiful and Pope Boniface VIII. King Phillip established a strong autocratic rule in France. On the other hand, Pope Boniface VIII had a completely unhidden and pronounced aspiration for the Church to also establish a secular government. In order to compete with the secular rule, he issued several decrees by which he sought to transfer civic authorizations to the Church. The edict *Clericis laicos* (1296) is one such decree that excommunicates from the Church all who would impose or pay taxes to a secular power for church property. Shortly after that, Boniface VIII issued a famous papal document, *Unam sanctam*, that stated how the temporal and secular are subject to spiritual, and therefore also to spiritual church power. These authorizations sparked continuous battles for predominance and influence over spiritual and church power..

Historical boundary

Throughout history, issues of power constantly burdened the Church. Besides doctrinal conflicts, issues over power, authorizations and authority were the Church's constant companions. The Church was preoccupied by those controversies in regard to conflict with secular powers, thus externally, but also internally by issues over the constitution of the Church. The latter, inner problems of the Church constitution, was especially manifested between the 14th and 18th century, often through national churches, in which the French Catholics took precedence. It was in France that there were a series of crisis after crisis, ranging from the *Conciliar* movement to *Gallicanism*, and on to *Josephinism* as yet another crisis of power over the issue of Church authority.

Conciliarism: The historical avalanche of inner issues and controversies in the Church over matters of the constitution and power was started by the *Conciliar*

[13] "Quum ad verum ventum est ultra sibi nec imperator jura Pontificatus arripuit, nec Pontifex nomen imperatorium usurpavit" ("Cum ad verum").

movement in France, at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th century. It was an attempt to reform the Church, and it started with the assumption that the final authority in spiritual matters is not the Pope, but the general council of the Church.[14] One of the main leaders of the movement was Jean Gerson (1363-1429), a theologian, preacher and a prominent member and head of the University in Paris. In his letters and sermons, Gerson advocates his position that the authority of the universal Church stands above papal authority to the extent that the general council of the Church has power, not only to elect, but to replace the Pope.[15] At the time of the Council in Pisa, Gerson brought to light his most significant writing, *De auferibilitate papae ab ecclesia*, in which he directly advocates the right of the Church to replace the Pope if needed, as well as Christ being the only head of the Church. Gerson always remained faithful to the Catholic Church and joined in the condemnation of Jan Hus, one of the forerunners of the Reformation. It is interesting that Gerson, in the case of Hus, especially condemned his "heretical" disobedience to the power and authority of the Church.

Gallicanism. After the conciliaristic crisis in the 14th century, the next great temptation for the Catholic Church appeared in the 17th century as "Gallicanism." French theologians again interceded for the reducing of papal authorizations and favored greater autonomy for certain bishops. Priest Edmond Richer, one of the leaders of Gallicanism, similarly to Gerson, advocated the position that the true and singular head of the Church is Christ alone. On the other hand, he also interceded for complete separation of church and secular power.[16] The difference between him and Gerson is that Gerson clearly supported the position that the Pope was Christ's governor on earth. At that time, a man from Rab, Archbishop Markantun de Dominis of Split (1566-1624) played an exceptionally important role in European dimensions.[17] This "clairvoyant and runaway" archbishop, as Turčinović called him, was not only an advocate of Gallicanism,

[14] This movement emerged as a reaction to the papal crisis and to the pressure by the French king. It was during the 15th ct. and at the time of the great schism within the Catholic Church, that an attempt was made to oust the papacy, as an institution, from Rome. It was the time of a double papacy: one in Rome (Pope Grgur XII) and one in Avignon (Pope Benedict XIII). It is interesting that in the given situation the cardinals of both sides met in Livorn, without the mentioned Popes, trying to resolve the crisis in the church, and they convened a Council in Pisa (1409).

[15] His writing "Quaerite dominum" is significant and also his sermon before the French king (1389) where he expounds some of his positions.

[16] His writing "De ecclesiastica et politica potestates libellus" (1611) testifies to that.

[17] Born on the island of Rab and ordained into the Jesuit order; he left the Jesuits and was appointed the bishop of Senj, and then the Archbishop of Split. After a conflict with his priests and bishops, he retreated from Episcopal service. In fear of persecution by the Inquisition, he fled to London. For more details about him see: J. Turčinović, "Markantun de Dominis iz teološke prespektive" ["Markantun de Dominis from a theological perspective"] (Encyclopaedia moderna, no. 36, 12/1991), p. 69.

but in some matters even more radical than Richer. Markantun's seminal work was "De Republica ecclesiastica." All of his thoughts and activities revolved around this work. He strongly opposed the abuses of church power, especially by the Roman curia. He questioned papal decisions and the impossibility to oppose them by anyone in any way. Somewhat earlier than de Dominis, another Croatian lent his voice to the discussion of matters of the power and authority of the Pope in regard to the board of cardinals and curia. He was a Dominican from Dubrovnik, cardinal and bishop Ivan Stojković. He appeared at the Church synod and left his mark by requesting that the church synod overrule the Pope.[18]

Josephinism. Conciliarism and Gallicanism are not the only historical burden of the Church. When, in the 18th century, Joseph II completely took over power from his mother, the Austrian empress Maria Theresa, in his reforms he sought for the Church to be subject to secular power in many matters. In history, any system or position similar to that held by the emperor Joseph II has been referred to as *Josephinism*. The principle *jura circa sacra* was put into place, by which the Church was not allowed to exercise any canonical law that was in opposition to state and royal power. The emperor Joseph began to regard church institutions as part of state power. Papal decrees became subject to emperor's approval, and non-Austrian bishops were expelled from the national Episcopal conference. In essence, all of these moves were not so directly aimed at the Church, but at the establishment of a complete centralization of imperial power.

Liberation theology

A strong critique of the Church in its practice of power and authorization appeared within the Church in the form of *liberation theology*, in the early 70^{s} of the 20th century. Liberation theology finds its ancient historical root in the centuries of Humanism (15th and 16th ct.), but certainly even earlier in the periods of the Conciliaristic crisis and Gallicanism, about which we will say more later.[19] Liberation theology, in many ways inspired by the Marxist critique of society and state, was developed in South America. The real spark for the birth and activation of liberation theology was the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in 1979. The Nicaraguan Catholic Church accepted the challenge, although the seeds of liberation theology were already sown in 1968 at the assembly of Latin American bishops in Medellin, Columbia.[20] The emergence and rise of liberation theology

[18] Stojković's *Tractatus de Ecclesia* is the first systematic writing about the Church in the history of Catholic theology.

[19] The term *liberation theology* was "coined" by Peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez in his book *Liberation Theology* (1971).

[20] At that time, three ministers in the cabinet of the Nicaraguan government were priests, and one

coincided with the rise of cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in Rome. The current Pope Benedict XVI then became (1981) a Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and the President of the Pontifical Biblical Commission and International Theological Commission. Thus, by charge, Ratzinger was to face or even settle accounts with that theology and its supporters and initiators. John L. Allen, in a markedly interesting and important biography of cardinal Ratzinger, in a very graphic and dynamic way, in the form of a chronicle, describes the emergence and further development of liberation theology (Allen, 2002:131-174). The year 1984 became a real battlefield between the Church in Rome and liberation theology. In the same year, Ratzinger started his offensive and was brought into the spot light during a public appearance when he actually, in a way, declared liberation theology to be a heretical confrontation of the Church, and that "people of God" were directly opposing the "hierarchy" of the Church.[21] Franciscan Leonardo Boff poured oil on Ratzinger's fire with his book "*Church: charisma and power.*"[22] Ratzinger accused Boff of "a pityless and radical attack" on the institutional Church. In the same year, Ratzinger issued "Instruction about some aspects of liberation theology" that was personally approved by the Pope John Paul II, and then he called Boff to Rome to explain the positions proposed in his book.[23] Boff s arrival and treatment in Rome was conspiring in many ways, and he commented, in a somewhat humorous tone, that maybe he "should be handcuffed" (Allen, 2002:159).

The Bible and authority

Speech act

Christians approach the Bible as the original utterance of God's authority. Therefore, they call it the Word of God. As the term "word" itself is a foundational statement and communication "tool," the term God's "Word" at the same time denounces the very nature of the Christian God, a God who pursues a communicational communion with its creation. As a prologue to this linkage between the (term) authority and Bible as the Word (of God), we should look briefly at the nature of the spoken "word," from a linguistic perspective. In linguistics, language

priest was also a Nicaraguan ambassador to the United States.

[21] Ratzinger's text in the Italian periodical *30 Giorni* of 14. March 1984.

[22] L. Boff, *Crkva: karizma i vlast* [*Church: charisma and power*] (Stvarnost, Zagreb, 1987)

[23] Ratzinger especially focused on the harsh critique of Marxism in chapter VII of this "Instruction." However, it needs to be pointed out that despite the fact that Ratzinger's document was approved by the Pope himself, the Roman curia and power did not unanimously or enthusiastically accept the document. The Secretary of the Holy See of that time, Agostino Casaroli, commented about the document with regret, and especially its negative tone.

is normally divided into "performatives" and "constatives." Into what we declare or claim and therefore state ("constative") and into those expressions that just by the act of uttering cause or make some action real ("performative"). The latter are often called *illocutionary*. Illocution is therefore an utterance that becomes an act by being spoken – it is realized and receives the force of realization in that way.

From the Creator's pre-historical "And God said…and there was," and then the Word (λόγος) of John the Evangelist, that "became flesh" – all that indicates the nature of the "word" in its performative power. In the first chapter of the Bible, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." (Ge 1:3) it is evident that the biblical "word" transcends the constative of the spoken, worn or written sign. It is not merely an "empty word" (לְאֹ־דָבָר רֵק) (Dt 32:47, ESV). In the linguistic perspective it is that very dimension and nature of the language in performative that occupies a significant position. In language theory it is called *speech act theory*.[24] A church environment and rituals are the appropriate context for speaking about that dimension and use of language and speech. As an example, let us take a Christian and the church ritual of baptism. First of all, some conditions have to be fulfilled for baptism. First of all, it is clear that no one can, at least not legitimately, baptize himself. Therefore, baptism is done by a priest (pastor), a person that is authorized, received and recognized by the act of ordination – by laying of hands. As the ritual of baptism nears its end, a priest speaks a "formula" – "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." Hereby, not only is the act of baptism completed, but, by saying "I baptize you," the baptism is executed and valid. The utterance "I baptize you" is in fact an illocution, a speech act by which something is realized, becomes real and is made valid. The Holy Scriptures, as the Word of God, in many of its forms – warnings, exhortations and such – indicates its power of illocution, God's speech act that accomplishes something and does something.

Authority of the Holy Scriptures

The question of the authority of the Holy Scriptures is a vast area of research and contemplation, and can be considered from the perspective of church history or systematic theology, but also methodologically and simply by exegesis of the holy text. As it is not possible to exhaustively display all those aspects of biblical

[24] In the early 1960s, the so called "speech act theory" assumed an important place in linguistics. This theory emphasizes that, along with the propositional and/or declarative dimension, the language also has a pronounced performative power. The dynamic and stimulus of the linguistic development of that theory was additionally sped up by J. L. Austin: "How to do Things with Words" (1962) and "Speech Acts" (1969). A very useful orienting text for this theme field was published in Croatian under the title "*Govorni činovi*" ["*Speech Acts*"]; Miller, S. Kolo 2/2004.

authority in this place, we will choose the basic ideas from some of the mentioned perspectives, and approach them by way of a few short notes, and then we will focus more on the biblical text itself

Holy text: Comprehension of the "holy text" will primarily relate to the original language and originality of some religious text. As most believers, especially Christians, do not handle the original Bible languages, we will also entertain the question of the authority of certain translations of the original text. Christian, Jewish and Islamic traditions find the authority of some text as such, in one way or the other, in the text of the material itself – in the original language or in some especially recognized and received translation. The real literality of a Christian church ritual or Jewish synagogue ritual in relation to the holiness of the text in a material aspect is indicative here. When a biblical author says "oh, how I love your law!" during a liturgical celebration, a rabbi will recognize that the text as holy and authoritative with the symbolic gesture of a kiss (Mt 5:17-18; Ps 119:97). Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants speak of the Holy Scriptures, although the latter use the term *holy text* is far more sparse in their vocabulary. When speaking of the "holy text," the theme expands and includes questions of original divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and of the transmission and tradition of the text, depending both on the translation and the process of translation of the Holy Scriptures. Can we also talk about the fact that Scriptural text in its original form and language contains relatively higher authority than, for example, some contemporary, more free, Bible translation? Therefore Islam considers that, in ritual only, the Arabic text is holy, because Arabic is an integral part of the Koran tradition. With Jews and the Hebrew Bible (Tanak), the material basis of the holy text (literary, stylistic and grammatical aspects) play an important role. That is closely related to traditions, transmission and text copying by scribes (text copiers). Their basic task was to be careful to the uttermost, to write and copy every "iota" just as the copier found it. Thus, the words of Jesus could be understood in a literal and material sense, "until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear" (Mt 5:17-18). In such literal and material comprehension of the holiness of the text, what a great burden the later Masoretes carried in their transmission of the holy text, in vocalization of the Hebrew text, where by a comma or a dot in a "wrong" place, a word can obtain a completely different meaning, and not infrequently, a completely opposite meaning!

In other religious traditions there are some especially recognized translations, which are assigned special value. In the tradition of the Catholic church, despite the fact that the church liturgy today is done in national, spoken languages, the Latin language and the Vulgate still remain the especially approved and accepted translation of the Holy Scriptures, by the Catholic Church. Thereby, that

translation of the Holy Scriptures still possesses special authority in the Catholic Church and remains the referential textual material for the future translators of the Holy Scriptures. The document *Sancrosanctum Concilium* of the II Vatican Council, and subsequent instructions for using the Holy Scriptures, *Liturgiam authenticam*, speak of the Holy Scriptures and its use in church life and liturgy.[25] Generally speaking, the Protestant position differs in that. Despite that, in some traditions of protestant evangelical Christianity in Croatian lands, for a long time, some translations were considered especially accepted and inspired. In matters of the Holy Scriptures, authority of the Bible or translations, even until this day in some places one can here questions regarding some Bible translation or the "true" authority of a certain translation of the Holy Scriptures, whether coming from the Catholic or Protestant side.[26] It also needs to be mentioned that the question of the authority of the Holy Scriptures from the Catholic theology perspective, is directly linked to church tradition and interpretation of the Word. Namely, the Church transmits, proclaims and preaches the Word, following the Scriptural instruction "that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known" (Eph 3:10; 5:25-26).

Systematic theology. From the perspective of a systematic theologian, the theme of divine inspiration and Scriptural infallibility are constantly in focus. It is not possible not to report, at least, the elements of biblical authority from the perspective of a systematic theologian, such as in the theology of K. Barth. In the focus of our interest is the biblical text, from the exegetical-hermeneutical perspective, related to the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth.

In his Dogmatic, K. Barth expounds the relationship between the authority of the Word and the Church.[27] In one place he says, "the Church does not claim direct, absolute and material authority for itself, but for the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God" (Barth, 1956:538). Out of that Scriptural authority, in which the Church is maintained and on which it is based, the power and authority of the Church is a relative and formal matter (ib). Barth builds his theology of the Holy Scriptures on four support pillars. Barth again emphasizes that the Word, first of all, is and should be "proclaimed." "How will they believe if they have not heard, and how will they hear if it is not preached to them" (Ro 10). The second support and pillar of Barth's theology of the Word is the fact that the Word, the

[25] Cf. *Liturgiam authenticam*, article 23, 37, 41a, 43. For liturgical purposes, the Latin text of the Roman missal is considered referential (typical) and is accepted as *editio typica* (1971).

[26] Sometimes this refers to the matter of canonical or deutero-canonical (apocryphal) Bible books; but not infrequently it will refer to the matter of translation. Of course, this refers to the Catholic believers and theologians who might suspect the "Protestant Bible"(?).

[27] K. Barth, *Die kirchliche Dogmatik I: Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes*, 2 (Evangelisher Verlag A.G., Zurich); eng. translation: *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of the Word of God* (T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1956)

Holy Scriptures, is by its nature "justiciary" (German *Gegenstand*). It stands opposite of us, so in its authority it is not subject to us and our hermeneutics. It is sharper than a double-edged sword (Heb 4). The third support pillar for Barth is the fact that Scriptural Word is "sure," inspired by God. It fills with hope and directs toward God (1 Pe 1:20-21). The fourth support pillar of Barth's theology of the Holy Scriptures is found in the fact that the Word is "powerful," therefore effective. Among other things, is the fact that it was manifested as a powerful *incarnation event*. That aspect, Word-as-event, occupies a special place in Barth's theology of the Holy Scriptures (Heb 1:1-3).

Biblical context

The dichotomy between power and authority in biblical context is particularly evident in the period of the biblical judges. Biblical judges carried and executed God given tasks by virtue of divine authority and visitation of God's Spirit, "Then the Lord raised up judges." When God began to raise up judges, "he was with the judge" (Jdg 2:16-18); the supernatural element of God's Spirit coming down on each Judge, capacitated the Judge to accomplish the task: "The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war" (Jdg 3:10). The people soon recognized their "condition" – recognizing and accepting their newly obtained authority, the people followed the judge unanimously and without reserve. At the same time, biblical judges had neither a worked out system nor the institution of power, at all. However, without institutions of power or an administrative area of government, their unmistakable obtained authority made them heroes, army commanders and defenders of Israelite homes and hearths, above and beyond their own abilities.

In the first few lines of the Holy Scriptures, in the first account of creation, some dilemmas in matters of power or authority appear to us. After the first act of creation work is finished – ordering the earthly space, creating the flora and fauna, and man ("in God's image") – the Creator gives responsibilities of "power" to the human being, to man and woman – "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, to be the ruler (רָדָה)" (Šarić translates: "let him rule") (Ge 1:27). Two things are undisputable here. First, the divine mandate of God is the sovereignty of his power. It is, therefore, already in the nature of God. Since man is made in the very image of God, he is given the mandate of ruling (power). Second, it is undisputable that the passage uses expressions which, as in other Old Testament texts, regularly have the connotation of domination, with a tone of oppression. With the basic meaning "to subdue" the enemy, the verb רָדָה means "to trample" or to rule ruthlessly. So it is said for Babylon that it ruled over the nations in anger (Isa 14:6); the messianic king will subdue his enemies and rule with a scepter in

the midst of his enemies (Ps 110:2).[28] But before we conclude that man is offered that kind of "power" by which all the living world and the animal world will feel his power, we need to place this biblical text in the wider context, not only of the Old Testament, because it is not about power in the sense of domination, but about power in the sense of "serving."

In the texts of the New Testament, concepts of "authority" and "power" are often alternated, and in some translations are used as synonyms. Many Croatian translations use such "synonymic abbreviations" or identification of the term "power" and "authority," even where the original context clearly does not allow it. One of the possible reasons might be translational dilemmas in regard to possibly uncommon or awkward Croatian expression. The semantic field or polisemiosis of the Greek term ἐξουσία may allow, to some extent, this term to be translated as "authority" (in the sense of charisma), but also as "power" (in the sense of institutional and political-governmental might). However, we expect the translator to have a contextual feeling for distinguishing so that, with additional effort, these terms will not be classified as synonyms.

At the end of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, we find an example of such "illegitimate" identification in the translation. In that text, it is stated that many present listeners realized that true authority is found in Jesus' teaching. Most Croatian translators translate that the "multitude of people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had power, and not as their scribes" (Mt 7:28; KS).[29] Some old Croatian Bible translations instead of "power" use the term "domain," which is interesting in that, at least today, the term "domain" refers to administrative boundaries and institutional authorizations.[30] In the mentioned biblical text and context it is absolutely clear that Jesus did not have any (political) "power" *de iure*. Quite contrary, it is he, Jesus of Nazareth, who was in opposition to the scribes who both *de facto* and *de jure* had real "power." Although, obviously, not only the authority among the people. As opposed to them who come from the institutional power, Jesus, in his appearance from the opposition, manifested

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[28] Along with רָדָה there is also כָּבַשׁ with a similar meaning "to subdue" (2 Sa 8:11)

[29] Šarić follows Vulgate here, and translates: "the multitude of people were amazed at his teaching. For he taught as one having power" (Mt 7:28), "potestatem habens" (Vul). Only the paraphrased translation of the New Testament ("Book of Christ") here states: "because he taught them as the one having great power" (IBS/Duhovna stvarnost, Zagreb,1981). English translations use "authority" in this place, and German "er sprach wie einer, der Autoriat hat" (Die Gute Nachricht, Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1976). For Latin "potestas," Croatian dictionary lists "power" and "authority" as synonyms, in the sense of subjection, as for example: "esse in sua potestas" (to be your own ruler) or "habere potestatem vitae necisque" (to have power over the head), i.e. over your own life.

[30] In standard Kaikavian, a translator of Maksimilian's Bible uses "oblazt": „Ar je on nye vuchil kakti kakov, koi oblazt ima, i ne kak nyihovi Piszmoznanczi y Farizeushi" (Mt 7:28) (Ignac Kristijanović). Katančić also uses "dominion."

the original "authority."

Matthew's gospel is, in many ways (themes, vocabulary, language and style), considered a Judeo-Christian gospel. It is thus not strange that many themes familiar to the Jews of that time are mentioned in it: themes of "power," "might" and "authority." In it, Jesus warns of the familiar behavior of political power-wielders and of the unacceptable practice of earthly powers to "lord over" (DF) their subjects so that people would "feel their might" (Šarić) (Mt 20).[31] However, he *empowers* his disciples, but not for institutional power, but he imparts might ("power") to them in the area of action in regard to the ulterior, "he gave them power (ἐξουσία) to be able to cast out unclean spirits" (Mt 10:1). The "power" in the sense of "feel the might" attracted Jesus' disciples, which is indicated by the warning in which he, gathering them around himself, says: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority (οἱ μεγάλοι κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν) over them. Not so with you." (Mt 20:25-26, NIV). In that same context and event, the worrying mother of the sons of Zebedee seeks to take care of her sons with Jesus, on the high position of power, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." (Mt 20:21, NIV). We find the wider context of her request in Mt 19:28 where Jesus promises that those who followed him will "sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Judging from his promise of the "twelve thrones" this motivated some of them to start a pre-election campaign. It seems that there was competition among them, but also some "armchair quarterbacks" who were interested in participation in power. Some even suggest that James and John were taking advantage of Peter's diminished popularity in Jesus' eyes (cf. Mt 16:21-23) in order to possibly take over his primacy (France, 1997:303).

The Authority of Jesus of Nazareth

We have already mentioned that at the end of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Mt 7:29) the people who are present recognize his authority although Jesus did not have formal power and was in opposition to those "in power." Mark the Evangelist adds the following words to the amazement of the crowd and to their reaction, "What is this? A new teaching with authority!" (Mk 1:27, NASB). Jesus' "but I say to you" in the Sermon on the Mount is an immediate testimony to the untouchable authority in which Jesus acted. His influence and authority among the people was to such an extent that those who wanted his head did not have an opportunity to complete their fatal intentions; as Luke the Evangelist states, "The

[31] Šarić's translation here is good and appropriate, saying "feel their might" (Vul. "dominatur eorum")

chief priests, the scribes and the leading men" – therefore, those in power – "were trying to destroy Him, and they could not find anything that they might do, for all the people were hanging (ἐξεκρέματο) on to every word He said" (Lk 19:47-48).

The peak of Jesus' authority, in theory and in his practice, is manifested in his divine paradox, which is especially pointed out in the Gospel of Mark. The paradox of Jesus' teaching, the "new and powerful teaching," is the co-working of authority and serving (Dillon,1995: 92-113). How do we reconcile those two terms, or better yet, how can it truly function without compromising one or the other? [32]

Instead of the conclusion

Salt and light: What is the Church to do in order not to succumb to the pitfalls which are ever and again set up by the temptation and challenge of power and ruling? How can the Church be and remain authoritative for man and humanity? In the way that the Lord spoke about it: the Church, the people of God, the community of saints, must all be occupied with being preserving *salt* and the directing *light*.

However, with the mysterious character of the Church, we should first start from the fact of the reality of the Church, that the Church is a community of real people. Those who see the Church only as universal and invisible, must give special attention to that. Indeed, not forgetting her election and calling – calling to holiness ("holy nation") and constant reminder that the Church is God's acquisition (1Pe 2:9). However, lightly neglecting the fact that the Church is a real community of real people will easily set up a pitfall in which the Church will fall and so become unreal and virtual, irrelevant to the human community and society, and a traitor to its original call. Besides that, such an attitude could have real long-term consequences, in terms of a tendency of the Church to be unchanging, even when and where it needs to be changing.

On the other hand, the Church as a community of real people cannot be organized and constituted. It is indicative that exactly those who, in the universality of the Church, so pronouncedly advocated her "universal invisibility" everywhere – and always opposed any formal or confessional determination or organization of the Church – in time began to constitute church communities in an especially rigid and hierarchically organized way. In some Protestant churches and church communities on Croatian soil, the charismatic movement, in its beginnings, was

[32] One of the papal titulars - *servus servorum Dei* – reflects the aspiration to truly be an heir of Christ. History did not deny Christ, but throughout history certain Popes, as the heads of the Catholic Church, compromised the authority of the Church.

the movement of the Spirit and freedom in the Spirit, with merely a weak, almost non-existing, formal constitution. Representatives and leaders of these spiritual movements were distinctly negatively inclined toward other "organized" and "ossified" formal churches and church communities. But the church communities of spiritual movements soon "ossify" organizationally, and not infrequently, also turn into acutely and rigidly constituted church communities, with a church discipline that even some Catholic ecclesiastic circles would be jealous of. Whether speaking about a confessional constituted church, such as the Catholic church, or about the Church in the sense of a confessional plurality of churches, it can either be an "institution" with all the authorizations and powers or, in all its constitution and despite of it, it can always be aware that it does not have the right to cease to be a "prophetic community of hope."

We are presented with three landmarks in correlations: Church/power – Holy Scriptures/authority:

(i) *inner dialogue* in service of building up (ii) *Churches as prophetic communities of hope* who will firmly lean on (iii) *authority of the Word*.

Inner dialogue — which has to be encouraged by the constant process of renewal of the Church, founded on the principle *ecclesia semper reformanda*. The Church, whether in its confessional determination, or in its plurality of churches, has to be able to "talk to itself." This is not merely an autistic church soliloquy; it is a vision of the Church constantly being changed. Namely, not to stumble before the conformity of the contemporary world, but to ever and again become able and ready for engagement and challenge – or, as Mounier states, to be active before the "challenge of events" (Mounier, 1972:78). That process and challenge has no alternative, and the history of the Catholic Church testifies to the painfulness of that process. It seems that Protestantism, it all its plurality, is still at the beginning of such reforms. The reason for this may be that Protestantism still rests on the laurels of the history of its first reformation?

Building a prophetic community of hope – As a precautionary measure, we need to warn of a few things. The term prophetic, as used here, does not relate to prophesying the future, where the crystal ball replaces the Holy Scriptures. Also, the term prophetic does not relate to an individual person or church group. It relates to all aspects of the Church life, which, along with the primary proclamation of the Gospel, makes the Church to be the "salt of society." They give "flavor" to human community and preserve it from spoiling. Of course, that "preservation" need not be understood as conservation of the current state (of the Church or society) because that would be in collision with the first principle of change. Along with aforementioned Miroslav Volf, and his texts about the Church in the world (1/1991), we certainly need to point to W. Brueggemann and his book "The Prophetic Imagination," which speaks of the prophetic from the Old Testament

perspective, but in the way that is directly relevant to the Church today.

Authority of the Word – it is not only a pillar of the Reformation and reformation tradition, but to the whole of Christianity it represents a God given soteriological, eschatological and ethical compass. Barth's view of the Word that God *revealed*, which is *written* in the Holy Scriptures and *proclaimed* to man, is an important landmark. Besides that, Barth outstandingly points out the Word as *Gegenstand*, that which stands *opposite* of someone or something. That is exactly the case with the Word, the bond of Scripture and Spirit judging us, not we judging it.

Here also, like in the aforementioned temptation to identify the Church with the Kingdom, we need to resist the temptation to completely identify the Holy Scriptures with the revelation of God. It leads to worshipping the book (biblicism), and not the true Author of the Word. Exactly that is what tends to happen among Protestants. One thing is clear, the Word is and remains a two-edged sword (Heb 4,12). In that, and every case, it transcends the already mentioned two-sword principle with which the Church so often fought through history, both inwardly and outwardly.

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