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John Zizioulas in Dialogue with Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac

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Abstract
This article examines John Zizioulas's ecclesiology in dialogue with Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac. Emerging in the 1960s within the context of Eucharistic ecclesiology and the neo-patristic synthesis, Zizioulas's thought developed through a sustained engagement with the relationship between Christology and Pneumatology. His dialogue with Congar during the 1970s and 1980s demonstrates the ecumenical significance of the encounter between the neo-patristic synthesis and *ressourcement*. For Zizioulas, the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology opens an eschatological horizon that shapes his understanding of the Eucharist, ecclesial institutions and ministries, personhood, communion, and truth. His Eucharistic ecclesiology also converges with de Lubac's recovery of the inseparable relationship between the Eucharist and the Church. Drawing on their shared biblical and patristic heritage, the article explores these convergences while identifying differences in their treatment of history, eschatology, and the work of the Holy Spirit. It argues that Zizioulas's distinctive contribution lies in the pneumatological and eschatological grounding of ecclesial communion.

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John Zizioulas and the Pioneers of "nouvelle théologie"

In the early 1960s, John Zizioulas wrote his dissertation on the unity of the Church, which was centered on the Eucharist and the institution of the bishop during the first three centuries of the Church, when the pan-Orthodox meetings began in Rhodes to prepare for the Council of the Orthodox Church. The subject of his doctoral thesis[1] is at the heart of the ecclesiological research that marked theology and the ecumenical movement from the early 20th century until the 1960s. It was essentially a historical study of the historical sources of the early Christian era, as well as of the relevant theological literature up to that point. The study focused on the development of the unity of the Church through the Eucharist, but also on the episcopal ministry, which connected the local Church with the universal Church. By examining the relationship of the Eucharist with the Church and the bishop in the early Church, he explored the unity of the Church at the local level and then the development of the "Catholic Church" throughout the world. The dissertation was completed and published in 1965. In this thesis, John Zizioulas took into account the rich ecclesiological research and theological thought that had already developed from the interwar period until the time of writing his thesis. In this work, he makes minimal reference to Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac, since he is interested in the historical exploration of the early centuries of the Church.[2]

[1] Ἰωάννου Ζηζιούλα, *Ἡ ἑνότης τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῇ Θείᾳ Εὐχαριστίᾳ καὶ τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ κατὰ τοὺς τρεῖς πρώτους αἰῶνας*, Ἀθῆναι 1965 / John Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop during the First Three Centuries* (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001).

[2] Specifically, John Zizioulas includes the following works in his bibliography as references: Yves Congar, *The Mystery of the Church*, trans. A. V. Littledale (Helicon Press, 1960). *Sainte Église. Études et approches ecclésiologiques*, Collection Unam Sanctam, 41

The most fruitful period for John Zizioulas began in Geneva, when he worked for three years on the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, focusing on inter-Christian relations and ecumenical dialogue. His unhindered study, inter-Christian stimuli and ecumenical contacts would pave the way for him to teach systematic theology, first in Edinburgh and then in Glasgow, followed by Thessaloniki and London. During the 1970s and 1980s, Zizioulas developed his theological thought, building solidly upon the historical background and primary ecclesiological material of his dissertation. Drawing on the legacy of Eucharistic ecclesiology, Fr. Georges Florovsky's program on "neo-patristic synthesis" and ecumenical dialogue, as well as the significant work of "nouvelle théologie,"[3] and the texts and decisions of the Second Vatican Council, John Zizioulas extended his ecclesiological research toward the theology of the Eucharist,[4] the place of Pneumatology and Christology in ecclesiology,[5] and the

(Editions du Cerf, 1963). Henri de Lubac, *Catholicisme. Les aspects sociaux du dogme* (Cerf, 1938). *Corpus Mysticum*, *l'eucharistie et l'Église au Moyen âge*. *Étude historique* (Aubier, 1944; citing here the 1949 second edition).

[3] At the same time that the movement of "nouvelle théologie" or "ressourcement" was developing in the Roman Catholic Church, Georges Florovsky and other Orthodox theologians worked toward a "neopatristic synthesis" as both a return to the sources and the patristic texts and, at the same time, a creative updating of patristic theology for our time. Eucharistic ecclesiology and liturgical renewal, the patristic teaching on theosis, and many other elements of the Orthodox tradition emerged from the fruitful exchanges and interactions that developed in ecumenical circles through the fruitful interaction between theologians of the "ressourcement" movement with theologians of the "neopatristic synthesis." For the relation between "nouvelle théologie" and contemporary Orthodox theology, see Barbara Hallensleben, Regula M. Zwahlen, Jack Pappas, et al. (eds), *Encounters. Dialogue and Theological Exchange between Catholic Nouvelle Theologie and Modern Orthodoxy* (Aschendorff Verlag – forthcoming).

[4] See Jean Zizioulas, "L'eucharistie: quelques aspects bibliques," Jean Zizioulas, J.-M.R. Tillard, J.-J. Allmen (eds.), *L'Eucharistie*, Églises en dialogue 12 (Mame, 1970), 11–74.

[5] John Zizioulas, "The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church," *Communio* 1:2 (1974), 142–158. "Implications ecclésiologiques de deux types de pneumatologie," *Communio Sanctorum, Mélanges offerts à Jean-Jacques von Allmen* (Labor et Fides, 1981), 141–154. «Cristologia, pneumatologia e istituzioni ecclesiastiche: un punto di vista ortodosso», *Cristianesimo nella storia* 2 (1981), 111–127.

theological significance of the person,[6] communion, and truth.[7] These thematic axes, and especially Pneumatology, gradually lead him toward eschatology, on the horizon of which John Zizioulas reinterprets his entire theological edifice with his last and most systematic work.[8]

Just as Congar served the renewal[9] that led to Vatican II, which inspired the convocation of the Second Vatican Council, Zizioulas, apart from his long-standing years of academic teaching at the university, placed his theology at the service of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, serving on theological committees and ecclesiastical delegations. For a significant period spanning some fifty years, his theological work concerned the varied and inspired initiatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the protection of the natural environment (since 1989), theological dialogue with the Anglicans (since 1986) and the Roman Catholic Church (since 1978), and the preparation of the Holy and Great Council in Crete (already since 1976 as a member, and since 1992 as president of the pan-Orthodox pre-conciliar conferences). Throughout all those years, John Zizioulas worked tirelessly for the realization of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, despite the occasional problems of unity and cooperation among the local Orthodox Churches. After the Council of Crete and during the pandemic, in the midst of many health problems, John Zizioulas managed to complete his magnum opus on eschatology. His previously announced book, *Remembering the Future*: *Toward an Eschatological Ontology*, in which he realizes a complete theological synthesis, conveying the rich theological heritage of the 20th century to

[6] See John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion, Studies in Personhood and the Church* (St Vladimir's Seminary Press and Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985), 27–65.

[7] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion,* 67–122.

[8] The eschatological perspective is already evident in the early works of John Zizioulas and becomes increasingly decisive in his thought, ultimately becoming the horizon of his theological hermeneutics. See Metropolitan of Pergamon John Zizioulas, *Remembering the Future, Toward an Eschatological Ontology*, ed. Bishop Maxim Vasiljević (St. Sebastian Press, 2023).

[9] See, among other contributions, on the ressourcement movement Gabriel Flynn, Paul D. Murray, Patricia Kelly, eds., *Ressourcement, A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

the 21st century, was published a few months after his death in 2023 with a foreword by Pope Francis.

What connects John Zizioulas with Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac? Zizioulas is primarily connected to Congar through the issue of Pneumatology and ecclesiology, as the work of both reflects a fruitful and substantive theological dialogue on the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology. Yves Congar, summarizing his ecclesiological contribution with a focus on the pneumatological significance of communion, recognizes in the ecclesiological work of John Zizioulas a fundamental and original contribution to the ecumenical dialogue.[10] Within John Zizioulas's pneumatologically grounded Christology, Yves Congar discerns the authentic voice of the shared tradition regarding the unity and catholicity of the Church. He considered John Zizioulas to be one of the most original and profound theologians of our time, whose originality stems from his penetrating study of the Greek Church Fathers and the living reality of the Church.[11] He points out the connection between ecclesiology and the theology of the person as an ecclesiological hypostasis, which leads Zizioulas to consider that the Church is not only an institution but also a way of being, which is experienced par excellence in the Holy Eucharist. Congar extols the eschatological nature of Pneumatology, which Zizioulas attributes to the Eucharistic experience of the ecclesial community. "We felt what wealth and improvements Orthodox thought can bring to our Latin constructs (which also have their value and power)."[12] At the same time, John Zizioulas is the Orthodox theologian who has systematically studied and discussed in depth the ecclesiological positions of Yves Congar. In the persons and work of these two theologians, "nouvelle théologie" and "neo-patristic synthesis" meet and dialogue in the most fruitful

[10] See Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 51. See also Jean Rigal, "Trois approches de l'ecclésiologie de communion: Congar, Zizioulas, Moltmann," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 120:4 (1998): 605–619.

[11] Yves Congar, "Bulletin d'ecclésiologie," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982): 87–119, 88.

[12] Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 2, trans. David Smith (Seabury Press, G. Chapman, 1983), 50–51.

way, transcending the theological and polemical extremes of the past.[13] Congar's outlook of the Church, which breathes with its two lungs,[14] the traditions of the East and the West, also encounters the thinking of Fr. Georges Florovsky, who was a teacher of John Zizioulas, regarding the two Churches as twin sisters.[15] John Zizioulas took this mutual and supplementary view of the two theological traditions seriously, engaging in a deep, fruitful, and meaningful theological dialogue on the unity of the Church.

From Pneumatology to Eschatology

The initial study of the Eucharist opened up to John Zizioulas the horizon of Pneumatology and its synthesis with Christology in the field of ecclesiology. At the same time, the space in which the significance of the person, truth, and communion is realized—themes which constitute key interpretive elements of his systematic theological thought—is the Eucharistic community of the Church. This perspective also marked the passage from Pneumatology to the horizon of eschatology.[16]

The inclusion of John Zizioulas as a young holder of a doctorate in the "Faith and Order" committee of the WCC in 1967 coincided with a period when ecclesiology was the most discussed topic in the ecumenical movement. The relevant consultations, theological conferences, and the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council steadily shifted Zizioulas's interest from the historical view of the problem of Church unity to a more theological and systematic direction concerning the contemporary inter-Chris-

[13] See our article forthcoming in press "Yves Congar and John Zizioulas on Pneumatology, 'Nouvelle théologie' and 'neo-patristic synthesis' in dialogue," *Encounters: Dialogue & Theological Exchange Between Catholic Nouvelle Théologie & Modern Orthodoxy*, International Conference / Fribourg, August 29–31, 2024.

[14] See Jaroslav Z. Skira, "Breathing with Two Lungs: The Church in Yves Congar and John Zizioulas," Jaroslav Z. Skira, Michael S. Attridge, eds., *In God's Hands* (Leuven University Press, 2006), 283–305.

[15] Georges Florovsky, "The Legacy and the Task of Orthodox Theology," *Anglican Theological Review* 31:2 (1949): 65–71, 67.

[16] See Rémi Chéno, "Eschatologie et communion: les conséquences d'une constitution pneumatologique de l'ecclésiologie selon J. Zizioulas," *Istina* 51 (2006): 375–412.

tian status and the different traditions between East and West. According to Zizioulas, the Eucharist is incomprehensible without the bishop, that is, the *primus* or the head of the local Church, and this affects all levels of the Church's organization and structure. It is true that in his thesis, Zizioulas was sufficiently Christocentric in his ecclesiology due to the strong influence of Fr. Georges Florovsky. The approach of Khomiakov and many other Russian theologians seemed strongly pneumatocratic. Adhering to Florovsky's line of thought, Zizioulas believed that the Slavophiles' purely pneumatological outlook transformed ecclesiology into a "charismatic sociology." This Slavophile school of thought culminated in Nicolas Afanassieff, who perceived the Church not as a historical institution with a hierarchical structure and order, but primarily as a "charismatic community."[17] For Afanassieff, the Church is primarily "the Church of the Holy Spirit," not the Body of Christ. Vladimir Lossky's approach to the existence of two distinct economies of the Son and the Holy Spirit seemed to follow the same line of thought. The Church is connected to Christ in its objective aspect and to the work of the Holy Spirit in its subjective dimension. Thus, the sacraments, ministries, and institutions of the Church are of necessity founded on Christology, whereas the personal experience of divine grace and the theosis of the faithful depend entirely on Pneumatology. This dual view attempted to combine Christology with Pneumatology in ecclesiology in a somewhat schematic way. Ecclesiology, however, appeared as an organic part exclusively of Pneumatology, which also included anthropology. Florovsky's position on the viewpoint of Lossky

[17] According to John Zizioulas, this idea was passionately opposed by Father Georges Florovsky. See, for example Georges Florovsky, "Christ and His Church-Suggestions and Comments," *1054–1954 Église et les églises: Neuf Siècles de douloureuse Séparation entre l'Orient et l'Occident*, Etudes et travaux offerts à Dom Lambert Beauduin, 2 vols. (Chevetogne: 1955.2), 159–170. "Le Corps du Christ vivant: Une interprétation orthodoxe de l'Église," *La Sainte Église universelle: Confrontation œcuménique* (Delachaux, 1948). Ἰωάννου Ζηζιούλα, *Ἡ ἑνότης τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῇ Θείᾳ Εὐχαριστίᾳ καὶ τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ κατὰ τοὺς τρεῖς πρώτους αἰῶνας*, 17–18, 196–202. *Being as Communion*, passim. "The Mystery of the Church in the Orthodox Tradition—with additional final paragraphs on the cosmic dimension of the Church," *One in Christ* 24 (1988), 301. Μητροπολίτου Περγάμου Ἰωάννου Ζηζιούλα, *Ἔργα Α΄, Ἐκκλησιολογικὰ Μελετήματα*, 81–269.

was that ecclesiology was nothing more than a chapter of Christology: "The theology of the Church is but a chapter and a vital chapter of Christology. And without this chapter Christology itself would not be complete ... It must be stated therefore that no coherent Ecclesiology can be constructed unless the centrality of Christ, the Incarnate Lord and King of Glory, is admitted without any reservations."[18] Christ is the head of the Church and the Church is the Body of Christ. Thus, contemporary Orthodox theology presented two strong and completely different tendencies in its view of ecclesiology.

John Zizioulas's systematic preoccupation with Pneumatology began when he realized that contemporary Orthodox theology was neither unanimous nor complete and comprehensive regarding the matter of the relationship between Christology and Pneumatology in ecclesiology. His first significant study on Pneumatology seems to have been prompted by this critical problem, its significance, and its implications for inter-Christian dialogue between East and West. As is well known, Orthodox observers (and not only them) at the Second Vatican Council pointed out that there was a clear lack or even underestimation of Pneumatology in the texts on the Church. Indeed, when this deficiency was also realized by the Roman Catholics, an effort was made, albeit retrospectively, to introduce Pneumatology into an ecclesiological structure that was essentially based on Christology from the outset. In his post-conciliar studies, Congar often referred to an important meeting he had with two Orthodox observers of the Second Vatican Council, crediting them with the pneumatological shift of the Council. At an informal dinner with Nikos Nissiotis[19] and Fr. Alexander Schmemann, in order to exchange views on a preliminary draft of the constitution on the Church, the two Orthodox observers pointed out the following to Congar: "If we were to prepare a treatise *De Ecclesia* (On the Church), we would draft a chapter on the Holy Spirit, to which we would add a sec-

[18] Florovsky, "Christ and His Church, 159–170, 170.

[19] During this period, Nikos Nissiotis had already published his study, "Pneumatologie Orthodoxe," in Franz Leenhardt, et al., *Le Saint-Esprit* (Labor et Fides, 1963), 85–106.

ond chapter on Christian anthropology, and that would be all."[20] John Zizioulas saw that this approach, in attempting to transcend the traditional Christomonism of Roman Catholic ecclesiology, inclined toward a kind of pneumatomonism, excluding the organic relationship between Christology and ecclesiology. On the one hand, John Zizioulas recognized the crucial importance of Pneumatology in the relations and differences between East and West, and the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, but on the other hand, he believed that the exclusively pneumatological definition of the Church was not the correct and appropriate view of ecclesiology. In his early study, "The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church" (1973), Zizioulas demonstrated that ecclesiology is based in a reciprocal way on the synthesis between Christology and Pneumatology.

Exploring the place of Pneumatology in ecclesiology, Zizioulas highlights the unity of the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit in the biblical and patristic traditions of the early Church. Despite differences in emphasis, the mystery of the Church was understood in both the East and the West through a synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology in the one divine economy of the mystery of salvation. Undoubtedly, Christology is the basis and starting point of ecclesiology, but this is made possible through Pneumatology. The synthetic relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit is the stable foundation of the mystery of the Church. Christ is the *Anointed One* of the Spirit; Christology itself is structured pneumatologically. The Holy Spirit, as described in Holy Scriptures and patristic tradition, constitutes *power*, *sanctification*, *truth*, *freedom*, and above all, *life* and *communion*. Wherever the Holy Spirit blows, it creates life and communion. Christ himself, through the Spirit, is a relational being par excellence; He is a person and a body in which many are incorporated. Consequently, the mystery of the Church as the unity of the *One* and the *many* arises precisely from this relationship between Christ and the Spir-

[20] Yves Congar, "Actualité d'une pneumatologie," *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 23 (1973), 121–132. "Pneumatologie ou 'Christomonisme' dans la tradition latine?" *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 45 (1969), 394–416.

it. It is not that the *One* exists first and then the *many* follow, but that the *One* is simultaneously *many*. The pneumatological dimension of the Church transcends any linear development of the history of salvation and already introduces the eschatological into history. The eschaton, that is to say, concerns the historical consciousness of the Church. On the one hand, it sanctifies and affirms history, and on the other, it reveals that the Church does not depend on historical causality and evolution, but on the eschaton of the Kingdom. The Holy Spirit as *Spiritus Creator* connects the mystery of the Church with creation and the world, grace with nature. The Church is constituted simultaneously by the work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit consists in transcending history, constantly opening up the horizon of the Church toward the eschaton. "The Church is the Body of Christ precisely in its being a 'spiritual body'"[21] The life of God is introduced into history; the Church becomes a *communion of saints* in the body of Christ, which is an event of communion within nature and history. This is precisely where, according to Zizioulas, Pneumatology encounters eschatology. The Holy Spirit does not merely guide the Church through history toward the eschaton, rather the Spirit already anticipates the mystery of the Kingdom, bringing the eschaton into history and liberating the Church from history's limitations. This perspective emerged from an organic synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology. However, subsequent theology up to the present day has not creatively assimilated this synthesis. This issue warrants further exploration. Here we will limit ourselves to arguing that this question—and particularly the theological, ecclesiological, and pastoral implications of this synthesis—does not appear to have been a major concern for contemporary Orthodox theology. John Zizioulas's observation in the early 1980s that "the actual state of Or-

[21] John Zizioulas, "The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church," *The One and the Many: Studies on God, Man, the Church, and the World Today* (St. Sebastian Press, 2010), 79.

thodox theology in this respect is by no means satisfactory" appears to remain true even today.[22]

If the Church is constituted by the Spirit as the body of Christ, this means that the Spirit establishes a concrete community in a particular place. This refers to the Eucharistic community in which the (Christological) mystery of Pascha is integrated with the (Pneumatological) mystery of Pentecost. The Eucharist, although established Christologically at the Last Supper, is now celebrated on *Sunday*, which is the eschatological day of the Resurrection. The historical aspect of the institution of the Eucharist is transcended by the Spirit, since it is now celebrated on the Eighth Day of the week and takes place within a community. The epiclesis of the Eucharistic community to the Holy Spirit, namely, the pneumatological-eschatological factor, determines history and gives life to the Body of Christ, which is the Church. "Thanks to the epiclesis, the Church realizes in herself the Christ event without her causing it to happen and without her being caused by it."[23] Therefore, according to Zizioulas, the epiclesis shows that there is no question of priority between Christ and the Spirit. This fact also reveals another pneumatological application in ecclesiology: The Eucharist (through the epiclesis of the Spirit) makes the Church, and the Church (through the epiclesis of the Spirit) makes the Eucharist. "In speaking about the *ecclesiological presuppositions* of the Eucharist I wish to exclude right from the start such an assumption. If there are ecclesiological presuppositions of the Eucharist –and there certainly are– these must not be understood to involve a priority of the Church over the Eucharist. My position... is that the Church constitutes the Eucharist while being constituted by it. Church and Eucharist are interdependent; they coincide, and are even in some sense identical... In order to find the

[22] See footnote 30 below. To the best of our knowledge, such an endeavor can be found in Boris Bobrinskoy's work, *The Mystery of the Trinity: Trinitarian Experience and Vision in the Biblical and Patristic Tradition*, (St Vladimirs Seminary Press, 1999). See also our work *Communion in Theosis: The Synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology in the Work of Saint Gregory Palamas*, forthcoming from Sebastian Press.

[23] John Zizioulas, "The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church," *The One and the Many*, 81.

deeper roots of this coincidence between Church and Eucharist we must again go back to the question of the relation between Christology and Pneumatology."[24]

Pneumatology implies that the Church exists as a local Eucharistic community. Its members are not individuals, but *persons in communion*. The Church is a *community/communion of persons*. This has implications for its structure and organization. By means of apostolic succession, the Church is a communion in time, and through synodality, it is a communion in space. The correct and balanced synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology transcends linear historicism and collectivist universalism, highlighting the local Church under the bishop and in the Eucharist as the plenary and catholic Church that encompasses all orders and ministries as charismatic events. Institution and charism are mutually composed precisely because of the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology. This issue, according to John Zizioulas, had been resolved by the early Church when it confronted the pneumatocratic and enthusiastic movements of Gnosticism and Montanism. "In the Spirit, the institutional becomes charismatic and the charismatic becomes institutional," because, according to Irenaeus, '*Ubi enim Ecclesia, ibi et Spiritus Dei; et ubi Spiritus Dei, illic Ecclesia et omnis gratia.*'"[25] Every charismatic gift of the Spirit always serves the edification and perfection of the body of the Church, that is, the Eucharistic community under the bishop. The charisms of the Holy Spirit are not individual but build up and relate the members of the community. They do not oppose either the order or the institution of the Church, but rather highlight it as a charismatic event. Institution and hierarchy are not objective expressions of authority, order, and submission, but ways of expressing charisms and means of communion and freedom of persons. "In the same Spirit the very structure of the Church becomes the existential structure of each person."[26] The Church is led to the truth by the Holy Spirit, while the truth is Christ himself, who becomes

[24] Zizioulas, *The One and the Many*, 68.
[25] Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, III, 24, I, PG 7, 966C.
[26] Zizioulas, *The One and the Many*, 85.

the life and communion of God with people. In his study, John Zizioulas has already perceived the crucial importance of *iconic ontology* in the Eucharist, which is shaped by the experience of the eschaton through the Holy Spirit in the Church. Whenever the Church celebrates the Holy Eucharist, the "truth" of the eschaton is already depicted within history.[27]

Christ, through the Spirit, sacramentally becomes the communion of truth within history. However, the word of God is ultimately *truth* and *communion* with the truth that is Christ. This truth is not confined to autonomous linguistic and conceptual forms and expressions, to autonomous historical and cultural constructions. The formulations of the Councils aim at truth and communion within the community of the Church. Everything that exists in the Church is determined by the event of Pentecost and becomes a charismatic event of truth as communion. Thus, the ministry of the bishop is not an objective form of apostolic succession above the community, but a charism within the Eucharistic community, in which all the ministries, orders, and structures of the local Church are dynamically and by means of the epiclesis encompassed. The confession of faith is not simply a logical statement, but a matter of the whole of human existence, which through the Holy Spirit communicates and is sanctified by the organic link it has with the body of the Church, namely, the Eucharist.

For John Zizioulas, the Holy Spirit as an event of communion in the Church is an expression of the *eschaton within history*. Thus, the Church in its pneumatological dimension becomes a *relational* reality that embraces the world in order to transform it. Its Eucharistic worship does not oppose the profane world, but embraces it in order to sanctify it. It does not build the Kingdom within history, but recognizes that it cannot become a state of history. On the contrary, through the Spirit, it constantly brings the eschaton into history in order to change the world.

[27] Maximos the Confessor, *Scholia eccl. Hier.* 3.2, PG 4, 137D: "The things of the Old Testament are shadow (σκιὰ); those of the New Testament are image (εἰκών); truth is the state of the things of the future (ἀλήθεια δὲ ἡ τῶν μελλόντων κατάστασις)." Cf. *Amb.* 21 (PG 91, 1253CD), *Cap. theol.* I.90 (PG 90, 1120C).

Historical developments alienated the East and the West, and this separation was due to the obscuring of the common tradition of Christology and Pneumatology. We therefore need to return to this common tradition in order to see and address the various problems that have arisen in the life of the Church and constitute obstacles to ecclesiological dialogue between East and West. Zizioulas points out that contemporary Orthodox theology cannot address the so-called "Christomonism" of the West by promoting pneumatological tendencies in ecclesiology. "The Orthodox are thus becoming the 'specialists on Pneumatology' to whom people can turn in discussions of this subject."[28] However, if the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology is applied not only to theology but also to the very existence of the Church, then this "pneumatomonism" will be fully assimilated and will no longer constitute a supposed particular privilege or trait of the Orthodox. This synthesis, as Zizioulas is quick to point out, is not a conceptual construct or a purely academic speculation, but is grounded in the mystery of the Holy Trinity, which reveals two fundamental movements in the life of the Church. The Holy Spirit leads to the unity of the Church and at the same time makes the Church an *ecstatic* and *relational* community that embraces the whole of creation. These two movements belong both to Christ and to the Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes the Church a structured community and at the same time a relational event, which realizes the catholicity of Christ, who is the recapitulation of all things. Thus, the Divine Economy is fulfilled through the Trinity, since everything ultimately refers through Christ and through the Spirit to the Father (1 Cor. 15:28). The recognition of this dual movement in the mystery of the Church reveals both the difficulties and the promising prospects for the path toward the restoration of Christian unity. Zizioulas concludes this first pneumatological contribution as a vision for unity and not as yet another theoretical framework. Acknowledging the various practical problems of this theological task, he points out that it is in the nature of Pneu-

[28] Zizioulas, "The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church", 89.

matology to free us from our self-sufficiency and leave the work of unity among divided Christians to God. However, our minimum task and responsibility is to obediently see the vision that the Holy Spirit sets before us. In this study, John Zizioulas laid down almost all the basic axes of his ecclesiological thought, which he would highlight and specialize in the evolution and development of his theological work.

Ten years after his first study on Pneumatology, he reverted to its ecclesiological dimension to demonstrate more vividly the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology, exploring the consequences of two types of Pneumatology in biblical and early patristic sources.[29] According to the first type of Pneumatology, the Holy Spirit is given by Christ to complete his mission with the miraculous expansion of the Church in the world. Christology here becomes the source of Pneumatology. Pneumatology is dependent on Christology. "The Church is the people of God in the diaspora, on the way to the Kingdom."[30] The work of the Spirit follows the work of Christ. The Church as a body must obey and follow Christ as its head. At the level of ecclesiology, there is a distance between the head and the body.

At the same time, another type of Pneumatology appears in the New Testament. Here, the Holy Spirit is not only related to the mission and expansion of the Church, but also to its eschatological nature. If in the first type the Holy Spirit is given by the risen Christ, here the Holy Spirit leads to the resurrection of Christ. The Holy Spirit brings about not only the resurrection of Christ, but also his Nativity and everything related to his work. Christ is full of the Spirit. In this case, Pneumatology is the source of Christology. Christology is dependent on Pneumatology. The Church is not understood primarily as a dispersed people, but as a gathered people. Instead of diaspora and missionary work, the Church

[29] Jean Zizioulas, "Implications ecclésiologiques de deux types de pneumatologie," *Communio Sanctorum, Mélanges offerts à Jean-Jacques von Allmen* (Labor et Fides, 1981), 141–154; reprinted in Jean Zizioulas, *L'Église et ses institutions* (Cerf, 2011).

[30] Zizioulas, "Implications ecclésiologiques de deux types de pneumatologie," *L'Église et ses institutions* (Cerf, 2011), 30.

is seen here as an *eschatological gathering*, as will happen in the eschaton. According to this understanding, the Holy Spirit does not address certain individuals for the fulfillment of the mission, but forms a *community*, *creates communion*. The Holy Spirit does not follow Christ, but realizes the Christological event in history through the community of the Church. The communion of the Spirit also means the presence of Christ. The Church is holy because of its unbreakable relationship with its head, Christ. The early Church experienced this dimension of Pneumatology in the Eucharist, as the faithful came together *in one place* and at *one and the same time*, as an eschatological act and experience. The Eucharist constitutes a manifestation of the Church as an eschatological community and communion with the life of God, and for this reason, it became the basis for the organization of the Church.

These two types of Pneumatology coexist organically in the New Testament. Their divergence began gradually in the post-apostolic period and intensified with Tertullian and Augustine with the exaggeration of morality and human activity in history. The Holy Spirit was perceived as the power that inspires individuals and is transmitted as a special authority through ordination as a grace that produces specific results. The biblical eschatology of the early Church, under the influence of Greek thought, was understood either as historical actualization (ἐντελέχεια), as the natural conclusion of the linear course of time, or as *spiritualization* or *symbolism*, where its spiritual or symbolic meaning is sought under Platonic influence. Another possibility of eschatology was the *apocalyptic* dimension as a "prevention" of the eschaton of the Kingdom. This dimension is clearly subject to the Eucharist and, through patristic tradition, passes from Irenaeus to Athanasius and reaches Maximus the Confessor as an *iconic ontology* of the eschaton.

Nevertheless, things took a different turn. In the East, under the influence of Origenism, the perception prevailed that the Holy Spirit acts and is possessed by certain individuals, mainly in monastic circles, and at the same time, the Eucharist was experienced as the place par excellence where the Spirit acts. The Holy Eucharist, deeply influenced by eschatology, was experienced as a living

image of the Kingdom. In the West, Pneumatology was based on the notion of mission. This idea was crystallized in the *Filioque* and in the overemphasis on the historical element of God's revelation as the basis of theology and the Church. The East preferred a more *theophanic* and meta-historical view, in which the Holy Spirit is equal to the Son.

For Zizioulas, these differences between East and West mark the gradual disappearance of the eschatological perspective in both Pneumatology and ecclesiology. The Holy Spirit was disconnected from the future age and connected with the historical Christ who is prolonged through the Church. Eschatology was also abandoned by modern Orthodox academic theology. However, it remained in the Divine Liturgy. The existing problems in the theological dialogue between East and West are largely related to the different approaches to Pneumatology and eschatology. If theology and ecclesiology developed differently in the East and the West; if papal primacy and infallibility came to be understood within a hierarchical, pyramidal ecclesiology; if the universal Church takes precedence over the local Church; if history is overemphasized at the expense of the eschaton, the divine essence at the expense of the divine persons; if the work of the Paraclete is underestimated and rendered entirely subordinate to Christ; if the Eucharistic epiclesis is absent and the Eucharist is understood merely as a historical commemoration of the Last Supper; if institution is opposed to charism; and if grace is incompatible with nature—all of these issues are related to the way Pneumatology and eschatology are interpreted.[31] For this reason, it is necessary to synthesize Christology and Pneumatology in contemporary ecclesiological problems. Pneumatologically dependent Christology, which could influence ecclesiology beyond the missionary-

[31] In his work *L'Église de saint Augustin à l'époque modern* (Cerf, 1970), 276, Congar cites a characteristic passage taken from Thomas Aquinas's *Contra errores Graecorum* II, 32 (Leonine Edition: Rome 1967): "Those who deny the universal primacy of Christ's Vicar, the Pope of the Roman Church, commit a similar error when they hold that the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Son. Just as Christ institutes the Church by confirming it with His Spirit, likewise the Vicar of Christ, exercising his primacy, takes care that the Church remains obedient to Christ."

historical type, balances the Eucharistic-eschatological type and could facilitate contemporary inter-Christian dialogue. This synthesis is more necessary than ever for the Church to combine its historical engagement in the world with the eschatological vision of the Kingdom, which it must bear witness and offer to the world. History without an eschatological vision has no meaning: "The Church exists in the world for the redemption of history and not simply to follow the flow of history."[32]

When asked what an exact synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology could bring to ecclesiology, John Zizioulas replies that we must first answer two basic questions. The first is the question of priority, and the second is the question of content and the particular characteristics of both Christology and Pneumatology. Both approaches are found in the biblical and patristic tradition. The problem arose when they became separated and completely alienated from one another, when Christology dominated Pneumatology in the West. Reacting to the Christomonism of the West, modern Orthodox theology has not managed to overcome the temptation of an antagonistic stance toward the priority of Pneumatology in ecclesiology. Going beyond extremes and polemics, we simply need to re-establish the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology as mutual and complementary.

Once the specific content of each is clarified, the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology can be complete. Certainly, their content is integrated into the Trinitarian mode and the specific contribution of the divine Persons to the economy of salvation. The Holy Spirit brings the eschaton into history and creates the Eucharistic community of the Church. However, the Holy Spirit constitutes the Church from the beginning and does not "inspire" it afterwards. Consequently, Pneumatology is connected with the being of the Church. Subsequently, the eschatological dimension and communion are necessary elements for the formation of ecclesiology, which needs to balance its missionary and historical dimensions. If this theological framework is applied to ecclesiol-

[32] Jean Zizioulas, "Implications ecclésiologiques de deux types de pneumatologie," *L'Église et ses institutions*, 47.

ogy, then there are specific implications for the very structure and organization of the Church. If Pneumatology is constitutive of Christology and, at the same time, of ecclesiology, then the local Churches are as primary as the universal Church. Basically, there is reciprocity and not some priority between them, transcending the dilemma between the local and universal Church. This is precisely where the role of the synodal institution and synodality as a *communion* that unites the local Churches among themselves comes to the fore. *Communion* and *uniqueness* coincide in ecclesiology because of synodality. The 34th Apostolic Canon articulates precisely this ecclesiology of communion portraying the unity of the *many* in the *One* Christ—as a Church that is both one and manifold. The same is true at the level of the local Church, where the one represents the many and the many are expressed through various ministries. The one cannot exist without the many, and the many cannot exist without the one. This mutual dependence takes place in the Eucharistic community, which is an image of the eschaton as a *gathering together in one place* and at *one time*. Consequently, all ecclesial institutions are sacramental because they are placed in the dialectical relationship between history and eschatology. In this way, the Church is founded by Christ and at the same time *co*-founded by the Spirit. Pneumatology provides the ecclesiastical institution with the element of communion, inviting us to participate freely in the Church.

This perspective, notes Zizioulas, could provide the framework for transcending the dual ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council, which did indeed take significant steps to recognize the catholicity of each local Church, the communion of local Churches, and the importance of the people of God, while continuing to recognize the pyramidal universal ecclesiology under the pope. However, how can ecclesiology that emphasizes the fullness and catholicity of each local Church be balanced with ecclesiology that considers catholicity to be a matter of universality under the bishop of Rome? Perhaps a Third Vatican Council[33] could complete the work of the Second Vatican Council, making

[33] John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 141.

the Church's being totally dependent on the ontology of communion, giving a constitutive and not a secondary role to Pneumatology in relation to Christology and ecclesiology.

Yves Congar and Pneumatology

Yves Congar's work in ecclesiology, which began in the 1930s, despite the freshness of the ressourcement movement and the laborious effort to renew Roman Catholic theology, devoted little attention to Pneumatology. The preoccupation not only of Congar, but also of other Roman Catholic theologians, with Pneumatology was minimal and restricted simply to the auxiliary role of the Holy Spirit in Christ's work of transmitting sanctification and grace to the Church. The collaboration and fruitful discussions with the Orthodox observers at the Second Vatican Council, and especially the critical observation that Pneumatology was almost absent from the draft texts, which were dominated by Christology, led to the subsequent introduction of relevant references to the Holy Spirit.

It seems that Congar took the criticism of the lack of Pneumatology seriously and, despite his initial reservations, ultimately accepted this observation as fruitful.[34] Indeed, the last creative decade of his life, shortly before his health declined, was devoted to the re-acceptance and promotion of Pneumatology in Roman Catholic theology and ecclesiology. In addition to his extensive writings on Pneumatology in the 1970s, in the early 1980s Congar published an important trilogy entitled *I Believe in the Holy Spirit,*[35] which culminated in another volume entitled *The Word and the Spirit.*[36] In this trilogy, he presents the biblical data on the work of

[34] See Pablo Arteaga, "How an Orthodox Accusation Became a Source of Inspiration for Congar's Pneumatology," *New Blackfriars* 100:1989 (2019): 526–537. Pablo Arteaga, "Yves Congar et l'Esprit Saint," *Communio* 271 (2020/5): 85–96. Cf. Yves Congar, "Actualité renouvelée du Saint-Esprit," *Lumen Vitæ* 27 (1972): 543–560, 550. Elizabeth Teresa Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[35] Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1–3, trans. David Smith (Seabury Press, G. Chapman, 1983).

[36] Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, trans. David Smith (Harper & Row, 1986).

the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and the dogmatic teaching of the Western Church up to the Second Vatican Council, with frequent references to Orthodox Tradition and the Reformation. He then develops the critical issue of pneumatological ecclesiology and its implications for ecclesiastical institutions and Christian anthropology. Finally, he attempts to bring the theological traditions of the East and West into a fruitful dialogue, discussing and incorporating fruitfully and creatively the contribution of contemporary Orthodox theology. Many elements of John Zizioulas's contribution, and especially his proposal for the synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology, are utilized by Congar in this pneumatological ecclesiology.[37] In the epilogue to the trilogy, Congar develops three interrelated theological fields: Christological Pneumatology, Pneumatological anthropology, and Pneumatological ecclesiology. In a remarkable synthesis of Christology and Pneumatology, Congar overcomes the obstacles of a misinterpreted Christomonism and Filioquism, as well as an autonomous Pneumatology.

In his exposition, Yves Congar begins with the revelation of the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures, which is transmitted to man through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Scriptures testify in various ways that the Word and the Spirit come from and lead to God the Father. The Word and the Spirit work together to accomplish the work of God the Father. From *Genesis* to the *Apocalypse*, they are revealed as inseparably connected persons in the economy of salvation. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, who is Christ. Roman Catholic ecclesiology, as crystallized from the Tridentine period to the papal encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943), construed the Church as a hierarchical community founded by Christ, who provided it with all the necessary

[37] See Stavros Yangazoglou, "Yves Congar and John Zizioulas on Pneumatology 'Nouvelle théologie' and 'neo-patristic synthesis' in dialogue," in Hallensleben, *Encounters. Dialogue and Theological Exchange.* See also our related article, "Yves Congar's Contribution to the Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue," Dr. Petros Vassiliades and Archbishop Lazar Puhalo (ed.), *For the Visible Unity of the One Church of Christ* (Cemes Publications, Synaxis Press, 2022), 191–212.

means for its mission until the end of history. The various anti-hierarchical reactions that have arisen from time to time, the Protestant Reformation, and the many pietistic, charismatic, and mystical currents and movements within the Roman Catholic Church showed a sharp contrast between institution and charism, hierarchy and spirit. Rudolf Sohm and Adolf Harnack systematized this contrast in ecclesiology. The Spirit as a factor of freedom and charisma is opposed to the institutional hierarchy of the Church, which was founded by Christ. Congar points out that there is no autonomy of the Spirit vis-à-vis the institutional and hierarchical structure of the Church, because according to biblical and patristic tradition, the Holy Spirit is inseparable from Christ and acts together with Christ. In the Church, there are no institutions, ministries, or charisms independent of the gift of the Holy Spirit. All ministries are charismatic and all are organically integrated into the order and institution of the Church; even the prophetic element is integrated and functions within the community and not separately or in isolation. The Church is structured by the synergy of Christ and the Spirit. Only an erroneous view of the Word hinders the work of the Spirit, who "blows where he wills" (John 3:8). However, Pentecost does not establish another Church apart from the Church that is the body of Christ in history. "The Word may be permeated with the Spirit, but the Spirit is also permeated with the Word. The two are inseparable. They both proceed from the Father. There is only one Church of God, which is at once the established Church and the Church of the future, and is built up by the 'two hands' of God! Those two hands are also what God uses to make men one with himself."[38]

The Holy Spirit co-establishes the Church with Christ, and the charisms are dynamic elements that continually build up the Church. "The Church appears therefore to come both from the Word in his incarnation and from the Spirit—or the glorified Lord—who is unceasingly active both in men and women and in sacramental or juridical structures. Truly, God works with his two

[38] Congar, T*he Word and the Spirit*, 71–72.

hands conjointly."[39] All the works of Christ the Messiah in the history of salvation are accomplished in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. Congar considers that the Spirit is in an indissoluble relationship with the Son and in the eternal Trinity, and refers positively to the Pneumatology of Gregory of Cyprus and Gregory Palamas on the eternal enlightenment of the Spirit from the Son. However, he acknowledges that the accusation of Christomonism is justified. Both he and other Roman Catholic theologians attempted to remedy this deficiency immediately after the Second Vatican Council. However, he believes that there were often one-sided aspects to this criticism, as well as to the exaggeration and autonomy of Pneumatology in ecclesiology. If there is a place where Christology and Pneumatology come together, it is the Eucharist, which is an institution established by Christ and an act of the grace of the Holy Spirit.[40] He acknowledges, in any event, that Roman Catholic theology has not sufficiently developed the cosmological and eschatological action of the Holy Spirit in creation as *Spiritus Creator*. Therefore, Congar concludes, the Church is founded mutually on the Word and the Spirit. Christology is pneumatological, and Pneumatology is defined Christologically. The Church is the body of Christ and at the same time the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Congar concludes this work with references to Nikos Nissiotis, always remembering the discussion they had during the Second Vatican Council, which turned him firmly toward Pneumatology. Combining Eastern and Western traditions, exploring Western theological tradition, and pointing out common paths and different emphases, Congar adopted the synthetic and clearly ecumenical approach of John Zizioulas. Congar accepts Zizioulas's distinction between historical and eschatological approaches to ec-

[39] *The Word and the Spirit*, 83.

[40] Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, 116–117: "What is more, the one place where Christology and pneumatology are united is undoubtedly the liturgy. In its contents, those who perform it and its whole context, in its combination of word and activity, spirit and form and finally as a celebration on the part of Christ as the great High Priest and the coming of the Holy Spirit into our hearts, it is instituted by Christ and constitutes an event of grace."

clesiology, recognizing both its originality and interpretive depth. However, because he emphasizes the Church's ministry and apostolic mission in the world, he insists on the priority of history and the realities of the divine economy over the eschaton—of the Alpha over the Omega.[41] His own interpretive approach to ecclesiology is more linear and historical. For Congar, the Holy Spirit "establishes" the Church, remains within it and gives it life. Zizioulas does not reject this approach; he maintains that Christ establishes the Church, whereas the Holy Spirit constitutes it. Yet this presupposes that Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is an "eschatological being" who incorporates the many. In this sense, Zizioulas understands and accepts Congar's description of the Holy Spirit as a co-founder of the Church. The Holy Spirit does not merely animate or vivify the Church after the fact; rather, the Spirit constitutes the Church's reality from the very beginning, just as the Spirit constitutes the event of Christ. Zizioulas thus argues for the priority of the eschatological, maintaining that the Alpha of history derives from—and exists by virtue of—the Omega of the last things, namely, the Kingdom of God.[42]

This important work is ultimately his magnum opus, which showed, on the one hand, the gaps and problems of Pneumatology in Roman Catholic theology from the 13th to the 20th century, but also how contemporary Roman Catholic theology can reclaim the rich biblical, liturgical, and patristic heritage of the theology of the Holy Spirit in the contemporary ecumenical domain and in a fruitful encounter with the Orthodox Tradition of the Eastern Church,[43] as well as within the sphere of the Reformation. After Congar, the place and significance of Pneumatology in the Catholic Church changed, not only in theology, but also in its piety and spirituality. Zizioulas pointed out that, despite histori-

[41] See Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 51.

[42] See Jean Zizioulas, *L'être ecclesial* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1981), 136–170. "Le Christ, l'Esprit et l'Église," *Prêtres Diocésains*, 1366, Mars-Avril 1999 (numéro spécial): 172. Zizioulas, *The One and the Many*, 15. See also *Remembering the Future*, 22–26.

[43] See Joseph Famerée, "Orthodox Influence on the Roman Catholic Theologian Yves Congar, OP, A Sketch," *St Vladimirs Theological Quarterly* 39 (1995): 409–416.

cal differences and problems, Pneumatology is a common heritage in the East and West.

After an extraordinary flourishing of Pneumatology in the West in recent years, the Orthodox cannot appear as the "experts in Pneumatology." Congar's interest in Pneumatology is a respectable and honorable response to Orthodox theologians' criticism of "Christomonism" in the Catholic Church, but also an important supplement to the ressourcement movement in contemporary Roman Catholic theology. Congar certainly does not fail to mention the eschatological and cosmological role of the Holy Spirit, though not in the existential, Eucharistic, and systematic manner of Zizioulas, but rather from a more historical perspective. Perhaps Zizioulas would have liked Congar's exceptional approach to place greater emphasis on its implications on ecclesiology and especially for ecclesiastical institutions. For Zizioulas, the Second Vatican Council paved the way for the recognition of the fullness and catholicity of the local Churches alongside the primacy of universality of the bishop of Rome. For this reason, he believed that overcoming this dual ecclesiology could be a task for the future. In any case, the spirit of Vatican II and the ecclesiology of communion, which he promoted both in practice and in theory, seems to have begun to be revitalized and to take on new forms and expressions in the Roman Catholic Church, primarily through the initiatives of the late Pope Francis regarding synodality at all levels of ecclesiastical life. None of this could have happened without the Second Vatican Council, without the renewal brought about by the "nouvelle théologie" movement, as represented by such eminent theologians as Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac, and many others.

"The Eucharist Makes the Church." Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas

While the evidence for the mutual theological dialogue between John Zizioulas and Yves Congar is clear, the connection between the Orthodox theologian and Henri de Lubac was not direct.

This does not mean that Zizioulas, belonging to a younger generation, did not study and draw inspiration from the profoundly existential, dynamic and renovative genius of this important theologian of "ressourcement," who expressed the other center alongside Le Saulchoir of the "nouvelle théologie" in Lyon.

What might have attracted John Zizioulas's interest in Henri de Lubac's thought? Obviously, the work of theological renewal of "ressourcement," which included the sources and patristic texts of the East, along with the Christian sources of the West and met the goals of the "neo-patristic synthesis," as expressed by Fr. Georges Florovsky and other Orthodox theologians. With his work, which was enormous in both thematic development and size, de Lubac attempted to unlock the treasures of the tradition of the Church in order to bring them into an updated dialogue with contemporary man. "Just to imitate primitive Christianity or the Middle Ages will not be enough. We can revive the Fathers' all-embracing humanism and recover the spirit of their mystical exegesis only by an assimilation which is at the same time a transformation. For although the Church rests on eternal foundations, it is in a continual state of rebuilding, and since the Fathers' time it has undergone many changes in style; and without in any way considering ourselves better than our Fathers, what we in turn have to build for our own use must be built in our own style, that is, one that is adapted to our own needs and problems."[44] Renewal

[44] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*: *A study of Dogma in Relation to the Corporate Destiny of Mankind* (Sheed and Ward, 1958), 172. Certainly, this was not some kind of innovation or "new theology," as this movement to return to the forgotten tradition was ironically called by the scholastic theology of the time. De Lubac himself, looking back on his work, noted characteristically: "Without pretending to open up new avenues of thought, I have rather sought, without any archaism, to make known some of the great common sources of Catholic tradition. I wanted to make it loved and to show its ever-abiding fruitfulness. Any such task required a process of reading across the centuries rather than critical application at definite points. It excluded too privileged an attachment to any particular school, system or period." Henri de Lubac, *Mémoire sur l'occasion de mes écrits* (Culture et Vérité, 1989). "Epilogue to Part Two: The Texture of a Work and its Unity," *Theology in History*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (Ignatius Press 1996), 599. See also Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church* (Communio Books 1993), 143. See Hans Urs von Balthasar's excellent and insightful presentation of de Lubac's work in his book, *The Theology of*

is the modernization and inspired revival of tradition in our times. Zizioulas also attempted to achieve this in the context of his "neo-patristic synthesis" and Eucharistic ecclesiology. His entire work, which revolves around the Eucharistic axis of ecclesiology and eschatology and the theological and anthropological significance of the person and communion, is an inspired apperception and fruitful transfer of the tradition of the Greek Fathers to the contemporary life of the Church and of humanity. At the same time, de Lubac's intensely existential view of the Christian faith amid the sufferings of 20th-century Europe, when atheism, wars, and various extreme and utopian ideologies seemed to attract the masses, did not leave Zizioulas unaffected.

In his dialogue with modernity, de Lubac draws inspiration not only from the Western Christian and humanist tradition, but also from the Fathers of the East and from Dostoevsky and Nikolai Berdyaev. The human person is connected to the personal God, and their relationship culminates at the Omega point, as his friend Teilhard de Chardin had said. De Lubac developed a theology for modern man that went beyond the rigidity and narrowness of the scholarly and formal Roman Catholic theology of his time, which was responsible for "the removal of Western man from his Christian origins."[45] The exiles, prohibitions, and bitter experiences endured by this brilliant and charismatic theologian did not diminish either his strength or his work, which was recognized in the late 1950s on the way to the Second Vatican Council, to which he was a prominent advisor alongside his companion and friend Yves Congar.

John Zizioulas, belonging to the next generation, was inspired in his work both by the ressourcement movement and by the corresponding and parallel movement of the "neo-patristic synthesis." These two currents shared many common elements of early Christian heritage and tradition, such as the central importance

Henri de Lubac: An Overview (Ignatius Press, 1991).

[45] Henri de Lubac, *Le drame de l'humanisme athée* (Éd. Spes [Le Cer], 1944), 5. For de Lubac's intellectual and theological journey, see Aidan Nichols, "Henri de Lubac: Panorama and Proposal," *New Blackfriars* 93:1043 (2012): 3–33.

of the Eucharist in the mystery of the Church, Christ as a relational being par excellence in the mystical body of the Church, etc. Both Eucharistic ecclesiology and the theology of the person constitute a contemporary witness of Orthodox theology to the great problems of the modern age. Particularly with regard to the Eucharist as the authentic basis for a new view of ecclesiology, beyond the scholastic, juridical and polemical theology of the Counter-Reformation, which also influenced Orthodox academic theology, John Zizioulas, despite the continuities and discontinuities of the two theological traditions, recognized many common points between East and West in the work of the representatives of ressourcement.

There is a fundamental point where John Zizioulas's Eucharistic ecclesiology converges and engages fruitfully with the thought of Henri de Lubac. "The Church makes the Eucharist, but the Eucharist also makes the Church."[46] This view could be taken as Zizioulas's position or even as a patristic quotation.[47] However, it belongs to Henri de Lubac, for whom there is a complementary relationship between the Church as an institution in which the Eucharist is celebrated and the Church as the body of Christ, which is constituted by the mystical body of the Eucharist. Emphasizing the link between the Eucharist and the Church, especially with regard to the relationship between the Eucharistic body and the ecclesial body, de Lubac drew mainly on the theological thought of Augustine, but also on the Fathers of the early Church (Irenaeus, Origen, Ambrose). De Lubac attributed clear Eucharistic significance to Augustine's account of the voice of the Word: "You will not change me into yourself, as you do the food of your flesh, but you will be changed into me / *nec tu me in te mutabis sicut cibum carnis tuae, sed tu mutaberis in me*."[48] For Augustine, con-

[46] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum, The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame Press, 2006), 104, 292–293, *The Splendour of the Church* (Sheed and Ward, 1956), 92, 106, 133. See Paul McPartlan, *The Eucharist makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue* (T.&T. Clark, 1993), 75–97, 98–120.

[47] See Bernard Sesboüé, "Eucharistie : deux générations de travaux," *Etudes* 355 (1981): 109–115, 101.

[48] Augustine, *Confessions* 7, 10.

stant participation in the Eucharist constitutes constant incorporation into the Church.[49]

The Eucharist as the mystical body of Christ has intense ecclesiological significance, and the Church as the historical body of Christ has an inherently Eucharistic character. In *Corpus Mysticum*, de Lubac explains that in the early Church, sacramental and ecclesial communion were considered inseparable.[50] For the Fathers, "sacramental communion (communion in the body and blood) is always at the same time an ecclesial communion (communion within the Church, of the Church, for the Church)."[51] The Eucharist creates the Church, as the faithful become what they eat. The Eucharist "corresponds to the Church as cause to effect, as means to end, as sign to reality."[52] While the Church produces the Eucharist through its priests, the Eucharist, in a very real sense, produces the Church, insofar as ecclesial communion is the result of sacramental communion.

De Lubac insisted on the link between sacramental and ecclesial communion, considering that this link had been lost in theology due to rationalism and neo-scholasticism. The focus simply moved to whether the Eucharist is really or symbolically the body of Christ. De Lubac clearly considers the Eucharist to be a real presence, but he points out that the Eucharist concerns the historical, sacramental, and ecclesial nature of the body of Christ. The sacraments of the Church, as the real presence of Christ, are also the means of unity within the Church. Christ is given to the faithful through the Eucharist. Without the sacramental body, the ecclesial body would not exist. The importance of the sacraments,

[49] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 99–100.

[50] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum,* 13–36. See Hans Boersma, "Sacramental Ontology: Nature and the Supernatural in the Ecclesiology of Henri de Lubac," *New Blackfriars* 88: 1015 (2007): 242–273. Dennis M. Doyle, "Henri de Lubac and the Roots of Communion Ecclesiology," *Theological Studies* 60 (1999): 209–227. Alexander J. D. Irving, "The Eucharist and the Church in the Thought of Henri De Lubac and Rowan Williams: Sacramental Ecclesiology and the Place of the Church in the World," *Anglican Theological Review* 100.2 (2018): 267–289.

[51] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 21.

[52] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 13.

and especially of the Eucharist, is absolutely clear for ecclesiology. The Eucharist is par excellence "the sacrament of unity"[53]; it is "a union with Christ and at the same time a union of all."[54] According to de Lubac, the Church is realized in "the very Act of the Eucharistic sacrifice itself,"[55] which is both type and reality, and through the power of invocation. The pneumatological factor in the Eucharist is clear when de Lubac points out that "Our churches are the 'upper room' where not only is the Last Supper renewed but Pentecost also."[56]

This unity of the Church as the body of Christ does not abolish the difference between its members; the personal element is not abolished by the universal. In the body of the incarnate Word, the unity of distinct human beings with God is realized. According to de Lubac, "there is no real unity without persisting difference."[57] We need "a real perception that grasps at a glance, beyond any spatial intuition, the bond between the personal and the universal."[58] The link between unity and diversity was achieved through the work of Christ. That is why "A fully realized, that is, a perfectly universalized, person without Christ is an impossibility."[59] Indeed, "Christ, by completing humanity in himself, at the same time made us all complete—but in God ... we are fully persons only within the Person of the Son, through whom and with whom we share in the circumincession of the Trinity."[60]

Regarding the ecclesiological presuppositions of the Eucharist, Zizioulas acknowledges his indebtedness to the work of de Lubac and Congar in highlighting the progressive loss of the connection between the Church and the Eucharist, particularly from the 13th century onward. In scholastic thought, the emergence of a sacramental theology independent of Christology and ecclesiol-

[53] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 88–89.
[54] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 92.
[55] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 102.
[56] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 110–111.
[57] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 341,
[58] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 341.
[59] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 342.
[60] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 342.

ogy reduced the Eucharist to one sacrament among many and transformed it into a "means of grace," rather than an expression of the entire body of the Church. Thus, the Eucharist came to be regarded as a sacrament produced by the Church, rather than as a sacrament that constitutes the very being of the Church. This view also influenced modern Orthodox theology.

In engaging de Lubac's thesis on the relationship between the Church and the Eucharist, Zizioulas makes a creative contribution by illuminating the question through the organic relationship between Christology and Pneumatology, or between history and eschatology. If the Church, as the Body of Christ, exists first and foremost as an institutionalized historical entity and subsequently produces "means of grace," such as the Eucharist, then the Church indeed makes the Eucharist. In this framework, Christ comes first, followed by the Spirit, and then by the Church, which produces the Eucharist. For Zizioulas, however, the deepest roots of the relationship between the Church and the Eucharist lie in the organic relationship between Christology and Pneumatology. When Christ is united with the Holy Spirit, the one Christ becomes a communion that incorporates the many. The Body of Christ is this eschatological communion of the many: the "communion of saints," the ecclesial community. Consequently, from an eschatological perspective, the ecclesiological presuppositions of the Eucharist are found within the Eucharist itself. The gathering of God's people in one place for this purpose—including all the orders and charisms of the community, centered on the bishop—constitutes the Eucharist's eschatological vision and manifests the mystery of the Church. These ecclesiological conditions transcend any dilemma concerning priority between the Church and the Eucharist.[61]

For de Lubac, the relationship between the Church and the Eucharist arises from a causal and complementary connection. The Church produces the Eucharist, and, conversely, the Eucharist gives rise to the existence and development of the Church

[61] Zizioulas, *The One and the Many*, 61–74.

through their mutual causal interaction. The Church is thus an institution in which the Eucharist takes place within a reciprocal causal relationship. For Zizioulas, by contrast, the pneumatological and eschatological constitution of the mystery of Christ and the Church leads—under certain conditions—to the full identity of the Church and the Eucharist, while avoiding both hierarchical and the charismatic approaches to ecclesiology. His thesis is that "the Church constitutes the Eucharist while being constituted by it. Church and Eucharist are interdependent; they coincide, and are even in some sense identical."[62]

As Paul McPartlan[63] has shown brilliantly and in detail, although the two theologians come from two different theological mindsets and traditions, their thinking converges and dialogues. Both develop their ecclesiological thought in common areas, such as the emphatically existential character of their theological thought, the attempt to express the tradition of the Church in a contemporary way, their intense anthropological interest, the mutual interpenetration of Eucharist and ecclesiology, the importance of catholicity in the Church and humanity, etc. Despite the convergence on many points, their thinking also shows some significant differences. In his theology of the Eucharist and the Church, John Zizioulas appears to base his thinking on eschatology in the *apocalyptic* sense. Henri de Lubac clearly has an eschatological view, but his emphasis is on *history* and the *mission* of the Church in the world. In our opinion, despite such pneumatological accents, the Spirit remains structurally secondary in his ecclesiology. Let us not forget that de Lubac's major works date back to the interwar period and extend roughly to the Second Vatican Council. De Lubac follows what Zizioulas called the first type of Pneumatology, where the historical-Christological perspective prevails, according to which the Church is the people of God in dispersion on their way to the Kingdom. The work of the Spirit follows the work of Christ. The Church as a body obeys and

[62] *The One and the Many*, 68.

[63] Paul McPartlan, *The Eucharist makes the Church, Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue* (T.&T. Clark, 1993).

follows Christ as its head. At the level of ecclesiology, there is a distance between the head and the body. Christ unites the many in his body, but mainly as the individual Christ who precedes and gradually incorporates them. Christ as an *ecstatic and collective personality*[64] in Zizioulas's theology is already the Christ of the eschaton and the Kingdom. In de Lubac's Eucharistic view, man dominates and the world and creation as a whole receives comparatively little attention. In his time, the ecological problem had not yet become acute. In any case, the Eucharist seems to concern not the rest of creation, but only man. This gives some priority to man's moral and social action within history and culture. For Zizioulas, only the Eucharist as an act and a manner of life can change not only man, but also the whole world.

The ecclesiology of communion based on the Eucharist as the mystical body of Christ exists in both theologians with different emphases. Both recognize the importance of mission, which belongs to the nature of the Church. For de Lubac, mission is addressed to humanity, while for Zizioulas it is addressed to the whole of creation. For de Lubac, every Christian proclaims the Gospel to others as a missionary act, as a participation in the gift of divine life. For Zizioulas, the celebration of the Eucharist is perhaps more important than the preaching of the word of God. The Eucharist involves not only rational man, but also the whole of creation, and becomes the nucleus of the ultimate destiny of the world. Man is the priest of creation and Christ is the "first-born" of creation. The Eucharist recapitulates creation in the one body of Christ. The Eucharist is a reference of creation to God. Immediately after his dissertation, Zizioulas wrote the essay "The Eucharistic Vision of the World and Contemporary Man" (1966)[65] as its conclusion. The word of God is addressed to man and, through man, to creation, which refers to God. He believes

[64] On this issue, see Amphilochios Miltos, "La notion biblique de «personnalité corporative», De l'exégèse biblique à la théologie dogmatique," *Θεολογία* 85.2 (2014): 147–175.

[65] "Η εὐχαριστιακὴ θεώρηση τοῦ κόσμου καὶ ὁ σύγχρονος ἄνθρωπος", *Χριστιανικόν Συμπόσιον* (Ἀθήνα 1967): 183–190; in French: "La vision eucharistique du monde et l'homme contemporain", *Contacts* 19 (1967), 83-92.

that the dichotomy between man and nature in the West is due to the importance Augustine attached to the concept of psychological time, distinguishing between man's "internal" time and the "external" time of the world, a perception that he passed on to modernity.[66] Zizioulas clearly places more emphasis on the altar than on the ambo, even though as a bishop he preached at every Divine Liturgy.[67] According to de Lubac, God calls every human being to the same supernatural end, which is founded on the unity of humanity. Zizioulas's broader perspective considers that the salvation of man requires the salvation of the whole of creation, because man is a *microcosm*. Christ, as the new Adam, is not an individual, but a *corporate personality* that includes the *many*. This is realized in the Eucharist. All ancient Eucharistic references begin with *thanksgiving* first for the gift of creation and then for redemption in Christ.

De Lubac focuses on the moral and ontological obstacles to the salvation of the human person. Zizioulas observes that the Christian West has not been freed from the Pelagian controversy over whether man participates decisively in his own salvation. Zizioulas accepts that the Eucharist is not merely a ritual, but has clear social and practical implications for people's lives and morals. However, as Paul McPartlan observes, for de Lubac as for Congar, *Omega comes from Alpha*. Zizioulas, on the contrary, believes that *Alpha comes from Omega*.[68] This is a difference in theological mentality between the Eastern and Western traditions. For Zizioulas, eschatology depends on Christology, making Christ a *corporate-relational personality*. The one Christ becomes "many." Christ is not an individual being who gradually incorporates individuals into himself, but is a corporate personality from the outset

[66] *Remembering the Future*, 254.

[67] Metropolitan John of Pergamon, *Receive One Another: 101 Sermons*, ed. Maxim Vasiljević (St. Sebastian Press, 2023).

[68] See Maximus Confessor, *Ad Thalassium* 59, PG 72, 616: «οὐκ ἔτι γὰρ μετὰ τὴν παράβασιν δείκνυται τὸ τέλος ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς, ἀλλ' ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐκ τοῦ τέλους." For Congar, the Holy Spirit, as co-founder of the Church, unites the Alpha with the Omega, attesting to the continuity of the Church's apostolic mission throughout history as it moves toward the end of time. See Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 33–51.

and is experienced empirically in ever-new Eucharistic communities.

Zizioulas makes the elements of *memory* and *reception* inseparable from the Eucharist. De Lubac, insofar as he maintains a distinction between Christ and the Church, appears unable to incorporate these aspects fully, despite his intention to do so. Christ, inseparable from the Church, as he will be in the future of the Kingdom, is already experienced in the Eucharist. Perhaps a pneumatologically-dependent ecclesiology could be the solution to the problem, so that Christ through the Spirit is considered inseparable from the Church. This is not something that will happen only in the eschaton, but something that is already happening, albeit not fully, in the Eucharistic experience of the Church. This eschatological experience of the Eucharist is crucial to the identity of the Church. "The Church does not draw her identity from what she is but from what she will be ... She is what she is by becoming again and again what she will be."[69]

John Zizioulas, with his contribution to Pneumatology and eschatology, seems to cover and fill in the gaps and limitations that appear in the Western theological tradition, realizing more fully the ecclesiological goals of Henri de Lubac himself. Thus, if the Church makes the Eucharist and the Eucharist makes the Church, these ecclesiological principles need to be mutually and inseparably unified and not constitute obstacles to de Lubac's mystical ecclesiological synthesis. In this way, Paul McPartlan considers that these two brilliant theologians dialogue and complement each other in their ecclesiological approaches. He even points out that de Lubac's initial contribution, by excavating the tradition of the Church, opened up new avenues and inspired Zizioulas to proceed to a more complete theological synthesis, bringing in the particular elements of the Orthodox tradition of the Church. McPartlan concludes his detailed exploration of the convergences and divergences between the two theologians with

[69] Zizioulas, *The One and the Many*, 138, 144.

Zizioulas' reference to Fr. Georges Florovsky, for whom "the authentic catholicity of the Church must include both the West and the East."[70]

Conclusion

The encounter between John Zizioulas and the two leading figures of ressourcement shows that the "neo-patristic synthesis" and the "nouvelle théologie" were not parallel monologues but a genuine exchange. With Congar, Zizioulas shared the conviction that Christology and Pneumatology cannot be separated. With de Lubac, he shared the recovery of the inseparable bond between the Eucharist and the Church. In both cases, however, the decisive difference lies in the direction of theological thought.

For Congar and de Lubac, Omega proceeds from Alpha: the Church is established in history and moves toward the Kingdom through its mission. For Zizioulas, Alpha proceeds from Omega: the Spirit constitutes the Church from the beginning by bringing the eschaton into history, so that the Church draws its identity from what it will be.

Herein lies his distinctive contribution. Because the Spirit constitutes the Church rather than merely animating it, several consequences follow: Church and Eucharist coincide rather than cause one another; the local Church is as primary as the universal; institution and charism are mutually composed; the Eucharist embraces not only humanity but the whole of creation.

The question Zizioulas put to the Second Vatican Council, how the catholicity of the local Church can be reconciled with a universalist ecclesiology, remains open. The synodal initiatives of recent years show that it has lost none of its urgency. In this sense, the dialogue among these theologians is not concluded. It belongs to the future that, for Zizioulas, already shapes the present.

[70] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 26.

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